



Winter

**MSA EVOLUTION PART 1:**  
Contextual Overview and  
Focus Group Findings



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## OVERVIEW

In 2014 Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) underwent a University-structured program review that included perspectives from students, staff, and faculty who were a part of the University community. Since then, MSA has experienced a great deal of change, some of which includes new staff, enhanced program offerings, along with new and strengthened partnerships. Throughout this six year period, the team has continued learning about and exploring the needs of marginalized students at Northwestern. The MSA team reviewed data from the three core sources listed below to better understand how students connected to MSA programs, and how they generally experienced Northwestern.

The secondary sources of data used in this study were the: 2017 Campus Climate Survey, 2017 Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, 2017 Consortium on Financing Higher Education survey and the 2014 MSA Program Review. As stated in the Context section, the intern analyzed data from these 4 surveys to compile the foundational themes which then led to the development of the MSA Focus Group Protocol.

The data revealed a set of needs and themes for students and left MSA wanting to know more about students' experiences with MSA. During the 2019-2020 academic year, MSA created a focus group protocol, trained focus group facilitators, and gathered data from students connected to MSA.

The following report details the methods used to collect data, outlines the results, and offers a set of recommendations for potential next steps.

## CONTEXT

In 2018, a new Director was hired to lead MSA and several new staff joined the team. The change in leadership and staffing afforded MSA the opportunity to explore the programs and services offered to marginalized students. The team set out to better understand the needs of students through pre-existing datasets. In the spring of the 2019 academic year, MSA generated a roster of students who were involved in MSA programs and/or events. Colleagues in the Office of Student Affairs Assessment & Planning used the roster to see if any of the students who were involved in MSA programming, events, or used MSA resources responded to several pre-existing datasets. The datasets used were the 2017 University Campus Climate Survey, the 2018 Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, the 2017 Consortium on Financing Higher Education survey, and the 2014 MSA Program Review.

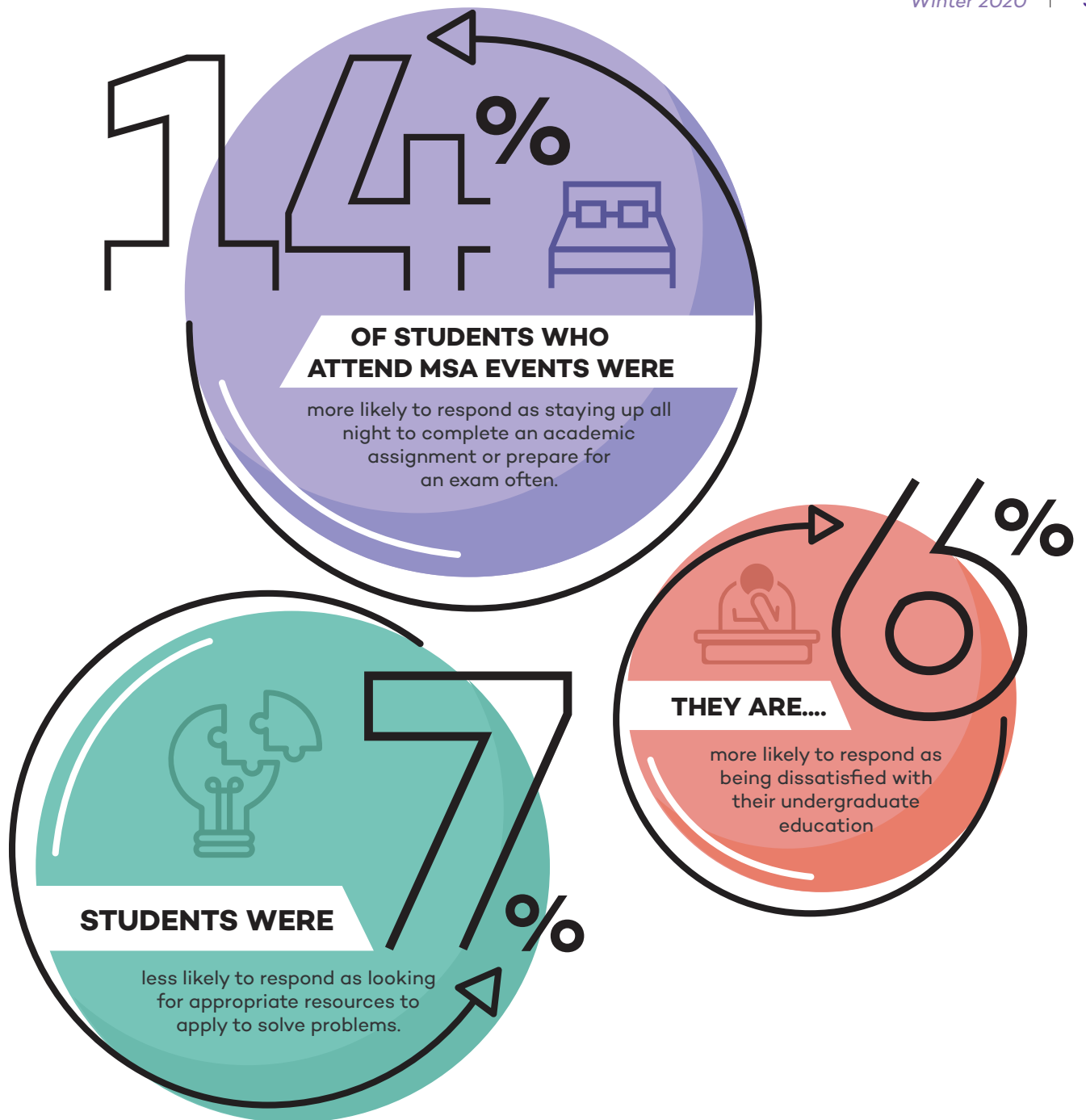
The University's Campus Climate Survey provides insight on student perceptions of the diversity at the institution. The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is conducted by an international research program every three years that is focused on understanding the influences of higher education in shaping social responsible leadership capacity and

other leadership related outcomes. The Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE) conducts a range of research activities to inform and support institutional decision-making at 35 colleges and universities. The 2014 MSA Program Review was conducted by a review team made up of four student affairs professionals from both within and outside of Northwestern. They interviewed approximately 40 stakeholders, including MSA staff, students, administrators, faculty, and alumni. Once the assessment was able to gather responses from students affiliated with MSA, the team began to review the data and identify themes.

The themes and findings from these datasets were then used to create a temporary programming and resources model for MSA. For the 2019-2020 academic year, MSA identified five areas of focus to guide their programming and practice: academic enrichment, community engagement, identity formation, leadership development, and wellness. The MSA team was eager to gather data from these surveys that would align with their newly identified goals.

MSA had its first cohort of interns during the summer of 2019. One of the interns, Gabriella Rios '21, focused on data and assessment, and established the logistics of focus groups that would be conducted during the upcoming fall quarter. They were also given the task of looking over various reports overseen by the Office of Student Affairs Assessment & Planning and pulling data from student surveys that would support MSA's guiding themes for the year's programming.

