Office of Diversity Initiatives

Policy/Procedure

About the Office

The Office of Diversity Initiatives (ODI) at Dickinson College is a resource center charged with advancing Dickinson’s commitment to broadening the understanding of and building a pluralistic society that promotes equality and integrity on the campus, in the community, and the world. The office provides individuals with the opportunity to broaden their views and enrich their cultural experiences through participation in diversity programs and training workshops. The office encourages and facilitates activities that allow students to voice their opinions, serve the community, and advocate for making Dickinson a place that welcomes difference and individuality.

In creating a meaningful education for a diverse community, the office collaborates with several constituencies at the college and in the community to fulfill its mission. Dickinson fosters diversity through the belief that awareness and knowledge of diversity and the ability to operate in a pluralistic society are important hallmarks of a quality liberal education. Dickinson College recognizes that breadth and depth in the pursuit of learning is enhanced by diversity within the student body, faculty, and administration. The quality of an education depends not only on the subject matter taught and quality of the teaching, but also on the people with whom students share their learning experiences. A multicultural presence helps all students better understand the challenges and rewards of living in a diverse climate. Day to day dialogue among students, faculty, and administrators, crucial to the teaching-learning process, is enhanced by diversity in a campus community where heterogeneity, whether cultural, racial, or economic, gives voice to a wider range of perspectives and worldviews.

The staff of ODI includes a full-time Director, Graduate Intern (Spring), Staff Associate, and student Diversity Assistants and Volunteers. The Diversity Assistants are responsible for coordinating yearlong projects and serve as campus and community liaisons for the office. Specific projects carried out by the Diversity Assistants include organization relations, diversity luncheon discussions focusing on specific themes, programming, web page management, community service, diversity dialogue facilitation, and creating and editing of the office publication, Diversity in Demand (DID). Other programs include a multicultural expo, diversity monologue contest, and lectures during culturally celebrated months. The office helps Dickinson students to build a community of world citizens, create a supportive environment for all individuals from diverse backgrounds, and improve Dickinson for all its members.

The office provides yearlong diversity programming and development for the campus and community in different ways. The ODI also provides diversity training workshops for student staff and different campus offices, and activities and programs for students, and works closely with other offices within and outside of Student Life to assist the college’s multicultural and social justice driven organizations.
The office houses a multicultural resource center open to the Dickinson community, which houses a library with different resources, and serves as a gathering area for multicultural organizations, and works together with diversity affiliates such as the Office of Global Education and the Asbell Center. The ODI also works closely with student organizations on Dickinson’s campus. This includes the Diversity Roundtable, ABOLISH, African American Society, ASIA, Latin American Club, House of Umoja, Spectrum, the Women’s Center, Indian Student Association, Muslim Student Association, Hillel, Sisterhood, Phoenix, Middle-Eastern Club, Tikkun, Club Afrique, 3rd Degree Step Group, and Sustained Dialogue.

**Diversity Assistants**

Diversity Assistants/Coordinators and volunteers representing the Office of Diversity Initiatives assist in promoting a respectful and diverse climate on campus. Each diversity assistant is responsible for coordinating year long projects carried out and organized by the office. Specific projects and responsibilities are listed below. Diversity Assistants/Coordinators and volunteers representing the office of Diversity Initiatives assist in promoting a respectful and diverse climate on campus. Each diversity assistant is responsible for coordinating year long projects carried out and organized by the office. Specific projects and responsibilities are listed below.

**Chief Coordinator**

The Chief Coordinator serves as the chief of staff and is assigned the role of overlooking all Diversity Assistants responsibilities as they pertain to the Diversity Assistants’ assigned projects and coordinator responsibilities. The Chief Coordinator meets with the diversity assistants once a week to go over specified projects assigned to them. The DA assigned this position also reports on the continuous progress of projects to the Director of Diversity Initiatives, and meets with the Director on a weekly basis. The Chief Coordinator assists the Director with the office’s manual, pamphlets, and any other publications representing the office’s structure, mission, and goals.

**Organization Relations Coordinator**

The diversity assistant assigned to organization relations works closely with diversity and social justice affiliated student organizations to make sure that all organizations collaborate and have a positive relationship with each other. The DA also attends organizations’ meetings from time to time and keeps the office up to date with programming, events, activities, and structure within each organization. The DA assigned to this position is also in charge of intercultural relational enhancement between organizations advised by the office of diversity initiatives or any organizations with a similar mission of creating a diverse, educational, and respectful climate, as well as promoting co-sponsorships among student organizations, campus constituents, and the office.

**Programming Coordinators**

The diversity assistants assigned to programming assist in the coordination of and planning of the year’s speakers, cultural events, co-sponsored activities, and campus programs hosted by ODI. The specific tasks include applying for external funds, seeking co-sponsorships with different offices and academic departments, working with conferences and events, collaborating with student organizations,
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and working with groups outside of the Dickinson community. Part of ODI's mission is to enhance awareness and broaden the views of the Dickinson community through program development on current and general diversity-social related issues. The DAs assigned to programming are also in charge of advertisement and publicity for the office.

