Integrating Diversity into Arts Management Education

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Abstract

Demographic shifts have altered arts audiences throughout the world, an important external factor for educators to remain cognizant of as they prepare future arts managers (Johnson et al, n.d.; MetLife, 2011). This article advocates for and discusses teaching methodologies mindful of both diversity and multiculturalism. Educators are encouraged to infuse issues of diversity into their teaching to foster inclusion and cultural sensitivity in future arts managers. The teaching strategies outlined in this article are designed to help students develop the skills necessary to empathize with the lived experiences of the diverse populations served by arts organizations.

Keywords: Diversity, Globalization, Inclusion, Multiculturalism

Introduction

Cultural diversity has increasingly received international attention. Given that three quarters of the world's major conflicts have a cultural dimension, finding ways to bridge gaps between cultures remains a top priority for peace, stability, and development (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, 2013). Indeed, globalization and transnationalism has created opportunities for Arts Management educators to innovate in their approach to preparing students for the field. Future arts managers must become global citizens. DeVereaux (2008) defined the global citizen as someone who is engaged, globally, in a way that is embracing of the diversity of cultures the world has to offer, and is in some sense, someone who supports the value of diversity, and even contributes to its flourishing or development in the cultural sphere. For us diversity is human differences more likely to lead to a cultural clash when humans ignore, devalue, or misunderstand them (Loden, 2010). As Figure 1 shows, the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity below identify the plethora of invisible and visible ways that humans may exist in societies.
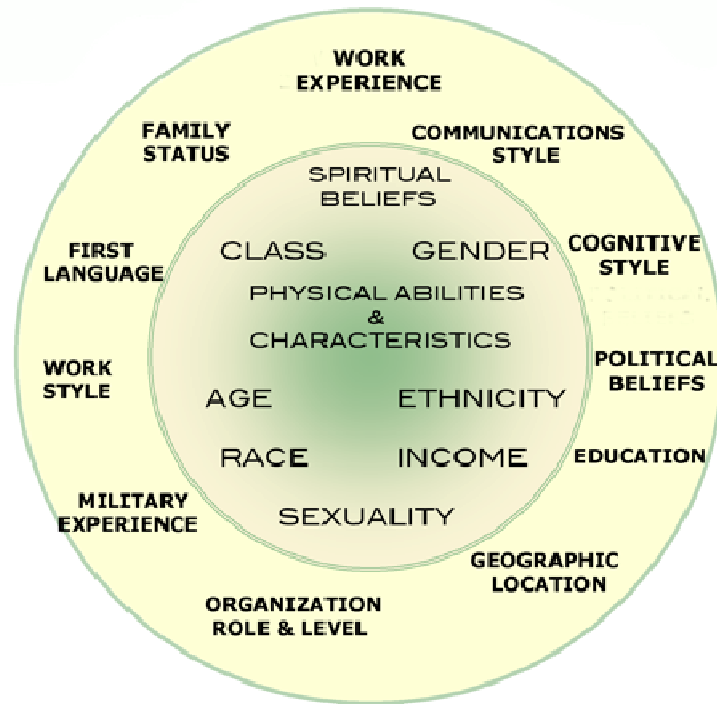
Figure 1 Loden's (2010) Primary & Secondary Dimensions of Diversity

In this article, we share four methodologies we have used in our teaching to promote cultural sensitivity, and foster an appreciation for diversity to assist Arts Management students in becoming global citizens. Because some scholars have described Arts Management as elitist, exclusionary, hegemonic, hierarchical, imperialist, paternalistic, and undemocratic (DeVereaux, 2008; and Keller, 1989), educators should do more in their teaching to encourage Arts Management students to become global citizens, while fostering an appreciation for all of human diversity.

Teaching Strategies

Collaborative Learning

As McKeachie (2006) pointed out, "cooperative peer learning is one of the most valuable tools for effective teaching." Previous literature has described advantages for the success of peer learning. Some of these reasons include interaction with a peer or peers, mutual support and stimulation, and it provides the opportunity for elaboration. More importantly, collaborative learning encourages students to explain, express, and question opinions, admit confusion, and reveal misconceptions reciprocally (McKeachie, 2006). Collaborative learning allows students to practice a highly regarded soft skill while enhancing their ability to learn. Juxtaposing collaborative learning with diversity (Michaelsen, Knight, & Fink, 2002) has yielded intriguing results in one of Dr. Cuyler's graduate Arts Administration classes.