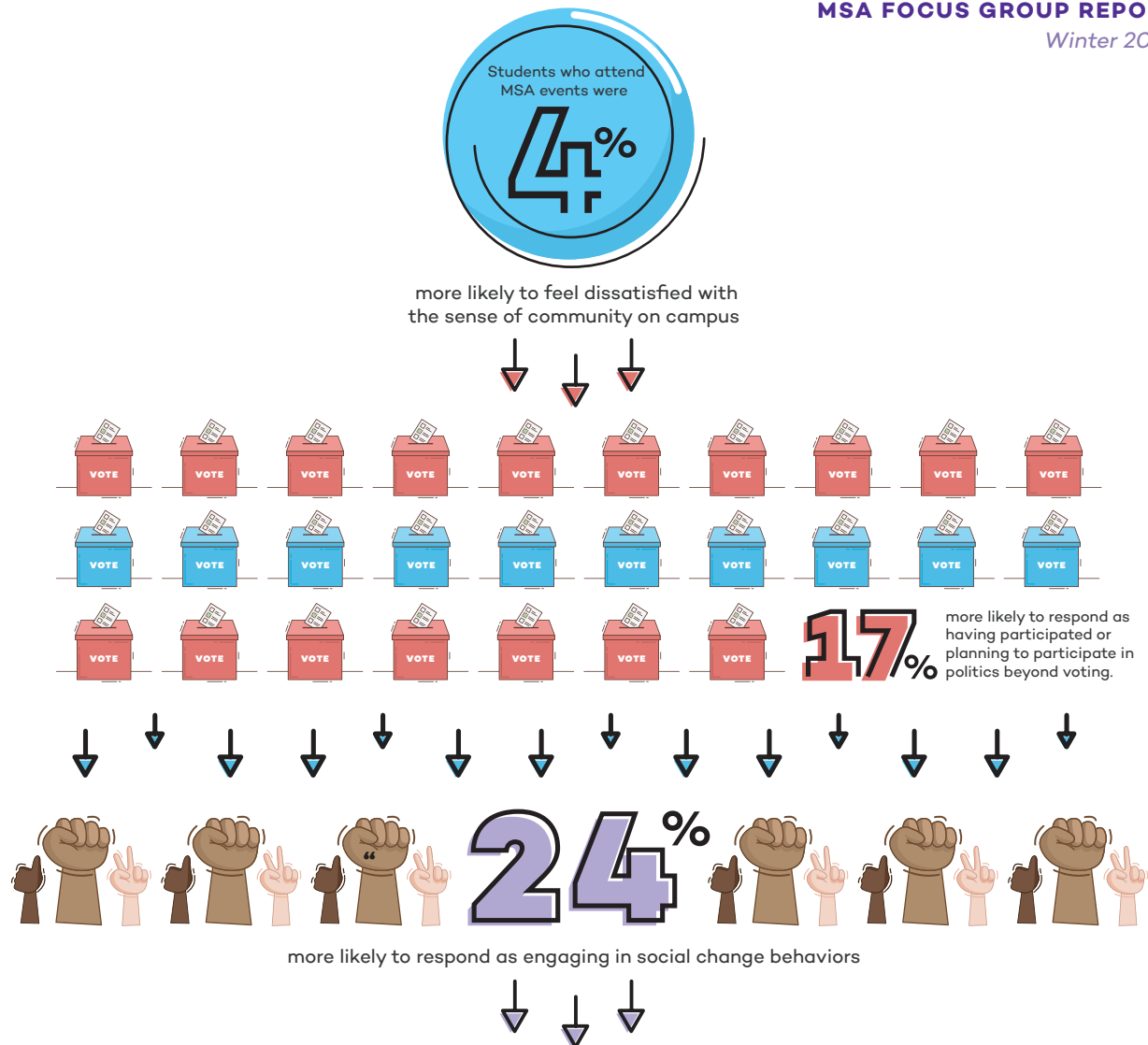
The intern looked over the datasets that MSA previously reviewed in order to find supporting evidence for the following five themes.



## ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

The COFHE data found that students who attend MSA events were 14% more likely to respond as staying up all night to complete an academic assignment or prepare for an exam often. They also were 6% more likely to respond as being dissatisfied with their undergraduate education. Lastly, students were 7% less likely to respond as looking for appropriate resources to apply to solve problems.

This data shows an area of academic improvement for students who are involved with MSA. MSA-affiliated students may benefit from academic programming that could help them with their time management, confidence in the classroom, self-advocacy, and academic identity.



**“ I BELIEVE I HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO MY COMMUNITY. ”**

These students had citizenship scores that were 6% higher than their non-MSA affiliated counterparts

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The COFHE data found that students who attend MSA events were 4% more likely to feel dissatisfied with the sense of community on campus. The same student population was 17% more likely to respond as having participated or planning to participate in politics beyond voting. Similarly, looking at the MSL data, these students were 24% more likely to respond as engaging in social change behaviors, which may include but are not limited to: being involved in organizations that address a social problem, taking action in the community to try and address a social problem, or taking part in a protest or demonstration. The MSL data also found that these students had citizenship scores that were 6% higher than their non-MSA affiliated counterparts, meaning they were

more likely to agree with statements such as: “I believe I have responsibilities to my community”, “I work with others to make my communities better places”, and “I participate in activities that contribute to the common good”.

Students involved with MSA are much more likely to be community oriented. The incredibly high percentage of MSA-involved students engaging in social changes behaviors shows how much these students value their communities and seek out to create change within them. Because of this, it's important to MSA to support the students in these endeavors.

## STUDENTS WHO ATTEND MSA EVENTS

11%

more likely to respond as having racial esteem

15%

feel that others perceived their racial identity in a negative light.

11%

feel that others perceived their racial identity in a negative light.

17%

feel out of place or that they didn't fit in on campus.

### IDENTITY FORMATION

The MSL data found that students who attend MSA events were 11% more likely to respond as having racial esteem (appendix D) yet were 15% more likely to respond as feeling that others perceived their racial identity in a negative light. The COFHE data found that students who attend MSA events were 11% more likely to struggle with developing their self-esteem/self-confidence. It also found that these students were 17% more likely to report feeling out of place or that they didn't fit in on campus.

This data shows that students who are involved with MSA are struggling with their own identity formation. Being able to identify, understand, and articulate one's cultural identity is central to multicultural education. MSA would like to improve the ways in which they give students the tools to think further about their identities, build their self-esteems, and increase their sense of belonging.

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The COFHE data found that students who attend MSA events were 11% more likely to struggle with developing their self-esteem/self-confidence. Similarly, students were 3% more likely than non-MSA engaged students to hold a leadership role on or off campus. In addition, these students were only 1% more likely to be motivated to become leaders.

This data shows that students who are involved with MSA could benefit from programming that would help them see themselves as leaders. By helping students to build their confidence and leadership skills, it might encourage them to seek out leadership roles more frequently.

### WELLNESS

The MSL data found that students who attend MSA events from the past year were 14% more likely to respond to experiencing a discriminatory campus climate and 7% less likely to feel safe on campus. Similarly, the COFHE data found that students who attend MSA events were 16% more likely to respond as having felt insulted or threatened based on their social identity. Additionally, students were 15% more likely to express concern related to searching for meaning and purpose in their lives. The data also found that they were 11% more likely to report that they often felt very sad, with 9% of the same group reporting they often felt so depressed it was difficult to function.

This data shows just how negatively students are being affected by various campus stressors. Lack of safety and security, coupled with disproportionate mental health concerns, is a cause for action from the MSA team to demonstrate better coping and self-care methods through their programming.



Dr. James Makokis (Cree) and Anthony Johnson (Dine), discuss all things gender, sexuality, and Indian country



Decolonizing Healthcare Event



Travel ban protest 2017



Students of Color Mixer

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

The 2014 MSA Program Review also gave the office insight on broader goals and areas of improvement. The review named the organizational operating structure, external influences such as traditions of alumni, lack of visibility of the GSRC, need for community-building, space allocation and building use, and staffing responsibilities as key issues for the office to address. The review recommended a restructuring of MSA, housing all MSA staff in one location, supporting students with mental health issues or victims of sexual assault, limiting the number of student groups MSA advises, building relationships with faculty in ethnic studies, and developing metrics that assess the effectiveness of MSA's programming.

As stated before, the themes and findings from the pre-existing datasets provided MSA a snapshot of the experiences affiliated with their programs, events and resources. However, the data did not specifically address the relationship, feelings, and thoughts students experience when engaging with MSA. This gap in data drove the MSA team to begin the process of facilitating focus groups. This report serves as a summary of the process MSA underwent to gather data and the results garnered from focus groups. Pulling from the themes identified in the pre-existing datasets that were then used to develop a temporary programming and resource allocation model, the intern created the framework for the focus groups. The question bank for the focus groups asked particular questions surrounding each of these five themes. In addition to its

programming, MSA chose to use these five themes to guide and frame the data they were going to mine from the focus groups.



Cafe con Leche event with Latinx Faculty



Dr. Asif Wilson speaks at Black & Latinx Community Gathering



## METHODOLOGY

Ten focus groups ranging from 1 and 7 participants were conducted between January 27 and February 11, 2020. To maximize the availability of participants, daytime (12:30-2:00pm) and evening (6:00-7:30pm) focus groups were held. The composition of the groups was deliberate based on the class year of each participant in order to assess their engagement with MSA over the course of a student's academic career at Northwestern.

Focus group participants came from a compiled master list of students whom had documented engagement with MSA. Documented engagement for the purposes of this report is defined as a student whom in the last two academic years (2017-18, 2018-19, fall 2020), (a) attended and signed into an MSA sponsored event or community gathering, (b) received direct mentoring/coaching from MSA staff, (c) were member of student organization executive board that is advised by an MSA staff member or (d) have worked with MSA (i.e. Office Assistant) or part of an MSA leadership program (i.e. InclusionNU Fund Board). The master list consisted of 859 undergraduate students, 71 graduate students and six School of Professional Studies students for a total of 936.

Initially, a total of 400 undergraduate students (100 per class year) and 5 graduate students were selected at random by the Student Affairs Assessment Office. A total of 30 students actually attended the focus groups. A copy of the email invitation can be found in Appendix A.

Each focus group was scheduled for 1.5 hours. Since the focus groups were held over mealtimes, a light lunch or supper was provided. Participants were each given a \$10 Amazon gift card in appreciation of their time and willingness to share their feedback to MSA.

