



UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

UB - A Multicultural University

Introduction

Multiculturalism is a buzz word nowadays in most universities in the world. It is very common in universities that are diversity –focused. Multiculturalism means tolerance of other cultures and here at the University of Botswana it means that all students embrace others despite the different cultural background that they come from. Put in another way, Multiculturalism at the University of Botswana simply means that all cultures are equally important. The belief is that no culture is superior to the other and that we have to be tolerant and accommodative of others. This has resulted in all cultures having a great influence on one another and this comes out clearly during the Cultural Diversity Day which is an annual event where all students here at the University celebrate and embrace their different cultures.

Support for multicultural living at the University of Botswana

The University of Botswana, through its vision, mission and value statement has adopted multiculturalism as one of the fairer systems that will allow all students to truly accept and express who they are within the University community. With this, all groups have a comparatively equal status hence the differences in the diverse cultures are better tolerated. Multiculturalism is also a better method for the University Community because in real life situation, no culture is static and this therefore means that as the world changes the different cultures also change.

Advantages of multicultural living at the University of Botswana

1. It is a democratically valuable tool that teaches individuals to embrace diversity and differences hence helping to integrate diverse cultures into the larger University community.
2. It promotes integration.
3. It addresses nation building issues within the University community.
4. It places a stronger emphasis on the cultural component of identity.

5. Through interaction, all cultures become enriched which results in our University becoming a solid community.

Implementing multicultural living at the University of Botswana

The University of Botswana is generally a multicultural community and this is revealed in the following areas;

- a) **Admissions-** the University accepts multiple cultures to the extent that the admission of students is indifferent to the cultural background of the students. Every student, regardless of his/her background, is equally important to the University. It is enriching for students to study in a multicultural environment because such an environment is, by itself, educative and appropriate for today's increasingly globalized community.
- b) **Halls of Residence Accommodation-** all students admitted at the University who are interested in living in the Halls of Residence have an equal opportunity when applying for accommodation. As future leaders of their countries, students are strongly encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards cultural diversity and see it as an asset and not a liability. Students are encouraged to make friends with students from other cultures and learn their different cultures. In addition, students from different cultures should opt to share rooms, and share activities that make their residential life vibrant and exciting.
- c) **Academic-** learning different cultures compliments classroom scholarship which could lead to better educated graduates who can function productively in the contemporary global village.
- d) **Cultural Celebrations-** the University has an annual Cultural Diversity Day where various cultures are exhibited through dress, foods, poetry and dance.

Cultural Diversity Day

The University of Botswana Students are the main drivers of this program and are supported by members of staff. It is important to note that this program is run by the Division of Student Affairs. Under this Division, the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation in collaboration with other departments ensures that Multiculturalism is implemented in the University community.

Cultural Activities

All cultural groups who are interested in participating in any cultural activity must register with the Culture Unit in the Department of Culture, Sports and Recreation.

We trust that you will join the bandwagon of diversity and contribute positively to the growth of cultural diversity here at the University of Botswana.

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