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Influence of Academically Based Living-Learning Communities on Men’s Awareness of and Appreciation for Diversity

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THIS STUDY EXAMINED the influence of academically based living-learning programs on men’s awareness of and appreciation for diversity. Findings include statistically significant and practical differences between student characteristics and their pre-college attitude towards diversity. Living on campus for one year revealed no significant differences for men. Discussion includes the importance of increasing the numbers of diverse students and creating environments that support diversity awareness and appreciation.

The focus on campus diversity initiatives is central to the promotion of positive attitudes towards difference, which often leads to higher levels of student success and enhanced learning (Longerbeam & Sedlacek, 2006). Living-learning communities (LLCs) have been utilized to introduce diversity and are touted as an innovative approach to reinvigorating undergraduate education (Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews, & Smith, 1990; Laufgraben & Shapiro, 2004) by promoting student learning and intellectual development (Pike, 1999). LLC students tend to be more open to differences due to increased sociocultural development as a result of their program participation (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003; Pike, 2002). Students living with a diverse peer group in LLCs are more likely to appreciate differences and foster more positive attitudes towards other students than are traditional residence hall students (Longerbeam & Sedlacek, 2006).

Studies on LLCs tend to explore their influence on students’ academics and civic engagement, yet few studies have explored the influence of academically based LLC environments on students’ appreciation of and attitude towards differences, and few studies were found that specifically examined the influence of LLCs on men (Jessup-Anger, Johnson, & Wawrzynski, 2012). Male college students are often under-studied in higher education because they are perceived to be a traditionally privileged group (Laker & Davis, 2011), despite the fact that women currently outpace men in areas of persistence, enrollment, and participation in the college (Kellom, 2004; Sax, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2009). If posi-
tive attitudes toward diversity lead to student success and LLCs reinvigorate student learning, how do different living environments influence men's awareness of and appreciation for diversity? Our research question was as follows: Do male students report different levels of awareness of and appreciation for diversity in significant ways? Specifically, are there differences between what male students in academically based LLCs and what those in traditional residence halls report?

THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY ON COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

The college environment influences various outcomes related to student development (Astin, 1993). Astin's input-environment-outcome (I-E-O) model (Astin, 2002) is an appropriate framework for assessing student learning because it examines the effects of the environment on outcomes while considering student characteristics as the input variable (Astin, 2002). The input and outcome of student engagement are measured at two different points in time, with an emphasis on the influence of the surrounding environment. We used male students' awareness of and appreciation for diversity in college as the input characteristics.

The outcome in the model is the goal or objective of a program or initiative. The outcomes in the current study included student expectations and student levels of Universal-Diverse Orientation (UDO), which measures students' awareness of and appreciation for diversity and their acceptance or rejection of those who are similar to or different from them (Miville et al., 1999). The environment is regarded as any external program that may influence student outcomes, since it includes aspects that can be directly controlled. We used LLCs as the environment in Astin's (2002) model.

While the structure of the environment is an important influence on student development, the actual opportunities for cross-racial interactions through programs and informal interactions within LLCs are influential factors on students' personal and sociocultural development. Experiencing a diverse college campus has direct benefits for all students in their transition to college, educational outcomes, retention, and overall college satisfaction (Chang, 1996). Frequent interaction with diverse college peers has effects on students' abilities to engage in critical thinking, problem solving, and developing skills in intergroup relations and understanding (Chang, Denson, Saenz, & Misa, 2006; Hurtado, 1997; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999).
The diversity of the student body on campus positively influences the climate and interactions amongst students (Hurtado et al., 1999). Rather than focusing on a quantity of diverse students, it is important to assess students’ attitudes toward diversity to better understand their perception of the changing demographics on college and university campuses (Pike & Kuh, 2006). Because UDO measures attitudes, we used it to assess students’ awareness of and appreciation for diversity.

UDO is based on factors such as race, gender, and sexual orientation (Miville et al., 1999) and evaluates students’ attitudes of awareness and acceptance of others, focusing on the belief that “the shared experience of being human results in a sense of connectedness with people and is associated with a plurality or diversity of interactions with others” (Miville et al., 1999, p. 292). Studies show a positive correlation between students’ UDO and diversity orientation (Fuertes, Sedlacek, Roger, & Mohr, 2000; Miville et al., 1999), and students with a higher UDO tend to be more open to diversity issues, such as religious tolerance and meeting and being at ease with people from diverse backgrounds, (Fuertes, Sedlacek, et al., 2000). In the current study, men’s UDO and level of engagement served as the intended outcome of participating in LLCs, or the environment within Astin’s (2002) I-E-O model.

