

Social Justice Programming: Current Practices and Suggestions for the Future

Christy Orgeta, June 21, 2012

Introduction

University Housing Services values social justice. This is demonstrated through the department's mission statement, staff training, committee work, leadership education, and collaborative efforts with outside departments. One other way UHS promotes social justice is through resident advisor programming. Currently, each building is required to have one social justice-based program per quarter. These programs are created and facilitated by Resident Advisors, who often times invite professional staff to assist in program facilitation.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to understand the current state of social justice programming from University Housing Services. These programs are meant to educate residents about economic, political and social rights and opportunities, as well as the inequities that occur in society. By assessing the number of social justice programs, professional staff will have the ability to identify where training and conversations should be focused in an effort to improve current social justice programming.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this assessment, professional staff will be able to:

- Articulate examples of Social Justice programming student staff executed during the 2011-2012 year.
- Understand what types of Social Justice issues Resident Advisors are discussing
- Identify trends in Social Justice programming
- Recognize which Social Justice topics are and are not addressed
- Provide recommendations for improvement in regards to social justice programming during training in Fall 2012.
- Provide recommendations for continued training and conversations throughout the 2012-2013 year.

Method

This assessment was done utilizing mixed methods. All information was drawn from an online programming database (<http://www.progdb.com>) that Resident Advisors use to report and document their programs. Quantitatively, numbers were calculated through Resident Advisor responses to numerical-value based forms. Qualitatively, information was coded from Resident Advisor free responses.

Results

During the 2011-2012 year, University Housing Services Staff oversaw the following amount of programs. Of the programs documented, only 59 provided attendance numbers.

Overall Programs	Social Justice Programs	Program Attendance
1103	84	1152

During coding, programs were themed into different types of oppression. Issues of class, multiple identities and heterosexism were the topics that were most heavily programmed; whereas religious oppression, animal rights and nativism were programmed about the least.

Type of Programming	Number of Programs
Animal Rights	1
Religious Oppression	2
Nativism	3
Lookism	3
Abilism	4
Cisgenderism	4
Inclusive Language	4
Race	5
Women's Violence	5
Political Inequities in Other Countries	6
Heterosexism	9
All Identities	10
Classism	11

Of the programs identified, 48 programming reports provided valid evaluation information that could be coded. Evaluations with no answer or N/A written were not further investigated. The following themes emerged as items that could be improved: advertising, attendance and planning.

Need	Reponses
Use of Faculty	1
Lack of Resources	1
Discussion/Reflection	4
Advertising	10
Attendance	11
Planning	24
None- Programmed Deemed a Success	10

Context

Resident advisors as a whole receive training about diversity and social justice at the beginning of the year through student staff training. At training, students are introduced to the idea of identity and the institutionalized oppression that comes with having said identities. During the year, new resident advisors learn about Social Justice during resident advisor class. In addition,

student staff are invited to participate in brown-bag lunches to discuss social justice, as well as participate in Cal Poly's Annual Tunnel of Oppression.

Next Steps

Following this assessment, three recommendations can be made:

Education of Identities during RA Training: During training, resident advisors go through a day and half of intensive diversity training with the Office of Student Life and Cultural Centers. During this time, much of the focus is placed on the student staff member getting to know their own identity and that of those they will be working with. In addition to this, resident advisors should also go through a separate training on the true meaning of social justice and diversity, and what that looks like at Cal Poly Pomona.

Portfolio-Wide Communication about Social Justice Programming: During weekly residence life team meetings, Residence Life should discuss at least once a month about what their communities are doing to educate about social justice. These conversations can be held in junction with the monthly Social Justice Collaborative discussions that RLT has each month.

Continued Training on Program Planning and Advertising: Due to the emerging theme of wishes for improved program planning and advertising, continued programming training is suggested. To do this, Residence Life could implement refreshers during weekly staff meetings, advertised tips and tricks in the weekly e-mail residence advisors receive from the programming e-mail, or even providing an in-depth UHS Wiki article that staff can refer back to.