



The University of Chicago
Office of Multicultural Student Affairs
2007-2008 Highlights



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Mission Statement

The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA) supports the academic success of students of color at the University of Chicago and works to build an inclusive campus community. OMSA's programs focus on enriching students' experiences and encouraging cross-cultural dialogue on campus. OMSA serves and advocates for all African American, Asian American, Latina/o, and Native American students who attend the College, Graduate divisions, and Professional Schools.

OMSA executes its mission in collaboration with other departments within the University of Chicago. All students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the University are welcome to partner with OMSA in advancing its efforts to support students of color.

2007-2008 Accomplishments

The 2007-2008 academic year marked the third year of reorganization for the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs.

5710 South Woodlawn

GOAL – Develop and implement a plan to operate the building as a vibrant new student diversity center with a range of opportunities to enrich student life.

5710 South Woodlawn celebrated its Grand Opening on February 26, 2008. Since opening its doors unofficially in January 2008, 5710 has seen 12 RSOs hold regular weekly meetings, over 20 RSOs have hosted events, 11 university departments/units have held events, and 5 institutional work groups/committees meet regularly at 5710. It is estimated that nearly 2,700 visits to 5710 have been made by students, faculty and staff since January. On average, 25 events or meetings are scheduled each week at 5710, with a total of 250 events and/or meetings held since January.

Re-conceptualize “Multicultural/Minority”

GOAL – Create effective programming that reflects the complexities of the Student of Color (SOC) community and the diverse (multifaceted) layers/identities of students (i.e. commuter, LGBTQ, bi-racial & multiracial students)

OMSA implemented a new approach to diversity programming which offered multifaceted and engaging programs to students, staff, and faculty. With a particular emphasis on intersectionalities, much programming in 2007-2008 incorporated race and at least one other identity marker including, but not limited to, gender, religion, and sexuality. Students were able to better see themselves reflected in programs either through the conversation topics, documentaries screened, and/or shows watched.

Academic

GOAL – Increase academic and career enrichment opportunities in order to support and/or enhance academic success of SOC (i.e. Women’s Board project, website resources).

In the 07-08 academic year, OMSA significantly increased academic and career enrichment opportunities to support the success of students of color. Through the support of the Women's Board of the University of Chicago, OMSA awarded 13 college and graduate students grants to participate in an on-site, GRE course. The support of external donors and an endowment fund allowed the office to award 88 student grants that supported student research, conference attendance, textbooks, computers and study abroad. Grants ranged in amount from \$26 to \$3,500. OMSA's base of external support continued to grow in 2007-2008 with a confirmed \$44,500 in renewed pledges from alumni donors for the 2008-2009 year. OMSA's 2008-2009 alumni pledges range in amount from \$2,500 to \$33,000.

The opening of 5710 has afforded OMSA more space to market and inform students of academic & career opportunities. Along with the retooling of OMSA's eNewsletter, which is now distributed on a weekly basis instead of biweekly, the office also advertises career opportunities on-site through bulletin boards & information binders. Each of these changes has increased OMSA's opportunity to communicate with students. In the area of academic programming, campus-wide events that OMSA co-sponsors saw an increase in participation. The second annual internship fair had a 60% increase in student attendance as well as an increase in internship sites from 6 to 11 sites and Diversity in the Workplace grew in both student and alumni participation. Finally, the office spearheaded two new academic initiatives for 2007-2008; (1) due to the large number of students of color who commute, OMSA began advising the commuter student program (2) to increase recruitment and community outreach, the office began collaborating with the Collegiate Scholars Program by hosting college transition panels and inviting the CSP students to participate in select OMSA events.

Institutional Awareness/Campus Climate

GOAL – Understand issues that impact retention for SOC in order to increase institutional awareness and support an inclusive campus environment.

In an effort to continue to understand issues that impact retention for SOC in order to increase institutional awareness and support an inclusive campus environment OMSA tracked 26 campus climate incidents brought to its attention including data on location, department or division of student, follow-up response and method of reporting. OMSA also led the committee that created, trained, launched and will coordinate the University of Chicago's first Bias Response Team. Additionally, OMSA continues to pilot a business objects reporting system with the Registrars office in order to access data on retention, grades, graduation, etc to enhance OMSA's services and resources, as well as analyze data and create reports.

OMSA Student Allocation Board

The OMSA Student Allocation Board was created in January of 2006 to provide support to programming efforts by the University's cultural Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs) that are consistent with the mission of OMSA. The Student Allocation Board, composed of student leaders nominated by their peers, reviews proposals submitted for OMSA funding. Funds for accepted proposals are drawn from the OMSA budget.