In the Classroom
Dr. Cuyler has typically taught diverse students from African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino American, and European American descents. Although mostly female, Dr. Cuyler has had some male students in classes, and some students with disabilities, as well as students who self-identify as Gay. Geographic location has also provided an unexpected level of diversity that has provided good material for teaching an appreciation of diversity. Based on the demographic profile of students, Dr. Cuyler purposefully assigned students to groups to work on a particular case problem as an in-class assignment. For example, in one class with nine students, Dr. Cuyler had six female and three male students. The ethnic profile of students included three female international students from Asia (China and Taiwan), two European American female students, and one African American female student. Two of the male students identified as European American, and one identified as Jewish.

To test if intentional diversity would improve the quality of their responses on case problems, Dr. Cuyler arranged students in groups based on their ethnicity and gender. Each group had one Asian female, one male, and one female student from the U. S. Interestingly, the quality of the intentionally diverse formed groups' responses to the case problems suffered. Dr. Cuyler observed that students spent a great deal of time working to not appear, do, or say something that one of their peers might perceive as culturally insensitive. However, during the next week's class session, the same students organized themselves in diverse groups without faculty facilitation. The students naturally chose peers they felt very comfortable with, but each group had a great deal of diversity. For example, even though the Asian international students who chose to work together were all female, two of them were from different parts of China, while the other came from Taiwan. The male students worked together, but they came from Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. Similarly, although the female students from the U. S. worked together, they came from Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

Considerations for Adoption
This class session revealed that using diversity intentionally in collaborative learning exercises might not work as well as unintentional diversity in collaborative learning exercises. Students chose groups based on their level of comfort with their peers. This comfort likely provided the space for students to agree and disagree with each other without fear of appearing culturally insensitive. Most importantly, student formed groups with diversity had higher quality responses to the case problems. These observations suggest that educators should recruit diverse students into their Arts Management programs providing the space for students to interact with others unlike themselves during their course of study. Previous literature (Kabes et al., 2010) supports this strategy as beneficial for graduate students in that they receive sustained and systematic practice of working in groups with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Myth or Truth

Dr. Cuyler has also used an exercise called "Myth or Truth" in classes with undergraduate Arts Management students. This exercise challenges students to question the embedded, often times inaccurate assumptions in stereotypes. In a class of twenty-five students, Dr. Cuyler asked students to organize themselves in five groups with each group containing five students. Because of the college's geographic location near New York City, students had incredibly diverse cultural backgrounds. Similar to Dr. Cuyler's discovery in the previous teaching strategy, unintentional diversity proved very useful.

In the Classroom

Once organized in their groups, each group received an index card with the name of a particular class of people written on it. Dr. Cuyler asked students to discuss and make note of all of the known stereotypes of the particular class of people written on the index card. For example, if a group received an index card with "Gay people" written on it, students would make a list of all of stereotypes known about Gay people. After ten minutes, Dr. Cuyler facilitated a class discussion about each group's findings. After this discussion, Dr. Cuyler asked students to reconvene in their groups and make a list of facts known about the particular class of people. After ten minutes, Dr. Cuyler facilitated a final class discussion of each group's findings and observed that every group had difficulty identifying facts or truths known about the class of people under study.

At this point in the class, Dr. Cuyler used readings from Adams, Bell, and Griffin (2007) and Rosenbaum and Travis (2012) to guide students' interrogation of their own thinking and received truths. This provided the space for Dr. Cuyler to also help students broaden their thinking to acknowledge and accept universal truths about the human condition that bond humans through their similarities, as opposed to dividing them based on their differences. Finally, Dr. Cuyler encouraged students to continuously focus less on human difference and more on human similarities as they moved through their lives and careers. Through this exercise, Dr. Cuyler moved students closer to becoming global citizens by disrupting their assumptions and igniting their intellectual curiosity about the world they live in and the people who live in it with them.

Considerations for Adoption

Educators adopting this strategy should remain poised to play the "devil's advocate." Purposefully using the Socratic Method to compel students to think about how they know what they think they know can become exhausting. Nevertheless, when used mindfully, many students appreciate the exercise of thinking critically and deeply about what they believe, and how they came to believe it (McKeachie, 2006).

Case Studies

Educators often use case studies to teach entrepreneurship and have been successful in the classroom for a number of fields including Business, Education, and Law. Case studies require students to process information and make decisions (Delpier, 2006). This method is particularly useful when introducing and acclimating students with the consulting profession. With some additional consideration, this strategy can help foster empathy. Educators can create space for cross-cultural understanding by including issues specifically related to diversity in classroom case studies. Here, we make the distinction between case studies addressed in the classroom versus those assigned as homework because classroom interaction is a key element of this strategy.

