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The Cultural Ideas Exchange Program Model

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“The primary objective of Cultural Ideas Exchange Program or CIEP is to provide informative insight and reports on those issues and events that ultimately affect the lives and welfare of minority and ethnic student populations.”

Primary Objective

Historically, the "ideas" to include opinions and societal contributions of African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans, as well as other diverse cultural groups have often been underrepresented in the North American social and political scheme. The Cultural Ideas Exchange Program or CIEP is based on global communication and has been developed in an effort to:

- Provide informative insight and reports on those issues and events that ultimately affect the lives and welfare of minority and ethnic student populations.
- Promote the understanding of those complexities and issues inherent in the recruitment, education and retention of minority students.
- Offer a continuous open literary and verbal forum where students, faculty, staff, administrators and the general populations can share their ideas and experiences.
- Research, assess and monitor the implications of lifestyle values to include socioeconomic, political and those internal and external elements that affect these diverse groups.
- Insure that all students are participants in this initiative to explore culture on a macro level.
- Heighten cultural awareness on campus by confronting and resolving issues that tend to polarize students.

A product of the CIEP model will be the research, development and dissemination of statistical data from a local, national and international perspective to university students as well as other organizational and educational institutions that maintain contact with ethnic and minority populations. This data will be analyzed, evaluated and used for the development of future programs or initiatives to improve communications across cultural groups. Finally, CIEP will assist the collective university demographic group and commercial industry in understanding the concerns, and meeting the needs of minority populations.

Program Overview

The CIEP model is based on those internal and external systems which are in effect and operating in the everyday lives of the students. The internal systems represent all organizational, protocol, membership, functions and mandates of the university system. The external systems represent all societal function or the external environment in operation outside the university.

Strategically, the model is complex and attempts to strike a balance between a continual distribution of information among universities, media groups, industry, government—local, national and international; and the professional as well as educational development of student groups at all levels of education. Major components of the CIEP model will also help to redefine university organizational goals and values.

University Structure

The internal university structure consists of five distinct groups which all play a specific role in academia. Each of these groups has interest in the outcome of certain cultural related issues or events. The student body is positioned at the core of this model with Committee and Organizations, Graduate Studies and Research, Department and Colleges, and finally, the Chancellor and Board of Regents as a hierarchical system. A precept of this model is that each discussion or panel would be regularly initiated by the Student body, Committees and Organizations, Graduate Studies and Research, and Department and Colleges. An open line of communication and feedback would exist between each one of these groups on those policies, programs and other initiatives carried out by the university in a proactive attempt to address any concerns of the student.

It would be ideal for Committees and Organizations to build a cooperative effort with CIEP. Programs like Math Engineering Science Aptitude (M.E.S.A.), International Student Organization (ISO), Student Organizations and Leadership Development (S.O.L.D.), or African People's Union could easily be reconstructed into or work in conjunction to CIEP.

Member Universities

University students will be the primary consumers of CIEP services. This will include overseas educational entities in addition to secondary school systems. CIEP will join the current global movement by maintaining contact with and including the journal entries experiences of students and general populations located in Canadian, European Union, African and South East Asian countries.

The Student Body is to actively report and produce articles on any issue or situation that affect the student. Ideally, the CIEP model will welcome and encourage experiential data and open creative thought processes. Campus climate, course offerings, counseling, financial aid, and admissions requirements all provide an example of what might be the topic of some of these discussions. Volunteer activities in the form of mentoring and information technology computer related training programs for *K-12* age students could also be implemented within the Student Body segment.

CIEP in Action

The major goal of CIEP will be to raise the social and cultural awareness in relation to commercial industry, news organizations and other media sources, and finally government. The process of monitoring the mass media communications under advertising and marketing practices of commercial industry will be an ongoing task for CIEP.

Industry and other commercial organizations will benefit from contributing to the CIEP model. A gain of knowledge and insight on ethnic populations extracted from surveys conducted by university students will undoubtedly assist industry in recognizing the needs of diverse target markets and other forecasting measures. CIEP will keep students informed of industry developments ranging from a company's decision to carry a new line of ethnic products, to employment practices of major corporations also will be part of this responsibility. Student feedback and results from public opinion polls will help to develop ways to adequately represent the ethnic marketing base. In reference to government, CIEP also will monitor legislature, as well as keep students informed of laws that will have impact on their lives.