Trained facilitators made up of Student Affairs professionals outside of MSA facilitated the focus groups. The following facilitators completed a training by the Office of Student Affairs Assessment and Multicultural Student Affairs:

- Kamillah Allen  
*Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA)*
- Charles Andrean  
*Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL)*
- Kelly Benkert  
*Leadership Development and Community Engagement (LDCE)*
- Lucas Christian  
*Dean of Students (DOS)*
- Celeste Garcia  
*Student Enrichment Services (SES)*
- Keith Garcia  
*Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL)*
- Mayra Garces  
*Student Enrichment Services (SES)*
- Briana Newkirk  
*Campus Inclusion and Community (CIC)*
- Tracey Gibson-Jackson  
*Student Organizations and Activities (SOA)*

- Travis Martin  
*Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL)*
- Laura Myers  
*Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA)*
- Christina Smith  
*Student Enrichment Services (SES)*
- Tracie Thomas  
*Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA)*

The focus group facilitator protocol and questions can be found in Appendix B & C.

In an effort to hear from more student voices, a MSA Focus Group Information 2020 webpage was developed. The webpage consists of a one-minute introduction video, background information, timeline and link to a confidential feedback form to hear from students that were not selected to participate in the focus groups.

## FOCUS GROUP DEMOGRAPHICS

1ST GENERATION COLLEGE	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
Not 1st Generation	70%	73%	89%
First Generation College	30%	27%	11%

RACE/ETHNICITY	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
Hispanic	13%	26%	13%
Asian/Pacific Islander	17%	25%	18%
Black or African American	33%	19%	6%
International	13%	11%	10%
White	7%	9%	43%
Two or More Races	17%	8%	6%
Unknown		2%	3%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native		0%	0%
Native Hawaiian/ Oth Pac Island		0%	0%

SCHOOL	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
Weinberg College of Arts & Science	53%	45%	46%
School of Engineering	10%	15%	22%
School of Journalism	13%	11%	8%
School of Communication	7%	10%	12%
Grad Programs	3%	9%	1%
School of Educ & Social Policy	13%	8%	6%
Bienen School of Music		2%	5%

CLASS YEAR CATEGORIES	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
First Year	23%	32%	27%
Second Year	17%	26%	25%
Third Year	23%	21%	23%
Fourth Year	33%	20%	22%
Fifth Year +	3%	2%	2%

HOUSING STATUS	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
In Campus Housing	50%	59%	56%
Not in Campus Housing	50%	41%	44%

HIGH NEED 4+	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
Low or No Financial Need	43%	52%	74%
High Financial Need (4+)	57%	48%	26%

SEX	Focus Group	MSA General Pop	Total Undergrad Population
Female	77%	66%	51%
Male	23%	34%	49%
Unknown			0%

\*Demographic data on this page reflects how students self report with university registrar.

## RESULTS

Nine themes emerged from the focus groups regarding student opinion and perception of MSA, its staff, services, and programming. They are listed below and then each is described more fully on the pages that follow. These themes were those MSA felt emerged from the focus groups most consistently. However, it's important to note that each student that participated in these conversations brought a unique perspective that didn't always fit each theme. Although efforts were made to gather graduate student perspectives, the total number of graduate student participants was too narrow to draw any conclusions (n=1).

### **THEME 1:**

*With Time Comes Increased Familiarity*

### **THEME 2:**

*A Need to Foster an Academic Connection*

### **THEME 3:**

*Connection Through Community Building*

### **THEME 4:**

*Developing a Greater Sense of Self*

### **THEME 5:**

*Honoring Nuance Through Intersectionally and Solidarity Building*

### **THEME 6:**

*An opportunity to explore leadership*

### **THEME 7:**

*Students feel cared for*

### **THEME 8:**

*Clarify Organizational Identity and Purpose*

### **THEME 9:**

*Staff Members are Valuable Resources for Students*

**THEMES**

**THEME 1:****With Time Comes Increased Familiarity**

*First and second year students had a harder time articulating their understanding of MSA than the third, fourth, and fifth year students. Many first and/or second years had a very basic understanding of MSA, or they described the office and its function incorrectly. The third, fourth, and fifth years were often able to go in-depth about MSA, its structure, staff members, programming, and services.*

“  
I think I  
only know of **MSA**

**tangentially**

**to the *Black House***

**and the**

**Multicultural**

**Center.**

**And I believe MSA oversees  
both of those spaces,**

**I clearly don't know that much. That's their most  
prominent function I know of.” (2nd year)**

”

“I know MSA is Multicultural Student Affairs. I know that it's usually for multicultural identities, I think. I know they have a Black House...and the Multicultural Center – I forgot what it's called. I don't really know much about their staff, but I'm pretty sure they're more like, trying to aim more towards students of color and different identities.”

*(1st year)*

“I didn't know there were specialized Assistant Directors for identities...In terms of their programs I don't know a lot of them but they're generally about creating community.”

*(1st year)*

“From my understanding, even though I personally haven't been to the main building on Sheridan Road, I do know that they oversee the temporary Black House and other spaces for people of diverse backgrounds. In terms of specifics for what MSA does, I'm not really sure.”

*(1st year)*

“I don't have that comprehensive of an understanding [of MSA]. I interact mainly with Christine and her grad assistant.”

*(2nd year)*

“When I hear MSA or when I think of the Multicultural Center, one of the first things that comes to mind is, ‘What does that mean?’”

*(2nd year)*

“MSA is under the division of CIC, along with SJE and SES. There's also staff members that are assigned to a certain student population.”

*(3rd year)*

“I view it as an overarching department devoted to inclusion of different backgrounds and tend to divide that up into identities based on racial and ethnic background.”

*(4th/5th year)*

“As far as their programming, I know they do a lot of heavy emphasis on community building within and across the marginalized identities. And then resources like printing that are offered in the physical spaces, and food.”

*(4th/5th year)*

**THEME 2:****A Need to Foster an Academic Connection**

*Free printing was named as a popular service among students from each year, acting as a financial and academic resource.*

“[The printer] is a big role in my academic life. Some of the stuff I need to print is pages and pages. In order to study, I like to print study guides to feel well-prepared. To be given the opportunity to do it for free really helps me. If I didn’t have the free printing, I’d have to pay out of pocket, which would detract from my academic excellence.” (1st year)

“I like their free printing.” (2nd year)

“I’ve never been [to the MCC] much, I just go there for printing.” (3rd year)

“Free printing [is a strength of MSA].” (4th/5th year)

“I love the free printing... It’s such a great resource.” (4th/5th year)

“I’m always at the MCC when I have time, and I always use the computer room and the printing, and I appreciate the space.” (4th/5th year)

“One thing that I utilize a lot is the free printing, and I think that’s really important for college students.” (4th/5th year)

“The printing helps a lot for first-gen/ low-income students. I don’t know what I’d do without it.” (4th/5th year)



*I think a big part of the reason I now want to pursue this Asian American Studies minor is because of the APIDA events that I’ve gone to where we don’t just address Asian American issues but we touch on anti-blackness, interracial identity, the ways in which Asian Americans are often pitted against other minorities and how we can overcome that.” (2nd year)*

*Some students also claimed that attending MSA programming helped them decide to pursue a major or minor in ethnic studies.*

“[MSA] intrigued my interest in Asian American studies because things pop up in our conversation that I want to dive into deeper.” (1st year)

“I really wanted to minor in Asian American Studies, but didn’t have a chance to because I want to graduate early and save up money. But a lot of MSA programs are like a way to maintain that connection to that department and absorb the teachings of those professors who I adore, and just learn bits and parts, not fully, but the teachings of the program.” (4th/5th year)

*However, there were also a few students who struggled with identifying how MSA has or could contribute to their academic experience at Northwestern.*

“Personally, I don’t think [MSA] has had an effect on me for academics.” (1st year)

“Personally, I haven’t had a whole lot of connections.” (1st year)

“I feel like there are so many spaces for academics on this campus, but there’s not a lot of spaces for social things, especially for people of color. There’s the Academic Learning Center, for example, but there’s not a lot of informal social events. So, I don’t really know if MSA needs to help me academically.” (2nd year)

*Lastly, a couple students felt that MSA could support students when it came to dealing with microaggression and conflicts in the classroom.*

“I think one thing we don’t talk about enough explicitly is the ways in which students encounter marginalization on campus, in classrooms, and in spaces on a daily basis. When we are talking about issues that face POC, we are talking about stuff that happen in the world, and not microaggressions and stuff that piles on every day. When you go into classrooms and professors are explicitly racist, that’s something that needs to be acknowledged to turn the criticism to the institution itself.” (2nd year)

**THEME 3:****Connection Through Community Building**

*Students named discussion-based programming, such as APIDA 101 or Harvest, and the designated MSA spaces as a couple ways in which they learn about how to be in solidarity with their own communities and those they are not a part of. Students often mentioned that they realize they are not alone in their experiences of marginalization and are able to relate to other communities because of that.*