In the Classroom
Dr. Heidelberg utilizes case studies in a variety of classroom contexts. A real-life campus event was the basis of the most successful case study. At a karaoke event produced by students in the Arts Management program an audience member used a racial slur. Many of the students in the class attended the event or had heard about it prior to encountering this scenario as a case study. This particular class focused on various topics related to engagement and community arts. At the time Dr. Heidelberg introduced the case study, students had read multiple articles on issues of inclusion and community building. Dr. Heidelberg briefly reviewed the incident, provided additional details, and split the class into groups representing the following constituencies: the student organization that put on the event, the Black Student Union, campus administrators, and the general student body. Dr. Heidelberg randomly assigned students to the various groups and provided them with a list of questions to discuss. Some of the questions, such as how they felt about the event, all of the groups received, while other groups received only specific questions to their group. Finally, all groups reported on what they felt their group's next step(s) should be to the rest of the class. Asking students to role-play is another important element of this strategy. Placing students into the lived experiences of others is a powerful way of creating understanding. Students acting as a particular person, group, or organizational member present in the case encourages them to see the case from a perspective other than their own. The group asked to represent the general student body actually grappled with their feelings about the incident, giving it true consideration. After this class session, students provided written feedback about their experience. Many students acknowledged that they never thought about the complexity of such an issue from an organizational perspective, or the perspective of people who the slur would directly affect. Educators can utilize case studies to reinforce management concepts as well as provide students with the opportunity to explore the complexity and nuance of diversity issues. Case studies like this also demonstrate that educators need not separate the teaching of diversity issues from organizational, programmatic, and field issues. This is an important lesson because many educational environments treat diversity as a special topic to address as a separate issue from the creation and management of arts organizations.

Considerations for Adoption
Asking students to view a situation from an identity different from their own may cause some students to rely on common stereotypes about that identity. Educators should watch for these instances and gently correct. Elements of the "Myth or Truth" strategy may help here. It is also important for educators to remain mindful of the composition of the class when dividing students into groups. In the above example, the groups were randomly assigned. One of the two Black students in the class was assigned to the group representing the Black Student Union. During the small group discussion period the group deferred solely to this particular student, in effect, forcing her to speak for the entire community. Dr. Heidelberg treated this as a teachable moment by

engaging the entire class in a brief discussion about tokenism. However, the situation could have been avoided as it also prevented the student from getting to see the situation as a member of one of the other groups. This is especially important as many minority students have the experience of having to speak on behalf of their minority group throughout their education (Wright, 1984).

It is important to note that the main disadvantage of this strategy is the time required to construct a case study, formulate the materials for each group, and prepare the students for the case. Finding preexisting case studies to adapt can lessen some of the time required to construct a case. Another timesaving technique is to provide students with the course-based information required to address the case study across multiple class sessions.

Exposure Experiences

Dr. Heidelberg noticed an aversion to particular arts organizations in two separate universities where she taught. She deduced that this was due to longstanding perceptions about the geographic location and/or the population(s) those particular organizations serve (Kuhn and Lane n.d.). In many cases, students are more comfortable with the thought of traveling abroad than with going a few miles to *that* part of town. This strategy challenges students to come out of their comfort zone. Exposure experiences are in alignment with the literature demonstrating that personal experience is the best way to alter long-held bias or aversion (Engberg, 2004). This strategy consists of visits to arts organizations (as part of an individual assignment or as a class) as well as bringing representatives of various organizations in to the classroom as guest speakers.

In the Classroom
In a class dedicated to community engagement, students attended two events at an institution they never visited before. This class occurred at a university in close proximity to two major cities and one smaller city currently undergoing revitalization efforts after a long period of economic decline. Due to the loose requirements of the assignment students self-selected into groups that stayed in their comfort zones either from a geographic or constituent perspective. Students who choose to go to areas and organizations that serve diverse populations became effective ambassadors. As part of the assignment, students shared their experiences and their nonchalance about going to a particular venue or area affected their classmates. More students went to organizations self-identified as "outside their comfort zone." Students who visited such organizations noted that their perception after visiting one venue "changed slightly" and "changed significantly" after visiting two or more venues. In future classroom discussions students acknowledged that, once they had experiences with an area and populations, their preconceived notions began to change. They also discussed their ability to begin looking beyond the surface of their assumptions.

