UROP Project #1- MESA/Trotter Grants Assessment

Objectives and Methodology

The mission of the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs is to promote student development and empower the campus community around issues of diversity and social justice through the lens of race and ethnicity. On way we live into this mission is to fund programs put on by student organizations that promote, enhance, and enrich campus community around these issues. The grants process is not merely a mechanism for students to receive funding, but it is also an opportunity for MESA/Trotter to engage these student organizations around learning opportunities associated with program development and grant writing. While our grants process has been around for years, we would like to begin doing a comprehensive assessment of the learning associated with this program. The purpose of this project is to explore and evaluate the impact and learning that happens with student organizations and individual students who receive funding. Specifically, the UROP students will assist in assessing the achievement of existing learning outcomes via a variety of methods including the proposal writing, post-event summaries, and final presentations.

Student Tasks and Responsibilities

- Gather, record, and organize all grant materials in preparation for grant committee meetings.
- Assist in the evaluation of the proposal, post-event summaries, and final presentations as connected to the various learning outcomes of the grant program.
- Provide support for the curriculum development of the partnership capacity building workshop
- If schedule allows—co-facilitate the partnership capacity building workshops (offered 6 times during the year).
- Communicate and work with student organizations to ensure that all information is received in a timely manner and meets necessary requirements.
- Read relevant articles and materials connected to intercultural development, learning outcomes assessment, partnership building, and other relevant topics to establish a greater understanding around the work of multicultural affairs and supporting diverse communities.
- Support the assessment efforts of other MESA programs as assigned (or as schedule permits) in order to get a broader understanding of research and assessment within a unit.

Minimum Qualifications of Student Assistant

- Interest in diversity and social justice issues, including different dimensions such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel (or a desire to develop these skill sets if not already well versed in them)
- Strong communication and organizational skills
- Tolerance for ambiguity and willingness to learn new things

2 students (8-10 hours per week)

UROP Project #2: Research on Utility of the Trotter Multicultural Center Facilities & Services

Objectives & Methodology

The William Monroe Trotter Multicultural Center officially opened its doors as a Black student cultural center in 1971. The desire for a place where U-M Black students, faculty and staff groups could hold meetings and cultural events grew out of the Black Action Movement (BAM) strike in the early 1970s. Since its inception, the Center has continued to grow. In 1981, the focus of the Center was expanded to become a student multicultural center. The Center has continued to live into its mission by providing free spaces to student organizations to host events/programs, putting on programs that draw a diverse population, and serving as a safe space for diverse communities to gather and interact in meaningful and creative ways. The Center hopes to continue its commitment to the campus community by assessing and evaluating the different ways various campus constituents have used, can use, and would like to use the facilities and services provided by the Center. UROP students would be the driving force behind this assessment and evaluation. The findings from this project will contribute to a better understanding of the needs of the campus community, and provide the Center with information that could lead to changes, expansions, and modifications of existing facilities and services that better fulfill its mission.

Student Tasks & Responsibilities

- Create surveys and evaluations for the different campus constituents
- Assist in the development to the overall assessment strategy
- Develop and strategize a plan for achieving a wide representation amongst all groups to participate in the various methods of assessment
- Conduct/implement the various assessment strategies (i.e. handing out surveys, conducting focus groups, holding interviews, etc.)
- Be involved in writing the final reports of the findings and suggest recommendations for future improvements/changes to facilities and services (as connected to research findings)

Minimum Qualifications of Student Assistant

- Interest in diversity and social justice issues, including different dimensions such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel (or a desire to develop these skill sets if not already well versed in them)
- Strong communication and organizational skills
- Tolerance for ambiguity and willingness to learn new things

3 Students (8-10 hours per week)

UROP Project #3: Assessing Campus Climate for Diverse Student Communities

Last year the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs revived a program called the MESA Forum. The MESA Forum served as a town hall meeting to address the concerns, problems, and inquiries about communities of color on campus. Some of the concerns raised included the need for safe spaces on campus, strengthening engagement across communities and identities such as race, ethnicity and sexuality, barriers that prevent certain communities from working together, and how MESA can serve as a vital resource to these communities. In an effort to continue these conversations, the purpose of this project is to conduct research within the student communities regarding the issues or concerns they are experiencing within their communities as well as external campus issues that play a role in their feelings of safety and inclusion on campus. The findings from this research will be used by MESA/Trotter to modify its practices as needed to better support the diverse student communities we serve.

Student Tasks & Responsibilities

- Conduct/implement various assessment strategies (i.e. handing out surveys, conducting focus groups, holding interviews, etc.) to obtain desired information
- Collect, organize, and interpret data acquired from the various assessment methods
- Engage students from a wide range of communities to involve them in these conversations
- Participate on the MESA Forum committee with other students to implement this project
- Communicate and work with others to establish programming that is focused on addressing the issues brought to light in the findings

Minimum Qualifications of Student Assistant

- Interest in diversity and social justice issues, including different dimensions such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel (or a desire to develop these skill sets if not already well versed in them)
- Strong communication and organizational skills
- Tolerance for ambiguity and willingness to learn new things

2 Students (8-10 hours per week)