Student Allocation Board members for 2007-2008 were:

Sandra Carvagal-Rago (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan), Tsion Gurmu (African and Caribbean Student Association), Jeffrey Lui (Chinese Undergraduate Student Association), Eric Maldonado (Puerto Rican Student Association), Luis Martinez (Organization of Latin American Students), Abimbola Oladokun (Organization of Black Students), Jessica Pan (PanAsia), Huileng Tan (Singaporean

and Malaysian Student Union), Zulma Terrones (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan), Jasmine Torres (Organization of Latin American Students)

Student organizations that received allocations in 2007-2008 were:

African and Caribbean Students Association (ACSA) for ACSA Undergraduate Panel
African and Caribbean Students Association (ACSA) for Annual Cultural Show
Gingarte Capoeira for "5th Annual Women's Encounter"
Minority Graduate Student Association (MGSA) for "Eyes on the Mosaic"
Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan (MEChA), et al for "Breaking Ground"
Muslim Student Association (MSA) for "Progress Theatre Event"
Organization of Black Students (OBS) for Annual Cultural Show "iRep"
Organization of Black Students (OBS) for OBS Black Light Release Party
Organization of Black Students (OBS) for OBS Legacy Dinner
Partnership for the Advancement of Refugee Rights (PARR) for PARR Opening Week Series
Puerto Rican Student Association (PRSA) for "Noche de Galeria"
Samahan for Annual Cultural Show
The Singaporean and Malaysian Students' Union (SAMSU) for "Citylights Chicago 2008"

OMSA Student Advisory Board

The OMSA Student Advisory Board was created in January of 2006 to 1) inform the director of OMSA and the university administration of the needs, problems, and issues currently facing students of color, and 2) to advise OMSA regarding areas of programming currently being offered. The OMSA Student Advisory Board meets as a group with the director of OMSA once every two weeks.

Student Advisory Board members for 2007-2008 were:

Manuel Barragán Arenas, Kumneger (Kim) Emiru, Julia Guan, Paola N. Hernandez, Angel Ochoa, Jr., Cela Sutton, Charles E. Umunna, Rebecca Yemin Shi

Staff Interactions with Students

The nature of each OMSA interaction is captured under one of ten categories. The nature-of-interaction categories are: academic, campus climate, career, financial, personal, RSO advising, and other.

Financial: 34%
Academic: 30%
Personal: 15%
RSO Advising: 12%
Career: 4%
Other: 4%
Campus Climate: 2%

New Initiatives

Programming, Community-Building, and Academic

5710 Estimated Attendance: Grand Opening – 350, To Date – 2,700
5710 opened in February 2008, and has grown tremendously. It is now a vibrant place for students to come together and build community. On an average week there are 25 scheduled programs ranging from weekly meetings, to study breaks, to panels and receptions. Students visit for these programs and to study, relax and hang out with friends. As more people learn about the welcoming environment, we anticipate more and more visitors to this space.

Caras de América Estimated Attendance 450
Following in the tradition of Latina/o Heritage Month, this series of events paid tribute to the rich history of Latin American culture while addressing issues currently facing Latinas/os in the U.S. and abroad. Programs engaged participants on intellectual, academic, and cultural levels.

Graduate Student Mixers Estimated Attendance 140
OMSA hosted two Graduate Student Mixers; one was held jointly with the Social Sciences Division and School of Divinity in the Swift Hall Common Room (location of the famous Divinity School Wednesday Lunches), and one was held in the brand new Community Lounge at 5710. Students from divisions across the University socialized, networked, and enjoyed a festive atmosphere.

Quarterly Cultural Registered Student Organization Meetings Estimated Attendance 69
These quarterly check-ins with students of color were conducted in an intimate setting to facilitate connections with fellow RSO leaders and the OMSA staff. A Queer Students of Color meeting specifically fulfilled the goal of engaging with communities that are often divided or separated. Students felt welcomed and developed new collaborations with each other and with OMSA.

Weekly Newsletter Estimated Readership 4,060
Publication of *Mezzanine*, the OMSA newsletter, was increased to a weekly frequency. *Mezzanine* was also redesigned to be more accessible and readable. As before, the newsletter provided a listing of programming sponsored by OMSA and the LGBTQ Programming Office. It also listed scholarship, fellowship, internship and employment opportunities offered to both graduate and undergraduate students. Additionally, it provided information on community-wide events that relate to diversity and social justice.

