

# 2019-2020 Assessment Final Report

Department: KU Memorial Union

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## Union Programs Student Programs Outcome Training

### Introduction

#### Assessment Project Description

Union Programs aims to measure the tangible learning that occurred through participation with our Student Programs Outcome Training (SPOT). All leaders of KJHK, SUA, and The Big Event were asked to attend this twice a week workshop in which all leaders attend. The same class is offered in two sessions throughout the week to account for various schedules.

Each learning outcome of SPOT was taught over the course of a week or two throughout the year through presentations and interactive activities. The purpose of SPOT was to supplement the students' leadership and leave them with tangible skills aimed to supplement their academic learning and make them better candidates in the workforce. The assessment of SPOT sought to answer if our teachings and activities were in fact teaching our students these skills. The results were used throughout the year to change up our teaching methods and activities and to inform next year's program.

#### Service/Program Student Learning Outcome(s)

##### Social Justice (Union #5, SA #3)

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

- A. Analyze socially and culturally constructed identities based on race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, sexuality, class, age, ability, and religion and applying this knowledge to their own personal identities within that construct.

##### Community Building (SA #5)

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

- Apply knowledge of their roles in creating community to real-world situations in meetings, events, and social gatherings

##### Marketing (Union #2)

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

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- A. Create and maintain a brand by identifying a target community and applying modern marketing strategies accordingly.

### **Group/Team Dynamics (Union #4, SA #4)**

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

- A. Demonstrate an understanding of an in-depth knowledge of professional communication via emails, reports, conversations, meetings, in an office setting, and informalities.

### **Critical Thinking and Learning (Union #6, SA #2)**

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

- A. Relate in-class learning with out-of-class programs and activities and vice versa

### **Leadership Development (Union #3, SA #3)**

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

- A. Demonstrate realistic self-appraisal of their own strengths and weaknesses, seeking helpful resources to supplement areas of personal growth
- B. Discuss, identify, and utilize strategies for managing emotions effectively and staying calm under pressure
- C. Demonstrate an understanding of how to set up an organization and position for effective leadership transition.

### **Event Management (Union #2)**

Students participating in the SPOT program will be able to

- A. Apply gained knowledge to effectively plan and execute all event elements including working effectively with agents and vendors, writing and negotiate offer letters and contracts, and mitigating risk management strategies.

### **Population/Sample:**

The full population size was 47 students. Each week about 60% of the students participated. The population was comprised of leaders from the following:

- KJHK 90.7 FM--As the University of Kansas' student run radio station, KJHK provides KU students with a unique and personal student development experience centered in the communication of culture. The station cultivates a sense of community and belonging on the KU campus. Through the KJHK

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experience, KU students learn leadership and relational skills that serve them for a lifetime.

- 16 students leaders
- Student Union Activities— SUA was created by the KU Memorial Unions in 1938 as the Union student programming board. Their main mission statement is to provide a leadership development and entertainment piece for the Unions and University of Kansas campus.
  - 17 student leaders
- The Big Event--The Big Event connects the KU campus with the Lawrence community by recruiting thousands of student, faculty and staff volunteers to work at hundreds of local job sites during one annual day of service.
  - 14 student leaders

### **Assessment Method(s):**

- Monthly, students were given an assessment that included both qualitative and quantitative questions relating to the topics covered in the previous month. The quantitative questions are rated on an agree/disagree scale. Qualitative was an open ended questions which asked them to share the most impactful lesson of the previous month, which was be coded and scored. The plan was to execute assessment in-class, on paper worksheets. However after COVID19 sent us remote, the remaining assessment was done via SurveyMonkey.

### **Summary of Key Findings/Results**

Due to COVID19, as with many projects, our program was cut short and our student engagement decreased. Topics that were scheduled to be covered after spring break include: leadership transitions, marketing, basic event management, digital privacy, and relating in-class learning to out-of-class involvement. However we were able to make progress on several of the learning outcomes prior to that time. Key findings per learning outcome as follows:

#### **Social Justice (Union #5, SA #3)**

- Overall success: Medium. The presentation is always important and due to the different levels of experience within our leaders, this topic hits very differently with each leader. However last year's presentation was rated more highly than this year.