The purpose of the current study was to examine men’s awareness of and appreciation for diversity as outcomes within their living environments. We sought to better understand the differences in men’s appreciation for diversity by surveying men living in traditional residence halls and those living in LLCs. We used Astin’s (2002) I-E-O model to assess the influence of living-learning communities on male students’ levels of diversity appreciation, using UDO as the predictor of attitudes towards diversity orientation.

**METHOD**

**Participants**

Participants in this study were drawn from a larger sample of 232 first-year residential students who completed two online surveys (one measuring students’ expectations of college in the fall and a follow-up survey measuring experiences at the end of the spring). Of those completing the surveys, 55 participants identified as men. Of those, 83.6% (n = 46) identified as White; 3.6% (n = 2) as Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander; 1.8% (n = 1) as Hispanic/Latino; 5.5% (n = 3) as African American/Black; and 5.5% (n = 3) did not identify their race/ethnicity. Of the men who completed the surveys, 18.2% (n = 10) resided in academically based LLCs. The racial/ethnic breakdown of men in LLCs was 90% (n = 9) White and 10% (n = 1) African American/Black.

**Instruments**

As a part of a much larger survey administration, all first-year students living in the residence halls were contacted via email by the residence life staff and asked to complete the web-based First-Time Freshman Survey (FTF) administered during the fall 2005 semester. Then, in spring 2006 all LLC students were contacted via email to complete the web-based Residence Hall Environment Survey (RHES). Confidentiality was assured for survey participants.

**First-Time Freshman Survey.** The FTF is a 62-item questionnaire to assess items related to expectations toward academic
behaviors, attitudes, and concerns about the university, goals and outcomes of college, institutional commitment, and support systems. The FTF was developed by a team of researchers who were interested in better understanding the first-year experience for students at the university. Each statement requires a response on a Likert-type scale (e.g., 1 = not a chance to 5 = a sure thing. Of the 62 items, 6 were related to diversity appreciation and awareness and were used in this study. Prior attitudes toward diversity were established by responses to the following question:

What is the likelihood that you will do or experience the following in the upcoming semester?
- Seek out opportunities to learn about different cultures or lifestyles
- Have experiences that prompt you to reconsider your views, values, or beliefs
- Learn more about the life experiences of people with different backgrounds
- Have a diverse (race, sexual orientation, background, religion, culture, etc.) social group
- Become more aware of your personal prejudices and stereotypes towards others
- See others being treated differently because of their backgrounds

Residence Hall Environment Survey. The RHES is a 76-item questionnaire to assess outcomes associated with the LLCs, residence hall environment, interpersonal interactions with peers and faculty, and the integration of academics within the living environment. The RHES also has Likert-type responses to statements and was administered to all LLC students.

Fifteen statements based on the short form of the Miville-Guzman Universality Diversity Scale (Fuertes, Miville, Mohr, & Gretchen, 2000; Miville et al., 1999) were included in the RHES.

- I would like to join an organization that emphasizes getting to know people who are different from me.
- I would like to go to dances that feature music from other countries.
- I often listen to music of other cultures.
- I am interested in learning about the many cultures that exist in this world.
- I attend events where I might get to know people from different backgrounds (racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual orientation).
- Persons with disabilities can teach me things I could not learn elsewhere.
- I can best understand someone after I get to know how he/she is both similar to and different from me.
- Knowing how a person differs from me greatly enhances our friendship.
- In getting to know someone, I like knowing both how he/she differs from me and is similar to me.
- Knowing about the different experiences of other people helps me understand my own problems better.
- Getting to know someone who is different from me (someone of another race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation) is generally an uncomfortable experience for me.
- I am only at ease with people who are like me (not of a different race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation).
- It is really hard for me to feel close to a person who is different from me (someone of a different race, ethnicity, religion, or
It is very important that a friend agrees with me on most issues.

- I often feel irritated by persons who are different from me (race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation).

(Scores from these questions were reverse coded.)