Women's Board Funding Attendance 13
OMSA hosted a GRE test preparation course for students of color using a \$12,400 grant from the Women's Board of the University of Chicago. This nine-session pilot program, also sponsored in part by Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions, provided intensive GRE study for 13 students. Without the grant, these students would not have been able to participate in a preparatory course of this quality.

Assessment

Registrar reports
Access to all student of color data on year, degree program, academic unit, program name, GPA, and race/ethnicity was obtained. This data will be used to create reports on retention, academic success,

and graduation rate across all students of color and comparatively against mentees in the Chicago Multicultural Connection. It will also be used to create reports as needed.

Advocacy

Bias Response Team

The Director of OMSA led a divisional workgroup which launched a Bias Response System consisting of administrators-on-call available to support and guide students seeking assistance regarding the handling of bias incidents. Members of the Bias Response Team assist the Vice-President and Dean of Students in documenting and reporting incidents that occur on campus with the purpose of providing holistic educational programs and the implementation of better evaluative tools and processes. The Director will serve as Bias Response Coordinator for the 2008-2009 year.

Highlights

Programming

5710 S. Woodlawn

5710 South Woodlawn officially grand opened on February 26th, 2008.

Average Usage

Since opening its doors unofficially in January 2008, 5710 has seen 12 Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) hold regular weekly meetings within the building. Over 20 RSOs have hosted events, 11 University departments or units have held events, and 7 institutional work groups or committees meet regularly at 5710. It is estimated that nearly 3600 visits to 5710 have been made by students, faculty and staff since January. On average, 25 events or meetings are scheduled each week at 5710, with a total of 30 events or meetings held since January.

As of June 14, 2008:

- It is estimated there has been 2700 visits to 5710.
- So far, there have been 250 scheduled programs and meetings at 5710.
- On an average, there are 25 scheduled programs and meetings per week.

“A Girl Like Me: The Gwen Araujo Story”

“A Girl Like Me: The Gwen Araujo Story” brought together white students and students of color as well as heterosexual and queer students. Students were greatly welcoming of learning more about transgender issues.

“The Hour of the Furnaces”

DOC Films and OMSA created a new collaboration in which the classic film “The Hour of the Furnaces” was showcased in celebration of Latina/o Heritage Month.

“Men of Color”

Carlos Lassiter, Assistant Director in the University House System, addressed the meaning of being a man of color in a predominately white campus. Targeted to undergraduate students, this program addressed the Men of Color community directly.

“Mixed Heritage Identities” with Josh Singh from Student Counseling and Resource Service

At “Mixed Heritage Identities” students were able to candidly disclose what their mixed heritage meant for them with the help of our facilitator. This was a new topic that was directly linked to other OMSA programs and goals.

“NO! The Rape Documentary”

“NO! The Rape Documentary” created an inter-generational and racially diverse dialogue between students, staff, and community members from various backgrounds that focused on violence within the African American community.

“Saving Face”

“Saving Face” showcased the queer trajectory of a Chinese American through the film which brought new students to 5710 from the API community and supported our partnerships between the queer and heterosexual community. ?

“Smoke Signals”

The Native American film “Smoke Signals” was shown as part of OMSA’s quarterly Study Break program. Over thirty students were in attendance.

“Teatro Luna’s S-E-X-Oh!”

The play “S-E-X-Oh!” by Teatro Luna was staged as part of Caras de América. Over 250 people were in attendance.

“White Privilege”

The CORE program was hosted by a white student that included undergraduate and graduate student participants in a discussion on race and ethnicity. Students left the program “feel(ing) complete” and “like some work is happening.”

“Women of Color and Our Bodies”

“Women of Color and Our Bodies” brought together fifteen young women of color who candidly discussed their relationship to their body not only as women of color but also through the perspective of their immigrant, light-skinned, dark-skinned, skinny, thick, and other identities. Students commented that “they loved the discussion” and felt a “safe space” in the dialogues.

