High Impact Practices (HIP)
Cover Sheet 2013 - 2014

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Name of HIP: Cultural Leadership, Understanding, and Exploration for Sophomores (CLUES) Learning Community
Approximate # of TAMU students involved in the HIP: 20-25

Please check the TAMU learning outcome(s) associated with this HIP:

Bachelor’s:
- [ ] Master the depth of knowledge required of a degree
- [X] Demonstrate critical thinking
- [X] Communicate effectively
- [X] Practice personal and social responsibility
- [X] Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence
- [X] Prepare to engage in lifelong learning
- [ ] Work collaboratively

Master’s:
- [ ] Master the degree program requirements
- [ ] Apply subject matter knowledge
- [ ] Communicate effectively
- [ ] Use appropriate technologies
- [ ] Develop clear research plans
- [ ] Choose ethical course of action

Doctoral:
- [ ] Master the degree program requirements
- [ ] Apply a variety of strategies and tools
- [ ] Communicate effectively
- [ ] Develop clear research plans
- [ ] Use appropriate technologies
- [ ] Teach and explain the subject matter

Please check the QEP learning outcome(s) associated with this HIP:

- [X] Improve student learning by developing habits and skills for lifelong learning — Curiosity, Initiative, Independence, Transfer, Reflection
- [X] Improve student learning by developing habits and skills for integrative learning — Connections to experience, Connections to discipline, Transfer, Integrated communication, Reflection and self-assessment
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Abstract
Living in an increasingly diverse society, the need to educate students in the area of multiculturally competent leadership is vital to their development and success. Cultural Leadership, Understanding, and Exploration for Sophomores (CLUES) is a multifaceted sophomore learning community that merges both multicultural and leadership education in a seamless partnership between Student Affairs and academia. This engaging educational experience was developed around a three credit hour two semester course developed by the Department of Multicultural Services (DMS) and the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications (ALEC). The course emphasizes multiculturalism, diversity/sensitivity, and leadership. In support of the mission of the DMS, CLUES provides an opportunity for sophomore students to gain knowledge of self, awareness of privilege, and understanding of social justice while being equipped with the leadership foundation and skills necessary to ultimately be the change agents our campus needs. Fellows earn academic credit for the purpose of enhancing their individual degree programs as well as participate in experientially educational experiences. The fall course commences with an in-depth introspection and reflection regarding the fellows’ personal socializations, experiences, and stories and ends with a call for social justice and action. This knowledge of multicultural responsibility is then put into practice throughout the following spring semester. The spring course builds upon the fall semester and commences with the fellows thinking critically, synthesizing, and applying course content to their understandings of their past experiences, their current academic and leadership endeavors, and their future personal and professional aspirations.

Description of the activity

a) Invest time and effort to purposeful tasks. Please describe the length of time of the experience
A DMS professional staff member and an ALEC faculty member will team teach ALED 222 (Fall) and ALED 289-223 (Spring). Every year as part of the two semester program, a cohort of approximately 20-25 students who have met the application requirements are chosen to become CLUES fellows and are enrolled in the course. The curriculum for the course is academically and theoretically sound and encompasses the rigor required of a sophomore level course and has been approved as a permanent course in the university catalog. Below is a brief overview of what each semester entails in terms of course content:

Fall Course Content
The fall semester begins by allowing the fellows to examine who they are in relation to their own particular cultures, and as the semester progresses, students are able to increase their knowledge and awareness about other cultures, stereotypes, oppressions and privileges; while learning to become multiculturally responsible. Through readings, class lectures, films, group projects, and discussions, CLUES fellows consider social theories and historical perspectives of leadership, particularly in terms of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. To meet the fall course objectives, the course is divided into three modules.

Module 1: Multiculturalism
- Course Introduction
- “Who Am I?” Activity
- Ambiguity & Stereotyping
- The Basics of Multiculturalism
- Recognizing & Overcoming Privilege
- Becoming Culturally Effective

Module 2: Cultural Leadership
- Leadership 101
- The Changing Nature of Leadership
- Leadership & Culture on Campus
- In-Class Film & Discussion
- Co-Curricular Activity: Dining with Diversity
- Debate Team Activity

Module 3: Special Topics in Multiculturalism & Leadership
- Race, Gender, Power, & Politics
- Exploring Multicultural Relationships
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- Co-Curricular Activity: Prairie View A&M Visit
- The Importance of Social Justice
- Cultural Expression Project Presentations

Spring Course Content
The spring course is largely focused on both synthesizing the concepts discussed during the fall semester and extending conversations on those topics, namely, leadership and becoming multiculturally responsible. The course utilizes lectures, activities, group discussion, individual reflection assignments, group assignments, and co-curricular activities. To meet the spring course objectives, the course is divided into four modules.