This scale provides a global measure of UDO within three domains: (a) relativistic appreciation of oneself and others, (b) seeking a diversity of contact with others, and (c) a sense of connection with the larger society or individuals (Miville et al., 1999). The Relativistic Appreciation subscale focuses on the cognitive acceptance of the similarities and differences between people. The Diversity of Contact subscale tests previous and intended behaviors related to interpersonal contact with people of different backgrounds. The Comfort with Differences subscale tests students’ comfort level with diverse people. The three subscales make up the Miville-Guzman scale, which evaluates participants’ orientation towards diverse people, with high levels of UDO typically demonstrating high identity development and cultural awareness (Singley & Sedlacek, 2004).

The internal consistencies of the Miville-Guzman scale in the current study, using Cronbach’s alpha, were .93 for Relativistic Appreciation, .81 for Diversity of Contact, and .83 for Comfort with Differences. Cronbach’s alphas are respectable, with a reliability of .70 or higher (DeVellis, 2003). The reliability measures of the Comfort with Differences and Diversity of Contact subscales are consistent with the alphas of other studies (Longerbeam & Sedlacek, 2006); the Cronbach’s alpha for our Relativistic Appreciation scale was higher than those in previous studies.

A variety of means established the validity of the surveys. Content validity was established by administrators who were knowledgeable and well versed in the first-year student and LLC literature. In addition, the content of the surveys was cross-referenced with the Miville-Guzman scale (Miville et al., 1999). Construct validity was tested through intercorrelations on survey item scores. In an intercorrelation of all items, the results were moderately correlated as expected. For example, “Have conversations with faculty members outside of the classroom” moderately correlated (.62) with “Have significant out-of-class conversations with faculty members.”

Both the FTF and RHES surveys contain self-report data. Though controversy surrounds the validity of self-report data (Gonyea, 2005; Pace, 1985; Pike, 1995), the data are valid when five criteria are met: requested information is known to the respondents, questions are phrased clearly and unambiguously, questions refer to recent activities, the questions merit a serious response by the respondents, and answering the questions does not embarrass or threaten the respondents (Bradburn & Sudman, 1988; Converse & Presser, 1989; Gonyea, 2005; Pace, 1985; Pike, 1995). Both the FTF and RHES surveys meet these criteria.

Statistical Methods

The data analyses proceeded in several stages. First, we employed simple descriptive statistics, frequencies, and correlations with the variables to understand and explore the relationships of the variables and found that no assumptions were violated. The second stage
included creating dependent variables from each of the surveys. The six diversity-related questions from the FTF were combined into one variable to represent first-year student participants’ attitudes towards diversity prior to living on campus. The scores were combined and grouped into two equal categories for propensity towards diversity: low and high. The total scores for first-year participants could range from 0 to 12. The range of scores for low was 0 to 9 and for high was 10 to 12 after running frequencies.

The 15 Miville-Guzman scale statements on the RHES survey were combined into one variable to represent participants’ overall awareness of and appreciation for diversity after one year of living on campus. The total scores for first-year male participants ranged from 0 to 75 and were divided into two groups with categories of low and high scores. The range of the scores for low was 0 to 56 and for high was 57 to 75.

The third stage of our analyses included running several chi-square tests of significance for statistical comparisons. Chi-square tests are appropriate since we explored the relationships between living environments and pre- and post-measures for awareness of and appreciation for diversity. One chi-square test consisted of exploring the relationship between participants’ residential environments and their expectations for diverse interactions prior to attending the university. Another chi-square test explored the relationship between residential environments and participants’ total UDO score after living on campus for one year. The fourth stage of our analyses included running chi-square tests for each of the three Miville-Guzman subscales. The subscales were explored along with the first-year student participants’ residential environments. The final N in each of the three Miville-Guzman subscales range from 53 to 55 participants due to a few missing cases.

RESULTS

Prior Attitudes to Diversity

The chi-square tests for independence in our analyses revealed significant and practical differences between student characteristics and the prior attitudes towards diversity. Table I represents the statistically significant prior attitudes towards diversity and the phi co-efficient effect sizes. Chi-square tests were conducted to explore male first-year student participants’ attitudes towards diversity prior to their on-campus living experiences, $X^2 (1, N = 53) = 5.5, p > .05, \phi = .38$. Of the LLC students, the men were divided evenly between having low (9.4%, $n = 5$) and high scores (9.4%, $n = 5$). More students in traditional residence halls reported their expected attitudes toward diversity with low scores (71.7%, $n = 38$) as compared to high scores (9.4%, $n = 5$). All participants reported at least a medium to high prior attitudes score, with the lowest score at 6.