“I did end up feeling very isolated from my culture here at first. Without finding a community that had more Latinos, it probably would have been a lot worse... I definitely think that it has helped because you don't have to be the only one experiencing this, there's other people like you, and there's a way to find those people.” (1st year)

“

***The community that's fostered through MSA encourages me to care more about multiculturalism in itself which encourages me to go to events for groups that aren't mine and makes me invested in other marginalized groups.”***

***(1st year)***

“Coming to a PWI I didn't think those spaces would be available. I thought that was only at HBCUs, where it's like the whole space or nothing. It's nice that there are spaces where I can see people like me or people are always welcoming and nice... Having those spaces, I feel like it allows me to be one on one with people I wouldn't have met otherwise.” (1st year)

“If I talk to someone, I sound very American because of my accent and it doesn't come up, but inside of me I'm always very curious about Asian American individuals and I wanted to know what that was like. I feel because of [MSA] events I realized in very different ways we are all marginalized.” (1st year)

“Spending time at the MCC with Alianza and other Latinx people has been a really beautiful experience and community builder... In Alianza, there's a lot of different Latinx people. I've found great community in that.” (3rd year)

“Interactions with MSA has strengthened my willingness to be there for other students with marginalized identities. Before, it was hard to find a pathway to know how to do that, but the calling to do so was always there.” (3rd year)

“Harvest, and when they do collaborate with Solidari-tea, is a really special place that [MSA] works on... The people that show up regularly, not everyone in there is Native...there's a lot of intersecting identities. Just hearing everyone speak about indigeneity, but coming from their own background, that inspires me to be in solidarity with everyone.” (3rd year)

“MSA embodies being an ally not just to us but to all the groups they serve. In going to specific events for the communities I identify with, they lead me to want to be what MSA is for me to other groups that are facing the same things.” (4th/5th year)

“I would say that the Harvest discussions allow me to take an active role in getting to know communities outside of my own, and not just like, 'I support you,' but like, 'I'm going to be present in your spaces,' where you set aside for others to come and build community with you and take a role intentionally. I make sure that if I say I care about other groups, I show up for them, and MSA makes that easy.” (4th/5th year)

“Anytime something happens in the world, MSA will make a post about it and say, 'We're thinking about this community right now; if you need a space, we will have it in the Black House or the MCC,' and they'll have cookies and tea out, so I'm thinking about engaging with the world in that way.” (4th/5th year)

**THEME 4:****Developing a Greater Sense of Self**

“MSA gave me the words to

articulate

things about my

IDENTITY

*Many students agreed that attending MSA programming or talking with staff members helped them identify and understand themselves pertaining to certain racial, ethnic, or other social identities. Students commented they struggled with their sense of self once they came to the NU campus, and MSA helped them navigate that transition and come into their own identity.*

“Going to Northwestern and having these spaces has allowed me to expand the kind of voices that I hear and allow me to tap more into my black side and see things from a different perspective, so I feel like I just have a better understanding and connection to my identity because of the kind of opportunities MSA has offered me.” (1st year)

“I never had to form an identity because I’m not from the US and not used to having an identity because... the first time I felt race was here. MSA really helped me figure that out.” (1st year)

“As a rural queer student from Missouri, I didn’t get to be out in high school and it’s something I really

struggled with. College was the first time I could live my life openly and MSA helped with that because I got to meet the MSA Assistant Directors here who are out and open and it’s something I really needed. I got a lot of support with that to be whatever I am and not push me into a category to be one or the other.” (1st year)

“When I came [to NU] this was the first time that I really started to confront my biracial identity. Up until this point, I’d really only walked through this world as a black girl because that’s how the world kind of sees me. So, I wanted to look into my Asian/Pacific Islander identity and Christine and the APIDA programs gave me the safe space to do that.” (2nd year)

and how that influenced my lived experience.” (3rd year)

“Personally, MSA challenged me to think bigger... Through different programming and interactions with different students it broadened my understanding and solidified my personal identity and challenged me to think about the stereotypes I’ve internalized.” (4th/5th year)

“I was raised in Seoul, South Korea. I felt like I was in a bubble... I always found myself between the Korean American and Korean international students. MSA programs helped me see myself in the Asian American community.” (4th/5th year)

“MSA was the first place that helped me identify or create an identity on the NU campus... The physical spaces of MSA were where I sort of came into myself at Northwestern.” (4th/5th year)

“I have learned a lot about my own identity and my own struggles with decolonizing my identity and my mentality... I’ve learned a lot about some privileges I didn’t think I had and be able to check those privileges and also talk about the identities that I didn’t think that would affect me as much as they have affected me at NU.” (4th/5th year)



*I think MSA is really good at providing spaces where different identities can go to, but one thing that could be new is focusing on intersectionality of identities and making those efforts to bind different communities together.”*

*(4th/5th year)*

## **THEME 5:**

### **Honoring Nuance Through Intersectionally and Solidarity Building**

*Students also expressed a desire for programming and spaces for students with multiple intersecting identities, especially those of mixed race.*

“One thing I wish is MSA would have more spaces for students who are mixed race, because it’s also a challenge for me and how I identify. Being mixed has a huge effect on my life.”

*(1st year)*

“Part of my identity is the FGLI community and I know MSA doesn’t do that because it’s SES, but I feel that it’s part of my identity more than race. I don’t know if MSA has the resources, but I would want community around that at MSA as well.”

*(1st year)*

“Most of the events are catered to one specific race or ethnicity, for example like a Black Student Mixer or a Latinx Student Mixer. If I were to have a suggestion, I’d say more meshing of the communities.”

*(2nd year)*

“It feels like there’s a lot of separate programs that’s targeted for monoracial identities. As a biracial person, I’d like to see more mixed spaces, spaces that are open or closed but center on mixed race identity... I would encourage more cross-cultural connection instead of keeping people in separate ethnic groups. We could have bigger spaces that include people of more ethnicities.”

*(2nd year)*

“It would be valuable to have a point person for Middle Eastern and African students.”

*(3rd year)*



**THEME 6:****An opportunity to explore leadership**

*Students from each year had different perspectives on the role MSA had played on their leadership development. Some students expressed MSA had no influence on that particular skill, while others felt that MSA had much to do with it.*

“I don’t think MSA has impacted me as a leader.” (1st year)

“There aren’t a whole lot of people in leadership that are multicultural or people of color. So seeing groups that are comprised only of people of those [backgrounds] is powerful and allows me to see myself in those roles.” (1st year)

“The one leadership experience I had tied to MSA was when I was helping to plan Jubilasian last year. In got to work with a small group of people to try to create something which was cool. In some way that probably prepared me for the exec position I took on in Blackboard, coming up with ideas, pitching, and creating action items.” (2nd year)

“I don’t think there’s enough engagement with student orgs in order for there to be leadership... There just isn’t enough community between MSA staff and students for there to be that mentorship which leads to the strengthening of leadership skills.” (2nd year)

“There are other orgs on campus where I’ve learned [leadership skills] as opposed to MSA.” (3rd year)

“I don’t think [MSA has helped with my leadership skills]. I think of other things, but not particularly MSA.” (3rd year)

“The advisors really help with facilitating and giving us tools to help with our events, providing resources, pointing us to people we need to talk to, and just providing resources and guidance on how we’re supposed to do things.” (4th/5th year)

“Empowerment is the big thing that they contribute to students on campus...making students feel they’re even eligible for leadership positions.” (4th/5th year)

“The committees for graduation is [sic] a great opportunity for students to advance their leadership skills and work with MSA.” (4th/5th year)

“I MC’d the Latinx Graduation Ceremony and I put public speaking on my job resume. And when I’m job interviewing, I tell people about it and it sounds simple but it’s leadership development.” (4th/5th year)



*The opportunities through MSA are important in growing as a leader. I attended a conference called Creating Change where I felt like I had the opportunity to make an impact on a bigger scale than just on campus.”*  
(3rd year)

**THEME 7:****Students feel cared for**

*Students were able to name a variety of MSA's resources that positively influenced their mental and physical wellness. This ranged from staff support and affirmation, to MSA events specifically centered on wellness, to even the existence of physical spaces on campus.*

“

I can't even count the number of times I've cried

in the **BLACK HOUSE.**

I feel I can be my most

**AUTHENTIC self**

“One day I went in one of the [AD] offices and just cried and felt really supported. But even in programs, I can go sit on the couch in the GSRC and there's a sense of community that I will [get] help if I need it...Even on my worst days I have people I can call.” (1st year)

“A big part of my wellbeing is also feeling welcome and accepted. I feel like with the resources and the spaces that MSA has offered, I feel at comfort and at ease.” (1st year)

“There have been Solidariteas about mental health I may have missed, but it's important for me to go to these spaces to talk about things I'm angry or frustrated about. It's an outlet, and I've found that often times they're frustrating other people too. So it helps mentally in that way.” (2nd year)

“MSA keeps us fed and creates the space to connect with others.” (3rd year)

“There was an event where a body worker/healer came in, a queer person from Chicago, and gave a workshop on specific techniques on how to touch the body well and promote wellness in that way. There was another event held at the MCC this past fall that was going over different Latinx and Indigenous practices of healing, talking about oils and smudging ceremonies... It was very thorough and nice, and I learned a lot.” (3rd year)

“At the end of the day, sometimes it's hard if you're first gen or a person of a marginalized community, where you feel burnt out. Sometimes you can't physically make it [to an event], but even if you can't, MSA's environment is so

comforting, you can come back at any time and re-immers yourself and that's really important.” (4th/5th year)

“MSA gives me a relief from this place. Sometimes there are days where I'm like, 'Do I really need this degree?' and I'm like, 'Yes, I do.' As a first-gen student, the pressure of my family's wellness is on me, but MSA helps me provide wellness for myself, where it's just showing up to the MCC and hanging out with people that struggle the same as me. That relief is such a huge component, which contributes to my wellness.” (4th/5th year)

“Personally, we don't talk about wellness in my community. It's like, 'You should be grateful for what you have, and let's move on.'