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- 23 respondents to assessment
- 95% agreed with the statement “As a result of this presentation I have reflected on my own identities and how they impact my leadership.”
- Of note for future improvement: Two students mentioned that social justice is important but didn’t feel this presentation added anything to their understanding of the topic. The presentation and curriculum for this that we use last year had higher remarks. From qualitative responses: “this presentation should have taken two weeks and relied more on the content used from the OMA and Emily Taylor.”

### **Community Building (SA #5)**

- The only topic of this learning outcome that was adequately addressed was running a meeting. Due to the overlap with the Group/Team Dynamics learning outcome, all results were placed there.

### **Marketing (Union #2)**

- Topic was cancelled due to COVID19.

### **Group/Team Dynamics (Union #4, SA #4)**

- Overall success: High. It seems the majority of our successful presentations related to group and team dynamics.
- 28 student leaders responded to survey
- Quantitative highlights
  - 71% agreed with the statement “As a result of this presentation I have reflected on my own identities and how they impact my leadership.
  - 100% felt that they understood the importance of creating a strong agenda.
  - 57% felt that they had the basic understanding of necessary components for a good meeting.
  - 93% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I can apply DISC results to the process of determining the best roles for individuals within a group or team.”
  - 100% agreed with the statement “This session helped me better understand the importance of calendar organization in working with others.”
  - 50% agreed that “This video showed me new information on how to respect differences in others.”

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- Indicates that the sessions in which we taught the information in a hands-on method was much more successful than the video we shared from the Meeting Professionals International.
- Qualitative highlights:
  - “This presentation helped me with specific skills to redirect a meeting if it’s not going in the way I wanted.”
  - “This presentation helped me reflect on how I approach the small tasks in the workplace.”
  - “This session gave me specific skills for managing a meeting like using the sandbox, rethinking the order of my agenda, and moving topics to the end of a meeting.”

### **Critical Thinking and Learning (Union #6, SA #2)**

- Topic cancelled due to COVID19.

### **Leadership Development (Union #3, SA #3)**

- Overall success: medium. Of the parts of this learning outcome that we covered, we had high success, however the outcome was written too broadly to be more successful. At winter break we found that our leaders were struggling with creating calendars and to do lists so we added this as a two week session. Although not originally in this learning outcome, it was highly successful.
- 30 student leaders responded to survey
- Quantitative highlights
  - 86% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I am able to apply the results of my DISC assessment to gain deeper understanding of my own areas of strength and areas needing increased focus.”
    - However 14% disagreed, our highest disagree rating of the whole program.

### **Event Management (Union #2)**

- Overall success: Medium due to cancellation of additional sessions on topic but success of sessions that did occur.
- 10 student leaders completed the assessment.
- Quantitative highlights

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- 100% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I have a basic understanding of how to negotiate with agents and vendors.”
- 90% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I have a basic understanding of contract execution.”

### Key findings:

- Our most successful outcome was group/team dynamics, followed by event management and social justice. Although not originally planned for the project, our work on calendar blocking and prioritizing within leadership development was successful.
- Overall we found that our students are learning from the program and have good takeaways as they implement the skills. Beyond just what is recorded in here, we can see growth happening in our students as they reflect on lessons learned while navigating the challenges that arise while in their leadership positions.

## Conclusions

### Impact of Assessment

- Due to continued successful outcomes, we plan to continue the SPOT program for an additional year. Although next year the program will need to be modified due to reduced funding and will reduce the number of topics we can execute. This year’s outcomes will allow us to further prioritize which topics we cover next year in the reduced timeframe. Lastly, this year’s feedback further reinforces that a direct conversation with the students in an interactive format results in the highest learning.
- If continued next year, the leadership development learning outcome needs to be rewritten to be less broad and discuss more specific skills tailored to our students.
- The most successful learning outcomes were those that addressed topics they really are not learning elsewhere such as agendas, meetings, networking, etc.

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## **Lessons Learned**

- Our process for gathering the assessment still is not clean enough and we did not get as much qualitative feedback this year. Possible modification next year would be to provide a quick assessment at the end of each session rather than running the risk of changing schedules or apathy. A previously suggested method would be to use a notecard at the end of the session and have each participant write something they learned.