The results demonstrate a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988) and indicate that a greater proportion of first-year men living in academically based LLCs reported higher prior attitudes scale scores (see Table 1). A greater proportion of traditional residence hall first-year men reported lower scale scores. These results may indicate that men in LLCs anticipate being more open and exposed to diversity experiences when living on campus.

Universal-Diverse Orientation

Another chi-square test explored first-year
student participants’ UDO levels after living on campus their first year (see Table 2). This chi-square test revealed neither statistical nor practical significance of the relationship between student characteristics and men’s appreciation for diversity, \( X^2 (1, N = 53) = .10, p > .05 \). Men living in academically based LLCs reported more lower scores (11.3%, \( n = 6 \)) than higher scores (7.5%, \( n = 4 \)), which is a slight shift from the even distribution of scores before living on campus. The majority of students in non-LLCs reported low UDO scores (64.2%, \( n = 34 \)). Of the total participants (\( N = 53 \)) evaluated in this chi-square test, only 17% (\( n = 9 \)) reported high scores. The lowest reported UDO score was 37.

The results indicated no significant differences between UDO and men’s living environments, which suggests that the men’s living environments, in both LLCs and traditional residence halls, have little or no influence on men’s awareness of and appreciation for diversity after living on campus after one year.

We explored the UDO variable by running chi-square tests for each of the three individual UDO constructs and found no statistically significant differences amongst the participants in the academically based LLCs or the traditional residence halls.

Chi-square tests explored the Diversity of Contact construct, \( X^2 (1, N = 53) = 1.10, p > .05 \).
.05. Tests resulted in a lower percentage of men in academically based LLCs reporting low scores (12.7%; n = 7) than men in traditional residence halls (72.7%; n = 40). Men in traditional residence halls have a higher percentage of high scores (9.1%; n = 5) than those in LLCs (5.5%; n = 3) (see Table 3).

The Relativistic Appreciation scores for first-year men in LLCs were found through a chi-square test, $X^2 (1, N = 53) = .73, p > .05$. The results were that 11.3% (n = 6) reported low scores and 7.5% (n = 4) reported high scores. A higher percentage of first-year men in traditional residence halls reported low scores (64.2%; n = 34) than high scores (17%; n = 9). Finally, a chi-square test was run for the Comfort with Differences construct, $X^2 (1, N = 55) = .013, p > .05$, and men in LLCs reported a higher percentage of scores in the low range (12.7%; n = 7) with 5.5% (n = 3) in the high range. First-year men in traditional residence halls reported higher numbers in the low range for Comfort with Differences (63.6%; n = 35) than in the high range (18.2%; n = 10).

### DISCUSSION

The results of the two surveys indicate that, although higher gains in men's awareness of and appreciation for diversity after living in an academically based LLC are reported, these findings are not statistically significant when compared with those for men living in traditional residence halls. The scores from pre-college expectations to post-residential experiences for men in academically based LLCs
indicate that awareness of and appreciation for diversity diminish after living on campus. Also, men in traditional residence halls report a slightly higher diversity score after living on campus for one year. The difference in score is minimal between the two chi-square tests. For example, the difference for men in LLCs amounts to only one participant, while that for men in traditional residence halls amounts to only four participants.

Men in traditional residence halls are likely to have lower scores on all these tests, including the three individual UDO constructs, yet men in traditional residence halls who report high levels are not that different from men in academically based LLCs. We found no significant difference between the two groups of participants after they had lived for a year in one of the two environments. The results necessitate some consideration for why male college students indicate lower awareness of and appreciation for diversity after living on campus for one year.

One reason for this could be the lack of structural diversity (i.e., the quantity of diverse students) within the residence halls, which may affect the male participants’ diversity levels. The overall results from men in LLCs and those in traditional residence halls are not surprising when looking at the demographics of the participants in this study. The dearth of students of color in LLCs may affect students’ UDO levels in these environments. The possible influence of a greater mass of students of color is consistent with results from previous studies finding that honors LLCs typically had a poor representation of students of color (Soldner, McCarron, & Inkelas, 2007; Wawrzynski, Jensen, & Stolz, 2012). These results suggest that participation in honors LLCs negatively related to diversity appreciation when compared to the experience of students in traditional residential facilities. Although the LLCs in our study were not all honors-based, comparison with previous studies of honors LLCs could still be valid because of the similarities in program and staffing structures.