Module 1: Social Change
- Fall Semester Recap and Organization Leadership
- What is Social Change?: The Social Change Model in Action
- StrengthsQuest: Introduction to Strengths
- Change

Module 2: The Social Change Model of Leadership Development Part 1
- Citizenship
- Common Purpose
- Collaboration
- Controversy with Civility

Module 3: The Social Change Model of Leadership Development Part 2
- Consciousness of Self
- Congruence
- StrengthsQuest Round II
- Etiquette Luncheon
- Co-Curricular Activity: Attend Broadway Play

Module 4: The Social Change Model of Leadership Development Part 3
- Commitment
- Becoming a Change Agent
- Mock Interviews
- The Reality of CLUES Alumni Panel
- Final Case Study Presentations
- Program Overview, Wrap-Up & Discussion

b) Interact with staff, advisors, and/or faculty about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time

Over the course of the fall and spring semesters, the CLUES faculty interact with the fellows through teaching and helping fellows apply what they are learning to their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. The CLUES course is team taught wherein the lead instructors consist of the faculty member from ALEC and an administrator from the DMS. There are also two additional instructors who are professional staff members from Student Activities and the Student Academic Success Center. They were involved in the creation and implementation of the CLUES learning community and have continued to teach parts of the curriculum, facilitate class discussions, and lead the fellows in group activities. All instructors teach course content, grade course assignments, attend co-curricular events, and engage fellows in reflective activities where they can apply what they're learning to their on and off campus experiences. In terms of sustained engagement over both semesters, the CLUES lead faculty members are accessible to students during their posted office hours.

In addition to professional faculty and staff, CLUES also utilizes an undergraduate teaching/research assistant. This position is filled by a former CLUES fellow whose charge is to assist the faculty in teaching course content, facilitating activities, and initiating formal and informal dialogues with the current fellows. The assistant enhances the fellows’ experiences while in the learning community because they act as a mentor and help guide the fellows through the
Division of Student Affairs curriculum since they have completed the course previously themselves. The assistant’s position may span across both the fall and spring semesters.

c) Interact with peers about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time
CLUES fellows build community both inside and outside of class through facilitated class discussions, group activities, participation in co-curricular events, informal social interactions, and team assignments. For example in order to foster leadership development and encourage student learning through ongoing peer interactions, fellows are tasked with operating as a student organization to accomplish group goals. This includes, among other things, nominating and electing officers, utilizing subcommittees, carrying out a service project, recruiting the next cohort of CLUES fellows, and planning and implementing their own graduation banquet. Like any other student organization, they have to keep records and compile results of their efforts and activities in a document which will be kept for historical purposes as a way of informing future CLUES organizational leaders about the organizations progress. Prior to the end of the year, the CLUES organization submits a document with a report from each committee, each person in leadership, and an overall summary of the semester. The final product includes challenges, words of wisdom, and successes of the organization.

d) Experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves
In a partnership between Texas A&M University College Station and Texas A&M University Qatar, CLUES hosts guests from both the College Station and Qatar campuses participating in a student exchange program. Guests from both campuses not only observe class but are also given the opportunity to interact directly with CLUES fellows through facilitated activities and class discussions. This encourages fellows to develop a deeper understanding of leadership in a global context through meaningful dialogues between students from the Middle East and America.

An additional way CLUES fellows experience diversity through contact with people different from themselves is the CLUES final project at the end of the year. The final project is requires fellows to develop a presentation that reflects their efforts to analyze and synthesize the Cs of the Social Change Model within the context of their A Different Mirror assigned community (Takaki, 1993). They accomplish this task through careful analysis of the text, engagement with student organizational representatives, personal interviews with faculty across various colleges and disciplines, and participate in traditional events of their assigned culture. The following is a detailed description of the final assignment:

The class is divided into (5) groups. Each group is given a chapter that represents different cultures (i.e. Chinese, Irish, Black, Native American, and Chicano) of the book A Different Mirror by Ronald Takaki. Based on their assigned chapter, each group submits a lesson plan and puts together a 10-15 minute lecture in order to teach the class about that culture. During the rest of the semester, each group continues to study the culture that they were assigned. They are required to contact a representative(s) from the Aggie community from that culture and interview them. During the interview, the group asks the individual about their experiences within their culture and how they perceive the differences between their culture and that of the United States in general.

