Growing our Multicultural Greek Communities
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As we conclude the traditional commencement period, where former student leaders walk across the stage with a wide smile spread across their face, triumphantly receiving diplomas, it is important to reflect on their (and our) successes. At WSU's recent multicultural graduation celebration, all four student speakers were members of our Multicultural Greek Community (MGC). Hearing their stories of perseverance and triumph, I was reminded why I entered the field: playing a small part in the retention and graduation of these students to ensure they can achieve their dreams and make a difference in their communities.

I reflected on the role their time in the MGC played in their student experience and how it contributed to their success, wondering how this could be replicated on an international level. Given the unique role MGC organizations play in the overall success of students of color (Moreno & Sanchez, 2013), I began to reconsider the size of our MGC and advocated for their growth, both in terms of membership and number of organizations on campus.

Students, alumni, and inter/national organizations have expressed some reservations; however, they have begun to understand the MGC must be responsive to the ever-changing needs of the student body. The growth of the MGC cannot be done solely by fraternity/sorority campus-based professionals. Instead, it must be achieved in conjunction with students, alumni, and inter/national organizations through the creation of a challenging, supporting, and empowering environment.

Here are some steps to achieving buy-in towards growing your Multicultural Greek Community.

1. Challenge students, alumni, and inter/national multicultural fraternity and sorority organizations to rethink recruitment.

While MGC organizations have historically been small, there is room for growth in chapter size. It is important to note the difference between residential organizations and an MGC organization and to not expect the same size organizations. Yet, the "quality versus quantity" argument does not hold merit in the MGC, especially once one reflects on the purpose of the organization: to provide a safe space of likeminded self-identified students, who had been traditionally excluded from other organizations, to achieve a common goal around a shared set of values. *The reality is that campus-based professionals and MGC organizations need to be able to respond to the rapidly changing demographics.*

There will be a wave of change awaiting American colleges and universities in the near future. In 2012, the number of minority births surpassed the number of white births for the first time

(Supiano, 2012). By 2060, non-whites will constitute a majority of the U.S. population (Colby & Ortman, 2015). During this time, expect the following growth: Latinos 115%, Asians 128%, and Two or More Races 226%. Non-Hispanic Whites are expected to decrease in total percentage of the U.S. population, down over by 8%. A more racially-diverse cohort of students will be entering our campuses in the near future.

From 2009 to 2010, there was a 24% growth in the number of Latinos enrolled in college (Cohn, 2011). In 2012, the post-secondary enrollment rates of Latino high school graduates surpassed that of whites (Roach, 2013). By 2022, Latino enrollment is expected to increase by 27% and Black enrollment is expected to increase by 26%, compared to a 7% increase for Whites and Asians (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). This means students will increasingly come from traditionally underrepresented populations.

How should we address these demographic changes? The best way to achieve this is to challenge our organizations to push membership numbers up and expand the number of MGC organizations on campus. Based on experience and in conversations with inter/national organizations, healthy and sustainable MGC sorority levels are 25-40 women while MGC fraternity levels range from 15-30 (depending on the type of organization). This maintains the historical significance and feel of the organization while still challenging them to become larger. Provide chapters with realistic but challenging recruitment goals. When they state this is too much, provide them with campus demographic statistics and ask them "Are we at that level yet?" If you are, congratulations! Most of us are not and should working towards achieving those numbers.

2. Support the transition from small to large communities and organizations.

Once the community has made this decision, it is important that fraternity/sorority advisors provide adequate levels of on-going support to all constituents: existing and expanding organizations, graduate and chapter advisors, council officers and chapter presidents, and alumnae/alumni. Their backing will naturally come once you provide them with equitable levels of genuine and long-lasting support. Without the assistance of these crusaders, the growth of the MGC will not occur. Create a Multicultural Greek Advisory Council (made of chapter and graduate advisors). If you had one in the past, reconstitute that old Multicultural Greek Alumni Advisory Board made up of alumni members who are invested in the success of the community.

Provide MGC presidents with individualized skills-based workshops, such as learning how to delegate, effectively running meetings with more people, or navigating conflict. Recruitment assistance and advising, including promotional items and training, must be part of the support provided. MGC organizations cannot grow without the same level of advisement we provide to residential organizations. As fraternity/sorority advisors, we must be actively engaging in all

levels of our MGC organizations, including assisting them moving beyond the old mantra of "We don't recruit."

Too often, fraternity/sorority advisors do not place the amount of attention on our culturally based organizations as we should. Whether it is due to lack of resources (financial, staff, or time), putting out real or imagined fires in our IFC or Panhellenic communities, or trying to achieve substantive cultural change in the fraternity and sorority community as a whole, our attentions tend to wander away from our MGC. It is important to flip this on its head.

3. Empower membership and organizations to take the lead on the expansion efforts and to take the reins on the overall compositional makeup of the fraternity and sorority community.

A supported alumni base and student officers will lead to increased buy-in; however, they must also be an integral partner in determining what growth will look like on the campus. Will organizations just be larger or will the university invite additional organizations to campus? Without equal partners, successful growth may not materialize. It would be best to look at the demographics on your campus already. Do you have the ability to host an additional Latino-interest fraternity? Do you not have a particular type of organization on your campus, such as an Asian-interest fraternity or a Native-American sorority? Do your campus demographics align with the organization you may be interested in? Attempt to shoot for future demographics if you have the opportunity.

With increased membership and organizations on campus, the MGC will begin to play a larger role in the overall success of the entire fraternity and sorority community. Once you have a larger MGC, they will be able to challenge and support their residential counterparts on a host of issues, including community service, equity, and social justice. The residential fraternity and sorority community can challenge and support the MGC on other issues, such as academics, philanthropies, and hazing prevention. A larger MGC will be able to celebrate their (and their organization's) lived histories and demonstrate to incoming students that there are different ways to be a fraternity/sorority member. This empowerment can lead to a transformative fraternal experience.

It's time to shed some of the historical stereotypes related to recruitment and sizes of our MGCs. We need to address the coming demographic changes, provide students with opportunities to celebrate their identity (Guardia & Evans, 2008), and promote the unique role MGC organizations play in the overall success of students of color (Moreno & Sanchez Banuelos, 2013). Growing our MGC organizations and communities is what I define as success, as they keep students of color (and other marginalized populations) in school by challenging, supporting, and empowering them on their way towards receiving their degrees.

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