

2016-2017 Assessment Final Report

Department: Student Involvement and Leadership Center

Assessment of Queer Empowerment Summit (QUEST) Outcomes

Introduction

Assessment Project Description

KU Queer Empowerment Summit (QUEST) is a one day leadership symposium for LGBTQ+ students. Its purpose is to create confident and intersectional queer leaders and empower those leaders to bring their knowledge and strengths back to their spaces on campus. KU QUEST is for students with different levels of understanding and backgrounds, therefore each student attends with varying leadership experiences. We wanted a method to measure knowledge gained despite these differences.

Three focus groups were conducted with participants. We asked a combination of questions, with half of the questions with a Likert scale (1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree). The second half of the questions were open-ended questions, inquiring about the program activities and objectives, and suggestions for future years. The results will help us identify changes for future KU QUEST sessions. The results will also help reflect what additional resources are needed for students, specifically leadership resources for queer students.

Service/Program Student Learning Outcome(s)

Students participating in KU QUEST will be able to...

- Identify personal strengths and campus leadership resources and opportunities (SILC Learning Outcomes #3, #5 and SGD Learning Outcomes #1, #4)
- Generate organized goals and plans for both their student organizations and their personal projects (SILC Learning Outcomes #2, #6 and SGD Learning Outcomes #3)
- Articulate ways they incorporate the value of their own LGBTQ+ identities into leadership roles throughout campus, including their organizations, residence

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halls, and classrooms (SILC Learning Outcomes #1, #6 and SGD Learning Outcomes #2, #5)

Population/Sample:

Students who attended QUEST on November 5th, 2016 were asked to participate in an interview evaluation one week after the event. A total of 21 students participated in the event, and nine participants participated in the focus groups.

Assessment Method(s):

Participants were asked to take part in a focus group one week following the event.

Summary of Key Findings/Results

- 100% of respondents strongly agreed that QUEST presented itself as a safe environment, welcoming of their identity(ies). (n=9)
- 100% of respondents strongly agreed QUEST facilitators created an inclusive environment for participants. (n=9)
- 77.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of participating in QUEST, they were able to recognize their personal strengths. (n=9)
 - 33.3% strongly agreed (n=3)
 - 44.4% agreed (n=4)
- 77.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of participating in QUEST, they were able to identify campus leadership resources and opportunities. (n=7)
 - 44.4% strongly agreed (n=4)
 - 33.3% agreed (n=3)
- 66.6% of respondents strongly agreed that as a result of participating in QUEST, participants were able to generate organized goals for their student organizations and personal projects. (n=6)
- Participants mentioned their favorite QUEST activities:
 - 3 (33.3%) respondents mentioned a discussion-based activity about Vulnerability and Leadership (Brene Brown)

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- 4 (44.4%) respondents mentioned the True Colors Inventory, a survey to determine personality types and styles
- 6 (66.7%) respondents mentioned Reach Out to Someone Who, an activity based on affirmation of other based on impact throughout the program
- Respondents mentioned the QUEST activity which most influenced their definition of leadership:
 - 5 (55.6%) respondents mentioned a discussion of Defining Leadership
 - 2 (22.2%) respondents mentioned a discussion-based activity about Vulnerability and Leadership (Brene Brown)
 - 2 (22.2%) respondents mentioned the True Colors Inventory

Conclusions

Impact of Assessment

The impact of the assessment project has provided us with context for suggestions and changes for future years. To be more specific, we will use the results of the assessment to add and change who the presenters are and who is involved in the planning process of QUEST. We will use the results of the assessment to plan a new form of assessment, one which collects feedback in a more productive and immediate manner. Additionally, we will explore what activities will be included in the schedule in future years and consider an alternative space to maximize interaction during activities.

Lessons Learned

Overall, participants experienced QUEST and its facilitators as an inclusive space, welcoming to all identities. The event provided an opportunity for many students, undergraduate and graduate, to participate outside of typical class and work hours. There were many participants who had not attended other SGD-sponsored events prior to QUEST, therefore it allowed students to connect with SGD staff as well. More than anything, participants commented about feeling affirmed, refreshed, and left with new peers and a community.

Challenges: (Responses match in order to the suggestions in the following section).

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- The first challenge presented with QUEST were having presenters from only two functional areas of Student Affairs (Center for Sexuality and Gender Diversity and Leadership). It limited our range of topics, conversations, and activities as presenters, and overall was a long day as a host/presenter.
- The second challenge of KU QUEST was the U.S. presidential campaign occurring in the following week, which resulted in coordinating the assessment a week later than planned. Many students were disillusioned with the campaign results, as all participants are part of a marginalized community. We contacted the participants multiple times to coordinate the focus groups. The lack of response resulted in low participation in the assessment, and an interview-style method than focus group assessment.
- The third challenge of KU QUEST was the participants' desire for deeper discussion, added topics of intersectionality and advocacy, and more resources for LGBTQ+ students, on- and off-campus.
- The fourth challenge of KU QUEST was how we set up the tables in the space. It may be beneficial to consider a different space or different set up. Participants felt they didn't interact a lot besides with people sitting at their table's group.

Suggestions: (Responses match in order to the challenges in the above section.)

- We would suggest inviting a variety of speakers from other KU departments or community members, such as the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Emily Taylor Center, faculty, etc.) Additionally, we could add a panel of LGBTQ+ professionals as part of the schedule of activities, and have a Q&A around a specific topic.
- In the future, we would suggest conducting a survey at the end of the event. It may be easier to collect more assessment data, immediately after participants attended the event.
- Participants suggested adding more emphasis on intersectionality, campus climate, and transgender issues, through discussions, activities, or guest speakers. Other participants requested for more community building and having breakout sessions separately for undergraduate students and graduate students.
- We would consider hosting the event on a different month, day of the week, and length of time. Many leadership programs on KU's campus occur during the spring



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semester during a break or Saturday. It would also be beneficial to find a location with more space and moveable furniture (tables and chairs).