Community Service Coordinator

The diversity assistant assigned to community service works jointly with two offices: the Office of Diversity Initiatives and the Office of Religious Life and Community Services. For ODI the coordinator searches for volunteer opportunities, schedules and plans activities for staff community service days, and encourages involvement with non-profit organizations such as Victory Circle, Amani, and the Hope Station based in the Carlisle area. The community service coordinator serves as a liaison between both offices and helps with the organization of projects such as the Giving Tree, and Make a Difference Day.

POSSE/Crossing Boarders Coordinator

The diversity assistant assigned to Crossing Borders works with the Crossing Borders Advisor at Dickinson to develop cultural immersion experiences for the students of Crossing Borders. Weekly meetings will be used to assess the progress in relation to their integration into the Dickinson community. In addition, the Crossing Borders coordinator aids the students in publishing an article that satisfies the program’s final requirements. The coordinator occasionally meets with the Crossing Border students for meals, social activities, and mentorship.

The diversity assistant assigned to POSSE works with the POSSE Foundation mentor at Dickinson to provide academic and leadership support for the POSSE scholars. Responsibilities include scheduling visits for incoming POSSE classes and coordinating hosts, dinners, classes and meetings with faculty, staff, and administration. The POSSE liaison also works with the POSSE scholars to plan a POSSE Plus Retreat, held in the spring semester for students and guests. The Coordinator Occasionally meets with the POSSE scholars for meals, social activities, and mentorship.

Diversity Training Coordinator

The diversity assistant assigned to diversity training facilitates programs for all students, student groups, clubs, and organizations at Dickinson interested in engaging in diversity-related topics or issues under the supervision of the director. To further diversity initiatives beyond the Dickinson community, the college is involved in exchange programs where students visit neighboring colleges and universities. The DA assigned diversity training will be in charge of co-facilitating student based activities having to do with diversity education and promoting diversity awareness on campus.

Publications Co-Coordinators

Web Site Coordinator

Diversity Assistants assigned Publications assist in updating the ODI website bi-weekly. Updates include current events, activities, and programs related to the office, as well as providing links to other...
resources geared toward diversity and leadership work. The DA in charge of the web also helps with keeping track of function turn outs, pictures, and any additional material needed to provide Dickinson, neighboring communities and institutions, and students with information relevant to Diversity events on campus.

DID Coordinator

Diversity Assistants assigned to Publications also work together to develop the layout for our biannual publication, “Diversity in Demand (DID).” DID Coordinators are responsible for assembling the physical layout of the magazine. This includes arranging the articles and sections, advertisement and distribution, pictures, writing, editing, and minor logistics that are involved with the construction of a quality publication.

Diversity Volunteers

Volunteer opportunities are available through the office for students interested in helping advance the office’s mission to increase cultural awareness on campus. Students who have limited experience working with Diversity often start as volunteers, and later apply to obtain a position as a Diversity Assistant. Volunteers are provided with the chance to become familiar with the office, and are exposed to issues and topics stemming from diversity and social justice. This is a great opportunity for students get involved without having to commit a lot of time.

Office Resources

Diversity in Demand

Diversity In Demand is an educational magazine published by the office once a semester. As a publication of voices speaking for change, the magazine serves as a social support vehicle for groups to embrace and promote cultural diversity. DID’s goal is to provide Dickinsonians and neighboring communities with different viewpoints on current issues underlying diversity and social justice, and to address the many issues surrounding diversity and multiculturalism on the Dickinson College campus, in society, and the world at large. Each issue of Diversity In Demand is devoted to a particular theme centered on a topical issue of diversity. Common to each edition of the magazine are articles written by the ODI staff and guests, dealing with a central theme. The magazine is distributed to regular subscribers and is made available to all Dickinson College community members in the lower and upper levels of the Holland Union Building and in the ODI.

Diversity Resource Center

ODI houses a multicultural library that serves as a resource center, which includes a collection of books, magazines, journals, music, and videotapes, that focus on areas and topics related to diversity and social justice, such as; gender, race, ethnicity, religion, history, socioeconomics, global issues, etc. This resource center is open to the campus and community. The library is housed in the Diversity Assistants office located in the Leadership Development Center in the lower level of the HUB.
Diversity Assistants maintain office hours throughout the year and are often available to answer questions about the office, and or any of the initiatives carried out by the ODI.

**Diversity Roundtable**

ODI works closely with, supports, and provides advice to several student organizations on Dickinson’s campus, and facilitates the Diversity Roundtable. The Diversity Roundtable is an umbrella group organized by the office, made up of student organizations on campus. Most of the organizations in the umbrella are diversity and social justice affiliate groups. The purpose of the Diversity Roundtable is to create meaningful and collaborative relationships amongst the organizations involved, other organizations on campus, and the community at large. The Roundtable also serves as a tool to create a safe space for leadership development, conflict resolution, intercultural relations, and organizational development for student organizations on campus. Through this roundtable, organizations work together as one to coordinate programming in a way that does not interfere with each others’ programs and events. This way most organizations work together to support each other, provide cultural awareness to the community, and strengthen their commitment to community.

**Related Information**

**History/Revision Information**

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: ODI Web Site (www.dickinson.edu/stulife/odi)