

Needs Assessment Unit Goal

Size and Nature of Problem

The issue with graduation rates am seems to be maintaining a level but one that is not strong. Minority is labeled at the University of Kansas in the research is American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Multiple. In 2005 there were 362 minorities that were entered into their freshman year (OIRP 2012). The information obtained for this essay was through the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. This is valuable to look at since it affects not only the University of Kansas but universities as a whole.

Problem

Within the University of Kansas the minority populations as a whole are not graduating at the rates of the their white non-Hispanic counterparts. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (2012) shows that white non-Hispanic student's 4-year graduation rate is 33.8% compared with 18.5% for minorities. Thus minorities are graduating at almost half the rate and the universities must identify what can be done to try and change the issue. Did this come about because of low population rates of minorities or was it the structure of the American university.

Target Population

Information used for target populations will be the rates and not raw numbers for graduating. Also, the groups that will not be included in this will be the Multiple, Asian, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Looking at minority populations on a deeper level and finding out which ones are the higher at risk populations could help in the promoting of graduation rates. The groups that are of more concern would be focused if they have a

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lower graduation rate compared to white non-Hispanic average 4-year graduation rate. Three groups stand out are the American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black non-Hispanic, and Hispanic (OIRP 2012). The direct populations it would affect are the ones in the previous sentence but the ones it would indirectly affect would be the other minority groups and as well white non-Hispanic. It is the idea that if minorities are gaining in graduation rates for the troubled groups than the program can be implemented to the ones succeeding but not exceeding the graduation rate. For white non-Hispanic it would be the fact that minority populations may start to rise in terms of how many are on campus competing for jobs and positions in programs to creating a stronger diverse network for them to learn in. The demand for this is high since we have a rapidly growing Hispanic population in Kansas and there needs to be programs in place to make sure these students stay at the University of Kansas but as well graduate from here.

Understanding How Targets Experience the Problem

The pieces we must look at are what is happening that these three groups specifically are not able to be graduating at a 33% rate in 4-years. To gain access to how this is going on at a rate that has been constant for 10 years needs to be addressed at the administration level. Working with faculty in departments such as sociology, psychology, anthropology and graduate programs within the School of Education to find the different environment, cultural, and capital issues with the graduation rate. Having such department all do focus groups and individual interviews with the students of Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Black non-Hispanic. Also, doing a study where anthropologist sits at certain areas on campus and observe students interactions on campus in a daily life uninhibited by the knowledge being pressured to answer questions

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on being in school at the University of Kansas. Looking at previous literature that relates to theories about minority student interaction at universities would be helpful and many sociological and educational articles on minority opportunities within the university.

The increase in minorities is always a great thing to say when trying to recruit but if you look at the data yes more come but no matter what between 10-20% are graduating in 4-years. To have the plan be a success there must be a buy-in from the administration and faculty for this to work. The biggest stakeholder in this would be the faculty because with their help we would be able to have so many different reports of what is happening on campus with relation to the select group. This means selling it to be one that would impact universities by giving the tools in how to make a more inclusive and diverse university system.

A piece that can be explored would be the social indicators on campuses. This would be looking at stats for crime on campus, conduct in the residence halls, and class going rates, which could be found through the MySuccess initiative that is running right now. There can also be the factor of the social networks that these minority populations have and with whom are they not interacting with. This is where you would need the buy-in of the administration since they are in charge of those pieces and could be useful in doing this efficiently.

Another thing to look at is what degrees they are pursuing and what the faculty demographic make-up is, for example is it white men and Asian women teaching them. Demographic information can be captured through a small survey and can even break down the ethnic groups into their subgroups to gain a better-detailed knowledge of who the students are and whom they are learning from.