Opportunities for interactions with diverse peers having different views may be challenging due to the demography of most LLCs, which—particularly those affiliated with an honors program—tend to be fairly homogenous with mostly middle-class, White students (except of course those found at historically Black universities, colleges, and community colleges) (Hamilton, 2004; Soldner et al., 2007). Although a high number of students of color cannot automatically foster more interaction between diverse student groups, there is a correlation between structural diversity and interactions amongst diverse groups of students (Pike & Kuh, 2006). Specifically, the more heterogeneous the student population, the more likely students will experience contact with diverse people. The results of Pike and Kuh’s (2006) study indicate a strong relationship between structural diversity and informal interactions, which in turn affects students’ intellectual and personal development as it relates to diversity appreciation.

Although structural diversity can increase student interaction, it cannot be the sole solution for increasing the diversity appreciation amongst residential students. Institutions of higher education must intentionally create residential programs that promote appreciation of and comfort with diverse student populations.
IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our findings offer important contributions to the study of men’s awareness of and appreciation for diversity in academically based LLCs. Though LLCs are often touted as a solution for increasing students’ appreciation of differences and positive attitudes towards others, other implications have been revealed in our study, which raises the following questions: What are the implications of men in academically based LLCs indicating a lower awareness of and appreciation for diversity after living on campus for a year? What are the implications of men in traditional residence halls reporting a slightly higher diversity score after living on campus for one year? Do academically based LLCs influence a decrease in diversity awareness due to the environment, or do traditional residence hall environments foster an increase in diversity awareness in men? Several implications should be considered when thinking about increasing structural diversity in addition to creating environments that promote an awareness of and appreciation for diversity in both academically based LLCs and traditional residence halls.

First, through continuous assessment student affairs professionals must be more intentional about the environments created in LLCs. Astin's (2002) I-E-O model asserts the importance of the influence of the surrounding environment for student assessment. The outcomes of student engagement and development are dependent on the impact of the surrounding environment; thus, it is important to intentionally create a residential environment that promotes an awareness of and an appreciation for diversity while continuously assessing the outcomes of student engagement and development. A first step includes examining structural and programmatic differences between traditional residence halls and LLCs. Despite LLCs being touted as settings that increase diversity awareness, in this study the male participants living in traditional residence halls had a slightly higher diversity score. By assessing the two residential environments, student affairs professionals have a better sense of practices and procedures that are more effective in promoting increased awareness of and appreciation for diversity.

Second, it cannot be assumed that increased numbers of students of color will necessarily increase students’ UDO levels. However, there may be benefits to having a greater mass of students of color in LLCs. Previous studies have demonstrated that honors LLCs tend to have low numbers of students of color (Soldner et al., 2007; Wawrzynski et al., 2012); increasing the structural diversity could potentially have an impact on men’s diversity appreciation in LLCs. However, student affairs professionals cannot be dependent on merely increasing structural diversity numbers to affect appreciation and awareness. At the same time, LLCs must be intentional about increasing diversity awareness in residents through collaborative learning environments that promote interaction amongst various diverse student groups. These efforts can be achieved by creating a plan for implementing changes through setting goals and planning programmatic activities with the involvement of faculty and staff (Hurtado et al., 1999). This action plan should go beyond the issue of structural diversity and address the characteristics that shape the residential
experience for students. A good start could be for student affairs professionals to re-evaluate current programmatic practices and consider incorporating different measures in order to increase the diversity programs and interactions in LLCs. Benchmarking with other institutions with well-established diversity programming in residential communities could be a beneficial way to determine transferable good practices in this area.

Third, in order to benefit all students, colleges and universities must facilitate cross-cultural interaction and ongoing discussions of diversity both in and out of the classroom. Otherwise, students may experience less overall fulfillment in college even if there is a large diverse population on campus (Chang, 1996). In order to minimize tension and competition amongst the diversity of students, colleges and universities must intentionally create opportunities for positive cross-cultural communication and intergroup dialogue (Quaye, 2012; Zuniga, Nagda, & Sevig, 2002). Peer interactions have the greatest influence on the student experience (Astin, 1993); thus, it is crucial for campuses to provide the proper environments that will lead to positive relationships through improved quality of contact amongst these diverse groups, whether through formal structures such as facilitated intergroup dialogues (Quaye, 2012; Zuniga et al., 2002) or informal processes in social interactions (Chang et al., 2006). This need for meaningful peer interaction also includes the need for well-trained resident assistants and other student leaders who are committed to creating cross-cultural interactions with all of their residents.