Considerations for Adoption
In some cases, it is best if the educator accompanies students, especially in undergraduate contexts. Visiting arts venues is a common occurrence in Arts Management programs. It is a chance for students to see the organization and its staff in their working context. This strategy requires the educator to think purposefully and strategically about the staff and geographic location of the venues they choose to present to students. Students come to expect the field to look like what they see while in their programs. If students only see one type of organization or one type of representative of the field, they may not appreciate and understand the diversity of arts organizations and arts managers that exist. This strategy also applies to guest speakers brought into

classes. It is important for educators to bring in successful Arts Managers, but it is also important to consider how the field defines a successful Arts Manager (Swartz, 2009). By only inviting Arts Managers that represent one identity we may send the message that the space for other races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, or (dis)abilities is limited. When seeking guest speakers it is important to model an appreciation of diversity for students.

Students may resist exposure experiences initially. While Dr. Heidelberg did not experience any outright resistance from her students, this is a very real possibility depending on the background and the comfort level of students. When experiencing aversion to the activities it is important to remember that the educators should create the space for students to receive exposure to different experiences, not to change a student's mind or behavior after one course session, site visit, or guest lecturer. To that end, it is important to address resistance directly; as individuals are far less likely to continue with the most detrimental resistance behaviors, (rude behavior and blatant stereotyping) once confronted (Czopp et al., 2006).

Conclusion

In this article, we discussed a range of teaching methodologies designed to educate future Arts Managers to operate as global citizens. The need to actively address diversity and inclusion in the Arts Management classroom grows as the world becomes smaller and more interconnected through demographic and technology shifts. We utilized Loden's (2010) diversity wheel in order to base our methodologies and analysis on an inclusive definition that goes beyond race and gender. Collaborative learning encourages students to actively seek out opportunities to work with each other in diverse groups, exposing themselves to different points of view. Myth or truth addresses issues of diversity and inclusion explicitly. Students are encouraged to talk frankly about common stereotypes and replace those misconceptions with facts. Case studies are an effective learning tool on their own. Incorporating elements specifically related to understanding the cultures, lived experiences, and unique concerns of others allows educators to encourage students to consider diversity and inclusion, as well as reinforce course content retention and the application of theory. Finally, we discussed the fact that students need to experience the true diversity that already exists in the field first-hand. Exposure experiences challenges educators to be inclusive when choosing guest lecturers, when visiting venues, and showing students examples of the organizations, people, and work that they may do upon graduation. Because each teaching environment is unique, we modeled the methodology and provided information that other educators may want to consider when implementing these strategies in their own classrooms.

What educators do in the classroom has significant implications for how the field is viewed, and potentially replicated by program graduates moving on to become Arts Managers. Current concerns with the continued lack of diversity on arts organizations' staff (Rushton, 2003) and boards (Bradshaw and Fredette, 2012), coupled with the increasing diversity of arts audiences (Johnson et al, n.d.) suggest that there is a need for Arts Managers to be well versed in intercultural communication, empathetic with others, comfortable working in a diverse environment, and able to effectively ally for those with different lived experiences. The teaching methodologies discussed in this article are one way educators can begin to address these needs.

These teaching methodologies are also a call to action to Arts Management educators to model behaviors desired and needed by the field. One of the most important considerations for all of the methodologies discussed is a comfort with speaking about diversity and inclusion. When employing

teaching methodologies focused on increasing awareness and sensitivity to diversity, educators must remain transparent. These strategies cannot create long-term change without open discussion about why Arts Management needs global citizens. Frank discussion about the importance of diversity and inclusion will affect students' willingness to fully engage in, and be changed by, the strategies outlined in this article (Denson, 2009).

While teaching methodologies may encourage an appreciation for diversity within Arts Management programs as they currently exist, there are additional strategies that will help programs better equip students for the field. An additional way to prepare students for the field is to encourage student populations that resemble the diverse population of arts audiences. Recruitment and retention are the next steps in this multilayered progression toward diversity in our programs and in the field of Arts Management (Cuyler, 2013). Concerted efforts to increase diversity through recruitment and retention strategies will help to create a more diverse learning environment for students, allowing them to gain exposure to different identities and ideas from colleagues. These efforts would also create a more diverse population of trained Arts Managers that could begin to address the aforementioned need for diverse staffs and boards. As Arts Management educators continue to professionalize and standardize the training of future Arts Managers, we must maintain diversity and inclusion as a priority. This will ensure that future generations of Arts Managers are global citizens capable of successfully serving and working with everyone.

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