5th Annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference

North Park University

AISES 2013

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Conclusion:

- Pretty strange, oddly religious, but fairly informative as well. None of the speakers were in anyway underqualified. I’d say it was worth the weekend.
Event 1 - Playing with Purpose: Cultivating Cultural Competency

- Card game that was a hybrid of euchre and hearts
- Teams were formed and changed tables based on victory
- Rules were different at each table, no one participating was told of this
- Things fell apart quickly upon realization things were different
- Extremely frustrating exercise, yet surprisingly valuable
- Tables were to simulate different cultural settings, the rules those cultural norms.
- It was to teach us how different people with different backgrounds respond differently to conflict
Event 1- Playing with Purpose: Cultivating Cultural Competency

- It was supposed to reveal that as a leader, frequently people under your administration have conflicts with you and you are unaware of it because it isn’t always directly expressed.

- The instructor said typically people not born in America or who are not of European descent deal with conflict in a more passive way.

- This was interesting because I have a tendency to believe that if one has a conflict, as an adult one should express it, but this is just not how deference is handled in other cultures.

- Furthermore it was to simulate culture shock, and at the same time to show that you may be violating cultural norms and not even know it.
Event 2 – Between Barack and a Hard Spot: Multiethnic Leadership in an Era of Trayvon Martin, a Black Presidency, and White Nationalism.

- This was by far the most informative session on a personal basis.
- The most important point with regard to universities is that minority staff are required, to teach diverse students in the voice of their own struggle and culture.
- Also that the concept of a “post-racial” era or a “colorblind university is entirely false and is fact insulting, because if you don’t see me as Native American or as An African American, what do you see me as? Does that not deny the rich history of my race and the love I have for me people?
Event 2 – Between Barack and a Hard Spot: Multiethnic Leadership in an Era of Trayvon Martin, a Black Presidency, and White Nationalism.

Next he introduced this helpful diagram regarding leadership:

- **Leader**
  - Personality, Training
  - Leadership, Values
  - Expertise, Relating
  - Expectations

- **Followers**
  - Motivation, Readiness
  - Expectations/Trust of Leader
  - Skills, Relational Expectations
  - Commitment, Time
  - Values/Culture

- **Situation**
  - Context, Culture, Cultural Values
  - Organizational Structures, Job Requirements
  - Events (Crisis or Not)
Event 2 – Between Barack and a Hard Spot: Multiethnic Leadership in an Era of Trayvon Martin, a Black Presidency, and White Nationalism.

- He concluded with “How do you lead out?” and “Finding Allies”
- Having to step over the line and learn more about the person whose view you are trying to change.
- Educating by building bridges and not walls, avoiding the sentence “you’re a racist”
- Being wary of Intent Vs. Impact with education, and how seemingly innocent ideas can have devastating far reaching psychological consequences.
- Organizing events, creating an ethos, and opening up real dialogue can lead to change.
Event 3 – Race Matters… Or Does It?

- This was also just a lecture, but I did gather a few things from it.
- One must instruct from a correct perspective, using the values of those you are trying to teach.
- The concept of race is human identity as reductionism, reducing an otherwise endlessly complex topic into an easily identifiable category with associated behaviors.
- Leaders resist systematic and bureaucratic racism. And that race is constructed to keep people in place by defining identities and behaviors for them.
- History is endlessly important in a discussion of race. It is important to define and not defend. To talk openly and not defensively. Especially about touchy topics like genocide and slavery.
I also learned that although it is difficult to understand, not knowing is distinctly different from ignorance.

It is impossible to fix something when one is unaware of the issue.

Instead of focusing on “fixing” or “righting wrongs” focus on mutually learning from the mistakes of the past, and coming to a better consensual dialogue of what must be done.

Also that mass incarceration (mostly from misdemeanor charges) is about social control.

As a leader, one must not simply consider the world and try to live better with those around you that are in it. One must ask why things are as they are and work every second to change and dismantle forces of unequal oppression.