“Hell No, We Won’t Go”
Student Activism as a Vehicle for Leadership Development

Dominique “Dom” McShan, University of Louisville
Colvin T. Georges, Jr., New York Institute of Technology
Tim Bryson, The Ohio State University
Presenter Introductions

Dominique McShan  
Program Coordinator,  
Multicultural Programming & Organizations  
University of Louisville  
dom.mcshan@louisville.edu

Colvin Georges, Jr.  
Assistant Director,  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development  
New York Institute of Technology  
cgeorges@nyit.edu

Tim Bryson  
Graduate Assistant,  
Student Development & Leadership  
The Ohio State University  
bryson.72@osu.edu
“Hell No, We Won’t Go”

What brought you here today?
Learning Outcomes

• Enhance understanding of the historical context of student activism within higher education
• Enhance understanding of the connection between student activism and leadership development
• Discuss opportunities to support and advocate for student activists while navigating institutional policies and campus culture
Introduction of Topic

- Conventional perception of student leaders
- Student activists as student leaders
- Not a new phenomenon, but resurging
- Institutions are microcosms of society
Introduction of Topic

- Modern tactics
  - Mobile photography/videography
  - Social Media
  - E-mail, GroupMe
- New tactics, same skills and competencies
- Reframing student activism as a mechanism for student development
Define activism.
Define activism.

- "Activism consists of efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic, or environmental change, or stasis with the desire to make improvements in society and to **correct social injustice**" (Jacoby, 2017, p. 2)

- "Participation of individuals in group behavior for the purpose of **creating change** -- in attitudes, knowledge, behavior and/or symbols" (Chambers & Phelps, 1993, p. 20).

- "Involvement in demonstrations, where the demonstration is the ‘public display of a group feelings toward a person and cause’ (Merriam-Webster, 2009) and there is a **strong commitment** to involvement in political and social changes towards a social justice means" (Rosas, 2010, p. 7).
twitter activism is wack.
marches don’t work anymore.

police should be forced to wear recording devices.
Social Change Model & Activism

Group Values
- Collaboration
- Common Purpose
- Controversy with Civility

Change

Individual Values
- Consciousness of Self
- Congruence
- Commitment

Society Values
- Citizenship

#NASPA17
Astin’s I.E.O. Model

A → Environment

Environment → Inputs

Environment → Outputs

C

Outputs → B
Role of Student Affairs

Supporting Student Activism as Student Affairs Professionals

(Gaston-Gayles et. al, 2005)
How can campus administrators best support student activism in higher education institutions today?
Strategy → Execution → Success
If you were to take an active stance on a particular issue affecting students today:

1. What would this issue be?
2. Do you feel as though you would be supported by Campus Administrators? Why or Why Not?
Institutional Policies

- Aspects of a strong campus organizing, expression, and free speech policy:
  - A standing committee on campus expression and free speech
  - Institutional stance
  - Guidelines
  - Speaker & Protests rights
  - Access to buildings
  - Marketing guidelines
  - Consequences for violating policy
  - Procedures for addressing policy concerns
  - Appeal process
Things to Consider

• Campus climate, history & response to student activism

• Understand and be able to influence institutional policies

• Know your role

• Create opportunities for critical reflection & discourse

• Encourage students to stray away from the “us vs. them” mentality
Things to Consider

- Develop and support courses & workshops
- Cultivate brave spaces
- Engage students in service-learning opportunities
- Emphasize leadership and professional development
- Supporting students with opposing values or beliefs
Closing

Questions?

**Dominique McShan**
Program Coordinator, Multicultural Programming & Organizations
University of Louisville
dom.mcshan@louisville.edu

**Colvin Georges, Jr.**
Assistant Director, Student Involvement & Leadership Development
New York Institute of Technology
cgeorges@nyit.edu

**Tim Bryson**
Graduate Assistant, Student Development & Leadership
The Ohio State University
bryson.72@osu.edu