Programming Co-Sponsorships

“5th Annual Women's Encounter” Gingarte Capoeira
“Black Light Release Party” Organization of Black Students (OBS)
“Breaking Ground” Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan (MEChA), et al
“César E. Chávez Commemoration Week” Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan (MEChA)
“Citylights Chicago 2008” The Singaporean and Malaysian Students’ Union (SAMSU)
“Cultural Show: iRep” Organization of Black Students (OBS)
“Cultural Show” African and Caribbean Students Association (ACSA)
“Eyes on the Mosaic” Minority Graduate Student Association (MGSA)
“Legacy Dinner” Organization of Black Students (OBS)
“Noche de Galeria” Puerto Rican Student Association (PRSA)
“Opening Week Series” Partnership for the Advancement of Refugee Rights (PARR)
“PanAsia Spring Festival” PanAsia

“Pride 2008” LGBTQ Programming Office and Queers & Associates (Q&A)
“Progress Theatre Event” Muslim Student Association (MSA)
“Samahan Cultural Show” Samahan
“Undergraduate Panel” African and Caribbean Students Association (ACSA)

Academic

OMSA Grant Awards

OMSA awarded 88 academically related grants for the 2007-2008 year. These grants ranged from \$26 to \$3,500 and included support for study abroad, conference attendance, research projects, textbooks and computers and a myriad of other academically related resources.

Second Annual Graduate & Professional School Exploration Day

OMSA initiated and led the second annual Grad Expo which brought 17 prospective graduate and/or professional students to campus on April 24th.

Career

Diversity in the Workplace

Diversity in the Workplace is a campus-wide career networking conference sponsored by OMSA, CAPS and University Alumni Relations. As in past years, students were given the opportunity to connect with prominent U of C alums of color through a panel discussion, dinner and networking reception. Over 80 students and alumni participated in this year’s event, up from 50 for the previous year’s event.

OMSA Internship Fair

The second annual OMSA Internship Fair saw a significant increase in the number of students in attendance for the 2007 year. Over 75 students attended, a 60% increase from the previous year. Eleven internship sites participated, providing information on summer internships for students in a variety of fields.

OMSA Resource Center

The new 5710 building enabled OMSA’s expansion of resource offerings. Bulletin boards and magazine racks have been installed. These and binders of information allow students to find outside opportunities for learning and employment as well as scholarships, fellowships and internships. The OMSA resource library carries books relevant to its constituency.

Assessment

5710 Daily Logs

Visitors and program attendance were tracked and analyzed, yielding usage information above.

Campus Climate Logs

All Campus Climate incidents brought to OMSA were logged and tracked. Data collected included locations, department or division of affected students, method by which the incident was brought to OMSA’s attention, and follow-up response. Data was analyzed and reported throughout the year.

Staff Interactions

Patterns of staff-student interactions were tracked. Data was analyzed and reported throughout the year.

New Collaborations and Partnerships

Programming

Commuter Lunches with Pre-Med Advisers

Pre-med/health advisers from the Office of College Advising attended lunches with commuter students. Pre-med advisor Cassandra Flambouras talked to students about preparation for medical school and dispelled some of the myths around the medical school application process. This was valuable programming for the large number of commuter students interested in attending medical school.

Doc Films

Latina/o Cultural Recognized Student Organizations and Doc Films collaborated on a screening of the 1968 Argentinian film *The Hour of the Furnaces*. Exhibition of this Third Cinema work allowed the 2007 Caras de America event to better encompass the multifaceted nature of Latinidad.

High School Panels with Collegiate Scholars Program (CSP)

OMSA collaborated with the Collegiate Scholars Program to host panels on college life for CSP participants. Current University of Chicago students spoke before CSP students and discussed both applying for college and expectations which come into effect once students are accepted. Roughly 25 students attended each of the 2 panels.

OMSA's Advisement of Commuter Students

OMSA began advising the commuter student program in spring 2007. Through the 2007-2008 school year, an OMSA assistant director planned programming for commuters and served as a general resource for student concerns. In working with the commuter student population, OMSA became better informed about the experiences of a diverse group of students and became a better advocate for these students. Although the commuter student program no longer accept new students after Fall 2008, Additionally, OMSA successfully worked with students to present their concerns about the impending end of the commuter student program to University administration in an empowering and productive manner.

OMSA and CAPS Co-Sponsored Brown Bag

OMSA jointly hosted a career planning brown bag with Career Advising and Planning Services. Participants received a presentation on career goals and completed exercises including an interest inventory and imagining their dream life.

Student Counseling and Resource Service (SCRS)

During the 2007-2008 year SCRS staff were available to meet with students at 5710. This initiative aimed to lower barriers and possible feelings of stigmatization on the part of students seeking counseling. Locating selected appointments at 5710 allowed students and counselors to meet in an environment comfortable for the student. This initiative will continue in the 2008-2009 year.

OMSA Race Studies Grant

The OMSA Race Studies Grant was begun in the 2006-2007 year to assist undergraduate, graduate, and professional students by providing financial support for scholarly projects exploring the multifaceted nature of race, race relations, ethnicity, and/or culture within the University of Chicago, the larger City of Chicago community, or Higher Education.