I don't have to code switch like I have to in other spaces on campus. Last year, a staff member helped me fill out leave paperwork, she understood what I was going through, and I didn't have to hide anything from her.”

(4th/5th year)

Coming from that kind of background, MSA has helped me connect my wellness to my physical wellness. Both the mental aspect and the physical aspect.” (4th/5th year)

“There's been a lot of days, especially through finals week, where I will sleep [in the MCC]. And the couches are so comfortable!” (4th/5th year)

I DON'T  
think everyone knows  
there  
are  
three MSA  
spaces under  
so I  
feel  
like  
more  
of a  
publicization  
of who they are and what they do.”  
(1st year)

## THEME 8:

### Clarify Organizational Identity and Purpose

*Students from each year agree that better communication advertising would increase event turnout and help students better understand MSA and its services. There is some confusion about what is considered an MSA event or program and what might be facilitated by student groups and/or other campus partners.*

“Don’t just reach out in the beginning. It does get more tough during like the middle of the first quarter, especially for people from low income backgrounds, we aren’t able to go home... So, in the middle is when it’s like, ‘Okay, now this is getting hard.’ So maybe if they could reach out more during then, it would help.” (1st year)

“I think [MSA] could definitely be better at outreach and making sure people know that those resources are there.” (1st year)

“Banners and visible things are very helpful, at least for me, to like go into the space, have an event in the space, and get to know the space more.” (2nd year)

“Students aren’t reading newsletters or following MSA online. I know about the events due to being in the spaces often. There should be a better network for knowing what is going on.” (3rd year)

“I get the newsletters and the emails but if you ask me to recall what they say, I’d be like, ‘What?’ I think it’s mostly like plugs for other student groups and like events, but for what MSA is doing, I can’t really recall. Maybe more information just on what exactly what MSA is doing.” (3rd year)

“I think it’s important to get to first years early. I discovered MSA my sophomore year, but I just know that having that strong community or having access to resources that early would have make my life so better, so maybe having something more structured to get to them so [first years] know they’re there.” (4th/5th year)



*“[The staff] make it easy to talk to them. It’s about you and how you’re doing. They care and you can tell they care because they continue to reach out beyond what they’re meant to do. When you have people supporting you, it feels good.”*  
(4th/5th year)

## THEME 9:

### Staff Members are Valuable Resources for Students

*Students remarked the benefit of their relationships with MSA staff. The staff serves as mentors, advisors, supervisors and trusted confidants to students.*

“If you’re counting people as resources as I do, the Assistant Directors and Director are the most useful. I can talk to them and they are willing to give me their advice and listen. I value them a lot but I think it’s less understood that you can go to them and they will be there.” (1st year)

“There’s a welcoming staff that’s willing to listen to students.” (2nd year)

“I feel like most spaces in the university just aren’t for me. With MSA it’s different. I can talk to staff members about anything.” (3rd year)

“MSA doesn’t feel like the feds. The staff members aren’t focused on fixing the diversity problem. They see students as actual people and not just a number. They care about students on an individual basis.” (3rd year)

“Dav as a human being has been really influential in helping me feel more comfortable in my queerness. I don’t think without MSA in some ways I could be myself. I really appreciate the work that they’ve done to facilitate and create spaces for people to exist in the ways that they need to.” (3rd year)

“[The MSA staff] are super kind people and deeply knowledgeable and intelligent and so willing to give that knowledge.” (4th/5th year)

“Whenever I walk into their offices, it’s full attention. It’s like the air almost clears and it’s you and them... They are also teachers in a way and teach you how to navigate this university and maintain your wellness. If I go to Dav, she helps me realize I can’t quit. I really appreciate them.” (4th/5th year)

“I know the staff really well, and I’m grateful that I have staff and faculty on campus that I can know on a face to name basis and know me really well and know my story and I know theirs, so I appreciate that.” (4th/5th year)

## DISCUSSION

The focus groups reveal students develop a deeper understanding of MSA as they continue their tenure at the institution. First and second year students were less able to talk in great detail about the structure of MSA, its location within Northwestern offices, its staff, resources, and services. Third, fourth, and fifth-year students were able to recall and explain much more about MSA. This may be due to the communication issue mentioned in the focus groups. Students stressed that sometimes MSA's outreach and advertising were not concise or clear enough to where they could understand who MSA was and what they did. This could be a possible area of improvement for MSA in order to better serve their students.



## ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

The area of academic enrichment was a bit difficult to decipher, as many students did not have many ideas on how MSA could or was helping them academically. However, students were able to name a few resources, such as free printing, study spaces, or spaces for talking about identity that helped them with their academics. Some students did report that they did not see a reason why MSA would want to help with their academics, as there are other offices or spaces for Northwestern to do that.

The data from the student surveys shows that students who are involved with MSA are more likely to struggle with their academics or feelings of satisfaction with their education. Students did not clearly touch on this in the focus groups. Perhaps where students need more help academically is finding confidence in their performance, versus ways

to succeed. There was no mention of MSA's relationship with advisers, deans, or programs featuring faculty. A point of exploration for MSA is how to build relationships with academics without the relationship focusing on training. MSA is not designed nor equipped to train or facilitate learning for our academic colleagues. However, the review of exiting data revealed a need for relationship building and confidence building between marginalized students and faculty (Tuit, 2003). Further exploration should be done to identify the role of MSA in supporting marginalized student experiences inside of the classroom.



Multicultural Student Affairs office assistants gathering for the quarterly training

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

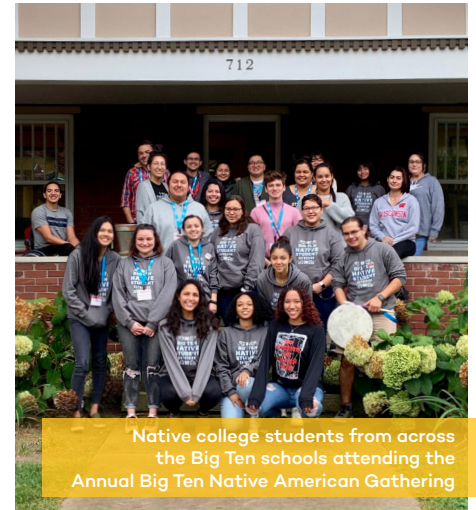
The data from the focus groups supported the data that emerged from the student surveys, showing that students wanted to play active roles in their communities. MSA's programming is helping students learn how to be more connected within and outside of the communities they are a part of. The data from the student surveys showed how students involved with MSA are often coming to this programming already with some understanding of how they may want to help their communities. It is apparent that some students are also learning how to be allies with other marginalized communities as they learn about ways to create change within their own. Other focus group participants expressed greater interest in learning about communities they do not identify within. MSA must explore the creative tension of affinity specific programming with intercultural and solidarity building programming.

### Spring APIDA Book Club





Travel ban protesters gather outside the MCC 2017



Native college students from across the Big Ten schools attending the Annual Big Ten Native American Gathering

## IDENTITY FORMATION

The data from the focus groups supported the data that was pulled from the student surveys, exemplifying the identity struggles that emerged once students came to campus. Students are benefiting greatly from the MSA programming by learning how to understand and articulate the complexities of their own identities. The data from the focus groups also showed that students often reported feeling out of place or like they didn't belong, which was also reflected in the student surveys, but MSA was helping students reach a greater sense of belonging as they came into their own identities.