As part of the final project, fellows are also required to become knowledgeable about the food, religion, customs, social norms, language, and family system associated with the culture. They identify stereotypes associated with the culture and report on the root and the status of them. Lastly, each group discusses how this assignment relates to the various components of the course. Each group compiles all the information and gives a 15-20 minute presentation. If possible, they invite a representative (often times a professional staff or faculty member) of the culture they are representing to attend their presentation. This is often times the person they initially interviewed. After their group presentation, fellows write a reflection on the cultural experience describing how what they learned enhances personal, community, national, and global awareness.

e) Receive frequent feedback about their performance – both formal and informal – in settings that allow them to respond to that feedback
In addition to holding office hours where fellows can seek informal feedback and clarity on assignments, CLUES faculty provide a tremendous amount of formal feedback in class discussions. For instance, faculty present general feedback to the fellows as a group after each graded assignment and co-curricular event. It is up to the fellows to seek individual
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feedback. They may attend office hours, make an appointment, or stay after class. Both faculty and the undergraduate teaching/research assistant provide their contact information on the syllabus.

f) Are provided opportunities to integrate synthesize and apply knowledge gained from their classroom/discipline to their co-curricular experience and vice versa. Students are provided opportunities to discover the relevance of learning through application and practice in a range of contexts.
The CLUES course gives the students many opportunities to apply what they are learning in the course and implement their new knowledge on campus and in the community. Below is a brief overview of the CLUES co-curricular experiences:

**Fall Co-Curricular Experiences**
CLUES fall semester course assignments include critical reaction papers, journals, co-curricular reflections, a debate exercise, and pop quizzes. Fellows also participate in co-curricular activities throughout the semester to experience aspects of different cultures. These co-curricular activities include, but are not limited to, visiting a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), attending a student organization sponsored event, and participating in the Dining with Diversity program which is a formal dinner with administrators and faculty of diverse backgrounds and experiences.

**Spring Co-Curricular Experiences**
The spring semester course utilizes lectures, activities, group discussion, individual reflection assignments, team assignments, and co-curricular activities such as, fine arts events and an etiquette lunch to expose students to different perspectives of leadership and multiculturalism.

One way course content is applied to a co-curricular experience is by the CLUES faculty explicitly reviewing the course content and outlining the knowledge the fellows have gained so far prior to the fellows’ participation in a co-curricular experience. The CLUES faculty hand out prompts to the fellows giving them specific things to pay attention to and think about as they experience a particular co-curricular activity. After each co-curricular experience, the CLUES fellows are required to submit a reflection paper connecting course content with their experiences as well as participate in a class reflection exercise designed to apply what they learned beyond the course.

Another way course content is applied to fellows’ co-curricular experiences is by the CLUES faculty coordinating various opportunities where fellows obtain information to help them with their career/major choices. Course requirements include StrengthsQuest training, interpreting their Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Career Report, meeting with a representative from the career center, participating in a mock interview conference, and submitting an essay detailing their five year academic, leadership, and professional plan. CLUES faculty provide individual feedback to the fellows as well as facilitate class discussions where fellows verbally process and synthesize the knowledge they’ve gained in the course and relate it to their co-curricular experiences.

g) Are provided opportunities to become aware of their values and beliefs and thus to better understand themselves in relation to others and the larger world
Throughout the CLUES course, fellows are continuously exposed to issues of diversity and multiculturalism as they relate to their leadership development. Course assignments, class discussions, and co-curricular experiences provide opportunities for fellows to both learn about themselves and others. At the completion of the course in terms of personal awareness, fellows are able to do the following:

- State key concepts of multicultural responsibility and leadership
- Recognize issues of inclusion on campus, in the community and in society
- Identify and formulate an opinion on key concepts
- Perceive and articulate any given event from more than one cultural viewpoint as well as recognize own biases
- Develop personal action plans
A variety of assessment methods are employed to gauge the success of the program. These include brief informal assessments given at the beginning and end of each semester and a formal assessment required of all courses that provide degree credit. Assessment results are used to make improvements and change. CLUES completed its sixth year of existence and the fellows' feedback has been very positive. The foundation of the CLUES learning community is the Social Change Model of Student Leadership Development (SCM). During the Fall semester three of the Cs (Consciousness of Self, Controversy with Civility, and Congruence) serve as the focus of the course content and activities while the other four (Commitment, Citizenship, Collaboration, Common Purpose) are covered in the Spring. To assess the growth of the fellows, a short informal assessment is given at the beginning and end of each semester. It describes the activities conducted in class and their relations with the Cs covered that particular semester. Fellows also give faculty open feedback inside and outside the classroom in regards to their experience in the learning community throughout the year. Lastly utilizing self-reported pre/post assessment question responses, the CLUES faculty ensure fellows are meeting the intended learning outcomes of the course. The CLUES learning community learning outcomes include the following:

- Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking by exploring the complex ways in which culture impacts leadership and examining how this complexity is reflected in their own stories
- Students will demonstrate aspects of social, cultural, and global diversity by analyzing the effects racism, sexism, privilege, ethnocentrism, and other biases have on access to leadership opportunities
- Students will be able to appreciate cross-cultural differences, enhancing their cultural capacity, ability to communicate effectively and capacity for healthy relationships.
- Students will be able to develop an understanding of basic leadership theories and development
- Students will be able to apply leadership and professional development competencies
- Students will be able to facilitate the acquisition of leadership skills preparing participants for various leadership positions
- Students will be able to create an action plan to progress towards their personal and professional goals