Individual grants are awarded once per year, with the total award divided evenly and disbursed quarterly. The grants are not awarded for projects that are already complete. 2007-2008 grantees were:

Marcus Board, M.A. student in the Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences
“Attitudes Towards Policing Among African Americans in Poverty Level”

Lindsey Carfagna, M.A. student in the Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences
“Decoupling Diversity: Organizational Change and Race Relations at the University of Vermont”

Anjanette Chan-Tack, Ph.D. student in the Department of Sociology
“Culture and Political Action in the Food Desert”

Karen Davis-Johnson, M.A. student in the School of Social Services Administration
“The Effect of Father Influences on African-American Female Behavior Over Time: A Dual Life Cycle Perspective”

Marissa Guerrero, Ph.D. student in the School of Social Services Administration
“Reproduction Reconceived: Race, Class, and Politics of Pregnancy”

Marcelle Medford, Ph.D. student in the Department of Sociology
“The Role of Ethnic Restaurants in a Changing Immigrant Enclave”

Daniel Morales, student in the College
“Mobility and Urbanization: The Creation of Chicago's Mexican Communities and the Individuals who Composed Them”

Angel, Ochoa, Jr., student in the College
“Latino Queer Community in Pilsen”

Karen Semans, M.A. student in the Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences
“Participation of Immigrant Mexican Vendors at Maxwell Street Market”

Rebecca Shi, student in the College
“Chinese Laundry”

OMSA Staff Committee Participation

Internal

Bias Response Team Workgroup – Chair
Graduate and Professional School Exploration Day – Chair
Martin Luther King Week Committee – Chair

Diversity in the Workplace – Co-Chair
Vice-President and Dean of Students Orientation Workgroup – Co-Chair

Vice-President and Dean of Students Human Resources Workgroup – Co-Chair

5710 Advisory Board
Bias Response Team
Deputy Provost Advisory Council
Diversity Educator Search Committee
Diversity Leadership Council
Leadership Alliance Committee
LGBTQ Programming Office Intern Search Committee
Graduate Recruitment Task Force
Graduate Services Team
Graduate Services Team Graduate Orientation Sub-Committee
Student Leader Awards
Summer Links Selection Committee
Vice-President and Dean of Students Assessment Workgroup
Vice-President and Dean of Students Assessment Workgroup Dashboard Indicator Sub-group
Vice-President and Dean of Students Human Resources Workgroup Performance Appraisal and Orientation Sub-group
Vice-President and Dean of Students Staff Award Committee

External

Diversifying Faculty in Illinois
Committee on Institutional Cooperation
Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers
Project 1000

2008-2009 Goals

Outreach and Engagement

Increase the outreach and engagement of our office with underserved populations of the University including graduate students of color, queer students of color, students of Middle Eastern descent and other underserved subpopulations, with a particular emphasis on graduate students of color.

Outreach and engagement will include gaining an understanding of the unique needs of these populations and differentiating between student affairs issues and other needs. This will also include determining student affairs issues on which OMSA should act directly to improve, and issues on which OMSA should advocate (within the University) for these populations. Finally, OMSA will continue to do programs that are multifaceted and explore different layers of one's identities and collaborate with academic departments that target and serve similar constituents.

Communications

Develop and implement a communication plan that will effectively promote 5710 and the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs.

The communication plan will include redesigning the OMSA and 5710 website, making the information and structure more user-friendly, developing branding and marketing guidelines for OMSA and 5710 as well as the re-evaluation of the electronic newsletter. OMSA will also explore other opportunities for free marketing (i.e. free event calendars, RSO listhost, etc.) and collaborate with other RSO or departments

to promote programs and resources to new segments of the University. OMSA will also look at the possibility of developing a programming series that can be institutionalized.

Retention/Institutional Awareness/Campus Climate

Understand the issues that impact retention for SOC in order to increase institutional awareness and support an inclusive campus environment.

In 2007-2008 access was obtained to the academic records of students of color at the University. Due to a leadership transition within the Office of the Registrar, access to the majority of the data was not obtained until spring 2008. Additionally, it was found that the Office of the Registrar would not provide analysis of the data. Analysis began in-house in spring 2008.

OMSA will roll this goal over to the 2008-2009 school year in order to obtain longitudinal analysis for 2007-2008 and also to address the following: differentiations between student affairs issues and other needs, differentiations between student affairs issues on which OMSA should act directly to improve and issues on which OMSA should advocate (within the University) for students of color, and addressing issues falling within OMSA's scope through improvement or creation of programming, resources, and/or funding.