Students also expressed a need for more programming around multiple identities. An idea that came up frequently was programming for mixed race or multiracial students. Students often expressed a desire for more intersectional programming, even going as far as how their racial or ethnic background ties in with their socioeconomic background. This may be an area that MSA could attempt to do some work on in the future.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Students from each year had varying levels of influence from MSA on their leadership skills. This may be an opportunity for MSA to provide a more uniform way of workshoping leadership skills with students. Some students were getting leadership experience in general, while others were not; some were getting said experience from MSA, while others were not. Yet, students who were getting leadership development from MSA had only positive experiences that often affected them in other leadership roles.



Harvest Indigenous Discussions



NCE performing at Harambee

## WELLNESS

The data from the student surveys showed that many students who are involved with MSA were experiencing a negative campus climate at higher rates than non-MSA involved students. Students in the focus groups reported feelings of lack of safety and relief stemming from those experiences. These students also reported they were gaining a better sense of wellness through their interactions with MSA and attending MSA programming. Even if the event may not have centered around wellness, students were able to draw connections between being in a space they considered as safe (such as one of the MSA spaces) and how that gives them a sense of security and better mental or physical wellness. Students were also learning about what wellness to them meant through MSA programming and learning how they can practice and prioritize it in their lives.

## COMMUNICATION

The focus group results reveal some students are uncertain about what MSA is, including why it exists, who is a part of the team, what spaces are a part of MSA's oversight, and how MSA serves students. There is confusion about what is deemed an MSA program, rather than an event or resource provided by a student group or other campus resources. Some of the confusion may be the result of MSA being an organization that has continued to evolve over the years. Another culprit for the confusion may be the various desired outcomes from MSA stakeholders (students, staff, faculty, and alumni). As MSA works with students to inform its ongoing evolution, the unit must answer the questions why does MSA exist, who does MSA serve and in what capacity.

## STAFFING

Those students who have relationships with MSA staff report a closeness and familiarity. Students express feeling supported, comfortable, and seen by staff. Yet, students also reported only knowing the one staff member who identifies with their specific identity. A consideration for MSA to explore are the potential outcomes of the existing structure. What might students be missing if they only interact with one staff member based upon one aspect of their identity? How does the staffing structure support or prohibit student development? Some students also communicated not knowing who the MSA staff is or what they do. MSA

must explore touch points that will increase visibility while articulating how MSA's presence as a whole can and does enhance the experience of marginalized students. Finally, if MSA continues to operate from a model of one person per identity, the organization must consider which marginalized communities are not being served.

## ON THE HORIZON

After reviewing the datasets and completing focus groups, MSA will now move into a brainstorming period with key stakeholders. Alumni, faculty, and staff will be brought together to make meaning of the rich feedback students have provided MSA. The MSA team will then utilize the totality of input gathered from data, focus groups, and stakeholders to begin building out a strategic plan that will allow MSA to best serve marginalized students in the present while preparing for the future. An advisory group will be assembled to ensure the community continues to have a role in the future of MSA. The MSA team anticipates the roll out of a strategic plan will take place over the next 3-5 years. External influences such as the evolution of other campus units, new University leadership, and the ongoing shift in student attendance must be taken into consideration when envisioning a timeline for this process. MSA will continue to provide updates about the strategic planning process to constituents through a weekly newsletter and MSA's website.





**APPENDIX A**

Copy of email invitation sent to students randomly selected to participate in focus groupsa

**APPENDIX B**

Facilitator focus group training protocol, script and questions

**APPENDIX C**

Facilitator focus group training slides

**APPENDIX D**

MSL definitions and design

**APPENDIX E**

Citation

**APPENDIX F**

MSA programs named in report

D

D

E

N

**APPENDIX**

I

X

# APPENDIX A

**FROM:** Dear \${m://FirstName},

sa-assessment@northwestern.edu

**SUBJECT:**

Focus Group for Multicultural Student Affairs  
(\$10 Amazon gift card)

You are one of many students at NU who either have participated in a Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) program, or have been part of a student group that receives advising by MSA staff, in the last two years. Therefore, we'd like to invite you to participate in a focus group to tell us more about your experience.

The purpose of these focus groups is to (1) to listen to students about your experiences at Northwestern thus far through the lens of identity; (2) learn about the way/s in which you come into contact with MSA's programs, staff and/or services and; (3) learn from students how MSA can better foster a nurturing campus climate that is inclusive and welcoming for students with marginalized identities.

Focus groups are organized by year in school (first year, second year, etc.) and will last about 90 minutes. All participants will be served a light meal and also will receive a \$10 gift card to Amazon at the end of the meeting. Your participation and responses will be held in strict confidence, and the results will be used to improve the programming and advising offered by MSA.

To view available focus group dates and sign up for a time, please [\\${!://SurveyLink?d=CLICK HERE}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:  
[\\${!://SurveyURL}](#)

Thanks for your consideration! We hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,  
Student Affairs Assessment & Planning  
sa-assessment@northwestern.edu  
847-491-7359

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:  
[\\${!://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

# APPENDIX B

## MULTICULTURAL STUDENT AFFAIRS FOCUS GROUPS

2019-20

### Script & Questions

Welcome to one of several focus groups we are conducting this year with students whom have interfaced with Multicultural Student Affairs here at Northwestern.

My name is [insert name of facilitator]. I am the [insert title of facilitator].

Assisting me is [insert name of co-facilitator] who is a staff member in [insert name of department].

The purpose of these focus groups is to (1) to listen to students about your experiences at Northwestern thus far through the lens of identity; (2) learn about the way/s in which you come into contact with MSA's programs, staff and/or services and; (3) learn from students how MSA can better foster a nurturing campus climate that is inclusive and welcoming for students with marginalized identities.

You are one of many students at NU who either have participated/attended in an MSA program or have been part of a student group that receives advising by MSA staff in the last two years. These focus group sessions have been organized by year in school, this is the [1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, graduate student] focus group.

Thank you for agreeing to come tonight.

In the next hour and a half we're going to ask you a number of questions on how MSA may or may not have contributed to your sense of belonging, community engagement, wellness, identity formation, academic enrichment, leadership development and access to resources. There are no right or wrong answers. Your experiences may be the same as or different from the other students in the group, but we want to hear them all.

Finally, we're excited to hear how you think MSA could better foster a thriving campus climate that is inclusive and welcoming for students with marginalized identities. Neither my colleague nor myself are MSA staff members so please be as honest as possible, know you will not hurt our feelings. In fact, MSA wants to hear your honest feedback to better serve marginalized communities on campus.

Your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence and, while we hope you will feel free to share your thoughts, you do not have to answer every question and you may leave the group at any time without penalty. We also ask that you respect what other's share by honoring their confidence/privacy as well.

In order to help us remember your suggestions and experiences, we will be recording the focus group. To protect your privacy, we won't turn on the recorder until everyone has introduced themselves and, as you can see, we are on a first name basis only tonight. Your name will not be associated with the focus group results nor will your responses affect, in any way, your academic standing here at Northwestern. The recording will be used only in the writing of the focus group report. Furthermore, the recording will be erased once the final report has been submitted. Does anyone have any questions about this?

Should you have any lingering thoughts or additional comments you would like to share after this session there is an opportunity share comments anonymously online through the MSA website.

Thank you. Let's begin.

[Do NOT turn on the recorder yet.]

# APPENDIX B

Would each of you briefly introduce yourselves by sharing your first name and pronouns then anything you feel comfortable sharing with the group? For example, you might want to tell us your school and/or major, your hometown, your year in school, a student group in which you are most involved, and/or your identities for example ethnicity, gender, sexuality, race, etc. . . whatever you want.

[Turn on tape recorder.]

1. What is your understanding of MSA's staff structure, programs, resources, and services they offer?
2. How often do you engage with MSA? (i.e., utilize MSA resources, meet with staff, spend time in MSA spaces, etc.)
  - a. Follow-up: what motivates you to continue to engage with MSA?
3. What are the strengths of MSA? Which of the programs, activities, communities, and/or resources provided by MSA have been most valuable/helpful to you and why?
4. What are the opportunities for growth for MSA? (What can MSA do to serve you as an individual?)

This next question is about identity formation

5. How, if at all, has MSA helped you develop your sense of identity?

This next question is about Community Engagement

6. How has MSA influenced your connection to the communities you belong to?
7. Do you feel that attending MSA events inspires you to become more engaged in solidarity with other groups experiencing marginalization? Why or why not?

This next question is about wellness

8. In what ways has MSA enhanced your overall sense of wellbeing?

This next question is about Academic Enrichment

9. What role if any do you see MSA contributing in your academic experience at Northwestern?

These next few questions are about Leadership Development

10. Do you feel that MSA has allowed you to envision or strengthen your own leadership capacity? Why or why not?
11. Any final thoughts about what you would like to see come from MSA to enrich your experience at Northwestern?

[Turn off tape recorder.]

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and insights today. This is valuable information that will help inform the future direction of MSA. You are one of several focus groups taking place on this topic so there may be students you know who will be asked similar questions; therefore, please refrain from discussing what you shared to allow other focus group participants to share their own truths. Should you have any lingering thoughts or additional comments you would like to share after this session there is an opportunity share comments anonymously online through the MSA website.