Finally, programmatic initiatives as well as diversity training for residential professional and student staff can be implemented in order to increase dialogue and interaction amongst students. Because residential staff are influential through their daily interactions and program planning for residents, it is imperative that professional and student staff are trained to facilitate diversity dialogue and interactions amongst all residents. Residential staff must be comfortable with and understand their roles as facilitators in order to best support conversations and interaction amongst diverse students (Quaye, 2012). Suggestions for training include taking advantage of the knowledge base that already exists on campus, such as multicultural affairs offices, through collaborative training and program-
Overall, our results suggest the need for further research on the influence of academically based LLCs on men’s diversity awareness. Our study was focused on the responses of men without consideration of their racial and ethnic backgrounds, which prevented us from surveying the individual experiences of students of color and White students. Further research should explore the impact that living-learning communities have on men of color and White men in terms of their comfort with and appreciation for diverse people.

Further research is also needed to better understand the longitudinal effects of LLCs for men, specifically the possible differences between UDO levels for first-year, sophomore, junior, and senior students. Although the current study is focused on the first-year experience of men, we realize there would be benefit to studying the longitudinal benefits of participating in LLCs on men’s UDO levels.

LIMITATIONS

As studies have limitations that must be noted, we note four here. First, the participants represent the experiences and expectations of students at one institution. Second, only first-year students were included; thus, this study does not represent the possible growth in diversity appreciation in LLCs beyond the first year. Third, a low number of men living in LLCs (n = 10) responded to the survey. Finally, much like other studies (Soldner et al., 2007), we were unable to explore the influence of race because of the small number of students of color who are in LLCs. Despite these limitations, we believe that the results are noteworthy as they establish a critical foundation for future research in men’s development in terms of appreciating diversity within a residential context.

CONCLUSION

Although LLCs have been created in recent years in an effort to promote student learning and intellectual development, more effort must be made to assist men in fostering a more positive attitude towards others and increasing their appreciation for differences, which will lead to increased intellectual development and student learning. Existing residential life studies often cite a positive relationship between LLCs and students’ appreciation for diversity; however, our study illustrates the disparity between academically based LLCs and men’s diversity awareness scores. These findings demonstrate the importance of intentionally creating learning environments for men that will promote diversity appreciation and awareness as outcomes.
REFERENCES


Discussion Questions

1. Other than the noted limitations to this study, how might you explain that men in academically based LLCs reported an appreciation for and awareness of diversity that was not significantly different than that of men living in traditional residence halls?

2. The results of this study are perhaps not surprising if you consider that, without a specific learning outcome directed at appreciation for and awareness of diversity, the experience of students in both LLCs and traditional residence halls might in fact be similar. Write a learning outcome aimed at increasing appreciation for and awareness of diversity and describe at least one action that residence hall staff could take to support this learning outcome.

3. What experiences do you have with diversity programming in the residence halls? What worked? What failed? What evidence do you have that suggested success/failure?

4. Consider the following living-learning communities and describe one programmatic initiative that would support greater appreciation for and awareness of diversity while also supporting the theme or purpose of the LLC; presume the communities are relatively homogeneous in terms of race and culture:
   a. Engineering LLC—Intended for students in the pre-engineering and engineering curriculum
   b. Sustainability LLC—Intended for students from all academic disciplines who are interested in environmental and economic sustainability
   c. Substance-Free LLC—Intended for students who are committed to a lifestyle free of the use of alcohol and other drugs

5. The authors use the concept of “structured diversity” (i.e., quantity of diverse students on a floor/hall) as a means of facilitating an appreciation for diversity. Do you agree with this proposition? Should residence life/housing departments intentionally assign students (integration) to floors/halls by demographics (diversity) in order to intentionally create diverse communities and hence greater appreciation for diversity?

6. What impact does the “I” in Astin’s I-E-O model have on students’ appreciation for diversity?

7. Do you believe that RAs have the developmental capacity and readiness to effectively facilitate positive and substantive cross-cultural dialogue? What are the key factors in whether they do or do not have this ability?

Discussion questions developed by
Diane “Daisy” Waryold, Appalachian State University, and Pam Schreiber, University of Washington