Finally as a token of our appreciation for your time and insights, here are your \$10 gift cards.

[Distribute one card per participant]

Thank you!

# APPENDIX C

## Tips on Conducting Focus Groups

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### Overview

- Team approach
- General Process
- Logistics
- Facilitation Techniques
- Types of Participants
- Conclusion

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"The researcher creates a permissive environment in the focus group that nurtures different perceptions and points of view, without pressuring participants to vote, plan, or reach consensus."

Schuh, J.H. & Upcraft, M.L. & Associates (2001). *Assessment practice in student affairs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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## Team Approach

### Team Approach

Moderator

- Directing the discussion
- Keeping the conversation moving
- Identifying future questions

Note Taker

- Keeper of the materials
- Handles logistics & environmental conditions
- Capturer of all things said (within reason)
- Identifies swell quotes

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## Logistics

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# APPENDIX C

## Materials

- Name badges
- Markers / Pens
- If needed, Informed Consent Forms, 2 per participant
- A digital recorder
- Focus group protocol for moderator & note taker
- Incentives (if applicable)

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## General Process

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## Getting Started

- Arrive early
- Make others comfortable
  - Food
  - Small talk
- Keep the main focus group goals in mind
- Share ground rules...

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## Ground Rules

- We're free to share honest thoughts
- No correct or incorrect answers – only different points of view
- Confidentiality
- Turn off cell phones / limit distractions
- There's no need to agree with others, but you must listen respectfully

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## Ice-Breaker Question

- Introductions  
(including moderator and note -taker)
- A question that relates to the focus group goal
- Participation by all attendees

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## Question Protocol

- Semi-structured protocol
- Scripted introduction
- Careful wording of questions
- Maintain the balance...structure vs. flow
- Stick to the questions

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# APPENDIX C

## Facilitation Techniques

### Facilitation Techniques

- The Pause**
  - Five-seconds
  - Helps participants gather thoughts
- The Probe**
  - “Would you explain further?”
  - “Can you give an example?”
  - “Tell me more!”

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## Types of Participants

### Participant Types

- The Expert**
- The Dominant Talker**
- The Shy Participant**
- The Rambler**

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## Conclusion

### Wrap up

- Thank the participants
- “Is anything missing from our discussion?”
- Distribute incentives (if applicable)
- Extra food
- ENJOY!

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## Questions?

Robert W. Aaron, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, Student Affairs Assessment & Planning  
[robert.aaron@northwestern.edu](mailto:robert.aaron@northwestern.edu)  
847.467.7579

# APPENDIX D



## OVERVIEW OF MSL INSTRUMENT CORE SCALES

The MSL consists of core scales that are administered to all students (which will be repeated in subsequent years), and sub-studies that are administered to a subgroup of the sample.

### MSL Core Scales

- **Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS):** Leadership capacities associated with the Social Change Model including Consciousness of Self, Congruence, Commitment, Collaboration, Controversy with Civility, and Citizenship. The Omnibus SRLS represents students' overall capacities for socially responsible leadership.
- **Leadership Efficacy:** Individuals' internal beliefs in the likelihood that they will be successful when engaging in leadership.  
Example: *How confident are you that you can be successful at... Working with a team on a group project.*
- **Cognitive Skills:** Students' growth in advanced cognitive skills, including critical thinking, self-directed learning, and making complex connections between topics.  
Example: *To what extent do you feel you have grown in ability to put ideas together and to see relationships between ideas*
- **Campus Climate:** The degree to which students feel connected and appreciated as members of the campus community. Includes three factors:
  - (1) Sense of Belonging: feelings of affiliation with the campus community  
Example: *I feel valued as a person at this school*
  - (2) Discriminatory Climate (Direct): concrete experiences of discrimination from community members  
Example: *Faculty have discriminated against people like me*
  - (3) Discriminatory Climate (Indirect): general perceptions of a hostile campus environment  
Example: *I would describe the environment on campus as negative/hostile*
- **Socio-Cultural Discussions with Peers:** Frequency of engagement with peers outside the classroom around a set of compelling social and cultural issues including diversity, human rights, and religious beliefs.  
Example: *How often have you held discussions with students whose political opinions were very different from your own*
- **Social Change Behaviors:** Students' actual behavioral enactment of socially responsible leadership capacities.  
Example: *How often have you been actively involved with an organization that addresses a social or environmental problem*
- **Social Perspective-Taking:** Ability to take another person's point of view and accurately infer their thoughts and feelings.  
Example: *Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place*
- **Resilience:** Characteristics that enable persistence despite adversity and positive coping with stress.  
Example: *I am not easily discouraged by failure*
- **Hope:** One's capacity to generate, initiate action toward, and sustain motivation for goals. Comprised of two factors:
  - (1) Agency – belief in one's ability to initiate and sustain goal-directed efforts  
Example: *My past experiences have prepared me well for my future*
  - (2) Pathways – belief in one's ability to envision multiple routes to achieve goals.  
Example: *Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve a problem*
- **Social Generativity:** Concern for future generations as well as engagement in current actions to advance the future of a community.  
Example: *I think I am responsible for ensuring a state of well-being for future generations*

*MSL includes a proprietary mix of scales created specifically for the purpose of the study, and scales for which permission has been granted for use.*



# APPENDIX D



## OVERVIEW OF MSL INSTRUMENT SUB-STUDIES SCALES

Sub-studies noted on this page were included in the 2018 MSL data collection. Reminder: sub-studies are administered only to a portion of the students at each campus.

### MSL Sub-Studies Scales

- **Collective Racial Esteem (CRE):** Self-concept related to membership in a broader racial group comprised of three factors:
  - (1) Private CRE- personal assessment of the value of one's racial group  
Example: *In general, I'm glad to be a member of my racial group (Private CRE)*
  - (2) Public CRE- personal beliefs about how others value one's racial group  
Example: *In general, others respect my race (Public CRE)*
  - (3) Identity Salience- degree of centrality of racial group membership to one's self-concept.  
Example: *Overall, my race has very little to do with how I feel about myself (Identity Salience)*
  
- **Spirituality:** Process of meaning-making grounded in the exploration of life's deeper meanings.  
Example: *How often do you think about developing a meaningful philosophy of life*
  
- **Motivation to Lead:** Cognitive construct affecting how likely one is to pursue or participate in leadership positions or processes. Comprised of three factors driving leadership engagement based on:
  - (1) Internal Self-Concept- personal standards about how their best self should act  
Example: *Providing quality leadership, whether recognized or not, is important to me*
  - (2) External Self-Concept- concern regarding others' perceptions and how successes and failures will be attributed to them  
Example: *It is important that others think I do high quality work*
  - (3) Goal Internalization- one's personal commitment to a group's desired outcomes.  
Example: *I put my group's progress toward a goal above my own success*

# APPENDIX D



## OVERVIEW OF MSL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The MSL examines specific environmental factors that leverage and/or constrain leadership development.

### MSL Theoretical Framework: The Social Change Model (HERI, 1996)

The Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) serves as the foundation of the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), which is the core of the MSL instrument. This model approaches leadership as a purposeful, collaborative, values-based process that results in positive social change.

The MSL has adapted the SRLS over time based on ongoing research and validation; therefore, the version employed within the MSL is unique from the original model as depicted in the image below.

### Core Values of the Social Change Model

#### Group Values

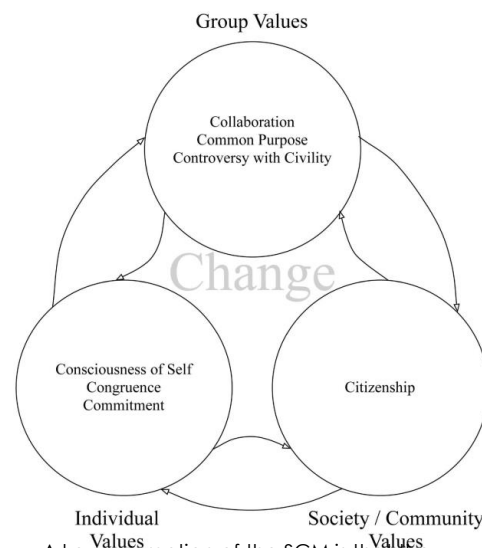
<b>Collaboration</b>	Working with others in a common effort, sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability. Multiplying group effectiveness by capitalizing on various perspectives and talents, and on the power of diversity to generate creative solutions and actions.
<b>Controversy with Civility</b>	Recognizing two fundamental realities of any creative effort: 1) that differences in viewpoint are inevitable, and 2) that such differences must be aired openly but with civility.

#### Individual Values

<b>Consciousness of Self</b>	Being self-aware of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate one to take action.
<b>Congruence</b>	Acting in ways that are consistent with one's values and beliefs. Thinking, feeling, and behaving with consistency, genuineness, authenticity, and honesty toward others.
<b>Commitment</b>	Having significant investment in an idea or person, both in terms of intensity and duration. Having the energy to serve the group and its goals. Commitment originates from within, but others can create an environment that supports an individual's passions.

#### Community Values

<b>Citizenship</b>	Believing in a process whereby an individual and/or a group become responsibly connected to the community and to society through some activity. Recognizing that members of communities are not independent, but interdependent.
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A key assumption of the SCM is that the ultimate goal of leadership is positive social change. An individual's capacity for this is represented by the dynamic interaction across all seven of the SCM values. In the MSL study this is represented by the Omnibus SRLS.

Leadership capacities are in turn influenced by other developmental factors embedded in the study (e.g., motivation, efficacy, higher-order cognitive abilities, resilience)

# APPENDIX D



## OVERVIEW OF MSL VARIABLES & SCALES

The following variables are included in the MSL study. Keep in mind that – although an item might be a campus experience or environment variable – it could also be used as an outcome measure.

### Demographic & Classification Variables (Inputs):

*These variables can be used as classification, sorting, or control variables for evaluative efforts.*

- Age
- Gender
- Military Service
- Sexual Orientation
- Ethnic and Racial Group Memberships
- Current Living Arrangements
- Ability/disability Status
- USA Citizen Generational Status
- Educational Generational Status
- Socioeconomic Status
- College Grades
- Religious Affiliation
- Academic Major
- Transfer Status
- Full- or Part-Time Enrollment
- Class Standing
- Political Views

### Pre-College Control Measures:

*MSL relies on a number of control variables to inform the understanding of learning outcomes. These include quasi-pretests\* capturing pre-college knowledge and development, as well as involvement in a number experiences prior to college. These include:*

- Involvement in High School Clubs
- Involvement in Community Organizations
- Pre-college Leadership Training
- Socially Responsible Leadership Capacity
- Cognitive Skills
- Leadership Efficacy
- Spirituality
- Social Perspective-Taking
- Social Change Behaviors
- Collective Racial Esteem
- Resilience
- Hope
- Social Generativity

### Campus Experiences (Environments):

*The MSL contains the following measures of campus experiences, involvement, and interaction.*

- Breadth and Depth of On- and Off- Campus Organizational Involvement
- Participation in Positional Leader Roles (on- and off-campus)
- Involvement in Campus Recreation Services
- Frequency and Forms of Community Service Involvement
- Academic engagement experiences (e.g., study abroad, internships)
- Amount of On- and Off- Campus Work Experience
- Participation in a Variety of Leadership Training, Education, and Development Programs
- Engagement in Socio-Cultural Discussions with Peers
- Mentoring by Various Constituencies (e.g., faculty, staff, peers, family, race/gender of most significant mentor)
- Social Media Usage
- Perceptions of Campus Climate

### Outcome Measures:

*The MSL instrument contains the following outcome measures.*

- Socially Responsible Leadership Capacities: Consciousness of Self, Congruence, Commitment, Collaboration, Controversy with Civility, Citizenship, and Omnibus SRLS
- Leadership Efficacy
- Motivation to Lead
- Complex Cognitive Skills
- Resilience
- Hope: Agency & Pathways
- Collective Racial Esteem
- Spirituality
- Social Perspective-Taking
- Social Change Behavioral Enactment
- Open End: What does leadership mean to you?

\*quasi-pre-test refers to retrospective measures in this cross-sectional study

# APPENDIX D



## EXAMPLES OF HOW TO USE YOUR MSL DATA

The MSL allows for multiple ways the data collected could be used for assessment, evaluation, and research. The following are just a few examples of ways that MSL data could be utilized.

### Conceptual Framework: Astin's I-E-O Model

An adapted version of Astin's (1993) I-E-O model is the conceptual framework for the design of the MSL instrument. It is a useful resource when conducting assessment, evaluation, and research, and allows individuals to better isolate the role of the college environment on a particular outcome measure.

- **Inputs:** Students' pre-college characteristics
- **Environments:** Programs, experiences, relationships, and other factors in the collegiate environment
- **Outcomes:** Students' characteristics across theoretical measures associated with socially responsible leadership or other outcomes after exposure to the college environment

#### Assessing Descriptive Information

<b>Question:</b> <i>What percent of commuter students participate in campus student organizations?</i>	<b>Analytic Methods:</b> Cross-tabs, means, frequencies
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#### Assessing Links to Academics

<b>Question:</b> <i>Do students who are involved in college organizations have higher college GPA than those who do not?</i>	<b>Analytic Methods:</b> t-test, one-way ANOVA
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#### Assessing Learning Outcomes

<b>Question:</b> <i>Do students who participate in leadership programs score higher on citizenship than those who do not?</i>	<b>Analytic Methods:</b> t-test, one-way ANOVA
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#### Assessing Difference

<b>Questions:</b> <i>Is student participation in community service significantly different from our peer institutions?</i> <i>Is there a difference in leadership self-efficacy between male and female students?</i>	<b>Analytic Methods:</b> t-test, one-way ANOVA, regression
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#### Assessing Relationships

<b>Questions:</b> <i>Is there a significant relationship between socio-cultural discussions and leadership outcomes?</i> <i>Is there a significant relationship between class standing and leadership efficacy for first generation students?</i>	<b>Analytic Method:</b> Correlation
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#### Assessing Influence

<b>Questions:</b> <i>Do socio-cultural discussions have an effect on leadership outcomes above and beyond race and gender?</i> <i>Which college experiences contribute to self-perceived growth in leadership efficacy?</i>	<b>Analytic Method:</b> Regression
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# APPENDIX E

## CITATION

- Northwestern University Campus Climate Survey  
<https://www.northwestern.edu/diversity/student-climate-survey/>
- Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership  
<https://www.leadershipstudy.net/about>
- Consortium on financing Higher Education  
<http://web.mit.edu/cofhe/>
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<https://www.northwestern.edu/inclusion/reviews-and-reports/msa-program-review.html>
- MSA Focus Group Information 2020  
<https://www.northwestern.edu/msa/about/focus-group-information-2020.html>
- Tuitt, F. (2003). Afterword: Realizing a more inclusive pedagogy. In A. Howell & F. Tuitt. *Race and higher education: Rethinking pedagogy in diverse college classrooms* (pp. 243-268). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review.

# APPENDIX F

- **APIDA 101** - APIDA 101 is a new MSA program that explores what it means to be a person of Asian, Pacific Islander, and/or Desi descent in the United States. Over the course of six sessions, you will make connections between your cultural/ethnic identity and a racial/political identity, analyze the history and dynamics of the APIDA experience in the United States, explore Asian activism at home and abroad, and develop strategies for allyship and solidarity across communities.
- **Harvest** - Monthly dinner and discussion series on topics important to Indian Country and the Northwestern Native and Indigenous Community. All are welcome.
- **Solidari-tea** - APIDA Solidari-Teas are a space for Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) students to come together and build community through reflection, story-telling, and discussions about the APIDA identity and experience. No prior knowledge is required to participate. This is a co-constructed space for students to learn about, from, and with each other – with tea, coffee, and snacks.
- **Latinx Community Gatherings** - Throughout the academic year, MSA hosts a community gathering for Latinx students and student organizations to make connections and to discuss local and global events, address important issues, share information, and build community.
- **Black House Community Meetings** - Throughout the academic year, MSA hosts an open meeting for students to come together in community, discuss campus happenings, current issues, and share information about upcoming events. Free food is provided, and the meetings are open to all.
- **JubilAsian** - is an annual celebration hosted by Northwestern University's Multicultural Student Affairs office as part of APIDA (Asian, Pacific Islander, and Desi American) Heritage Month, celebrated in May. JubilAsian is a celebration of the vibrancy, diversity, and resilience of the APIDA community at Northwestern and beyond. Each year, JubilAsian is planned by a dedicated committee of NU APIDA students who help shape its theme, goals, and structure.
- **Creating Change** - Every year MSA assembles a student delegation to the Creating Change Conference, run by the National LGBTQ Task Force, is the foremost political, leadership, and skills-building conference for the LGBTQ social justice movement.
- **Latinx Congratulatory** - The Latinx Congratulatory is one of several end of year celebrations organized by MSA. The Latinx Congratulatory is our way of recognizing and celebrating the accomplishments of Northwestern's Latinx graduates. While the event has a special emphasis on our undergraduates, participation is open to any and all graduates who identify with the Hispanic/Latinx community.
- **InclusionNU Fund Board** - The InclusionNU Fund is a grant distributed by Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) that supports registered Northwestern University student organizations in implementing programs and initiatives that align with MSA's mission of cultivating an inclusive and welcoming campus through intentional engagement with difference.