

Multicultural Center Concept Development Committee Preamble

The multicultural center concept development committee was established to address the following issues:

1) conduct a study of the frameworks at other campuses, including 'peer' campuses, on how the centers are organized and governed, their physical location, the space allocated and how it is configured and apportioned, the center's budget and how the center is financed; 2) assess the opinions of IUPUI and the broader community regarding the needs and functions that should be served and; 3) work with Blackburn and Associates in defining the kind of space that could accommodate the multicultural concepts that the committee is developing. The results of our efforts should form the basis that would be used to guide the establishment of the center.

It is the committee's view that the concept of the proposed multicultural center should emphasize "inclusion and focus". The 'inclusive' element would mean that the center would be one that encompasses all elements of cultural diversity present on campus (e.g. African American, Native American, Latino, Asian Pacific Americans, GLBT, women, and people with disabilities). The focus element is needed to address critical needs and issues related to persons of color on campus, e.g. African Americans, Latinos/Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. Examples of important needs include but are not limited to the crisis of African American male retention, the paucity of African American, Latino and Native American tenure-track / tenured faculty, and under-representation of Asian American faculty and students in the humanities. The needs of both inclusiveness and focus are necessary so as to address contentious discussions in the academy around either one or the other concept. Advocates for the 'inclusion only' model argue that focusing on one group is unfair and not equitable to all; a position that results in the pretension of the non-existence of specific problems. The 'inclusion only' belief does not allow for adequate attention to the validation of unique cultural experiences, since this view supports something that is everything, and in so doing, prevents the validation necessary to improve the climate and conditions for students, faculty, and staff of color at IUPUI.

Therefore the model for inclusion with focus would render the multicultural center as the larger, inclusive structure under which specific entities can be 'focused' on and united.

The committee reviewed information on multicultural centers located on nine campuses, many of which were 'peer' campuses. Funding for these centers range from student fees to university and /or private donors. The committee is of the opinion that the source of funds in support of the center should not be attributable to student fees since the source of funds, to a large measure, serves as a measure of the importance of the center to the university. Additionally, the committee feels that the center should serve as an external 'bridge' to the community.

The attached proposed organizational structure indicates the committee's recommendation that the center should have an academic as well as a cultural mission with the academic mission aligned with the university's principles of undergraduate learning. The center should serve the needs of all students (undergraduate, graduate, professional), faculty and staff and serve to make multiculturalism a holistic concept as well as have a research component. The component parts (divisions) within the center should be arranged physically and organizationally so as to foster

interactions between components. Additionally, the organizational structure of the center should be such as to support existing cultural organizations but not so configured so as to interfere with planned growth and expansion. The proposed structure accomplishes this with the added caveat that the center director should have a faculty appointment with some expectation of external fundraising.

While there was much discussion and little consensus about 'where' the center should be located, the committee is unanimous in the belief that the center's location serves as a statement to the community on the value the university places on multiculturalism and its commitment to diversity and that discussions on the center's location should be incorporated into discussions of multicultural concepts. Some committee members feel very strongly that the UC building should become the Multicultural Center (MC) with the space currently occupied by University College-related offices to remain. Such a conversion is the most timely method of implementing our vision, mission, and goal recommendations while acknowledging that the ideal would be to build an independent MC in the future. The need for an MC is immediate and cannot be addressed by waiting for that future date when an independent MC becomes a reality.

The committee believes that the multicultural center should be an integral part of the university's ethos and as such provide services that are critical to the university's ability to accomplish its stated mission. As such, performance metrics that are tied to the mission should be aligned with performance indicators that are established by and evaluated through the diversity council.

The attached vision, mission, and goals, are the result of: discussions of this committee's deliberations as well as the deliberations of past committees at IUPUI; consideration of center operations at other institutions and; an effort by the committee to 'visualize' future multicultural needs of the broader community. Due to time constraints, the committee was unable to assess the needs of the broader IUPUI community. However, a process is proposed, and attached, for such and is recommended for future consideration.

Proposed Multicultural Center (MC) at IUPUI

Vision:

- The Multicultural Center at IUPUI represents the institutional commitment to the value of diversity as stated in its mission; as such, the MC will receive base funding from the university, which may be supplemented by a student fee.
- The MC will be a part of the Chief Diversity Officer's (CDO) portfolio.
- The MC will function as a safe haven for African American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American students, as well as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) students and women, where their identities can be affirmed through visual and programmatic representation.
- The MC will function as a resource center and clearinghouse for materials, visual media, and publications that speak to the experiences of diverse groups in higher education, i.e., journals that publish the scholars representing these groups and such books as Cuyjet's *African American Men in College*.
- The MC will provide a space for creating partnerships internally to strengthen collaborations among students and student-faculty relationships.
- The MC will foster programmatic partnerships between IUPUI student and community organizations.
- The MC will function as a space in which the value of diversity is promoted as an integral component of undergraduate and graduate academic training, preparing students for the 21st century.
- The MC will be comprised of multiple units, each dedicated to African Americans, Latino/Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, GLBTs and women, directly including, but not limited to, the student organizations that serve the communities of color both on and off campus.
- In recognition of the history of the land upon which IUPUI exists, the MC should be named after an important member of the African American community.

Mission:

- The Multicultural Center will support the entire student population by promoting the value of diversity, broadening multicultural awareness and sensitivity, and advancing and supporting cultural competence and civic responsibility among *all* members of the IUPUI community.
- While being inclusive of diverse IUPUI communities including GLBT students, women, and students with disabilities, the MC will focus attention on African Americans, Latinos/Hispanics, Asian Pacific Americans, and Native Americans.
- The creation of a MC is an exigent response to specifically address the needs of students of color in a traditionally white institution and to improve their rates of recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Goals/Objectives:

- Convert the UC-building to the MC. Space occupied by University College-related offices will remain
- facilitate and promote cross-cultural programming

- encompass programs and activities such as intrusive advising, faculty mentoring, student peer mentoring, focused professional development for faculty in the areas of curriculum and instruction, diversity scholarships and fellowships, promote and facilitate programming specific to diverse communities of students/staff/faculty that complement the communities of color at IUPUI and campus-wide dialogue on diversity in higher education
- assist in the recruitment of faculty of color who can serve as role models and mentors to students of color and who will exemplify IUPUI's commitment to its diversity mission.
- establish, maintain and promote relationships with community partners
- facilitate and promote collaborations while leveraging resources to impact recruitment, retention, graduation, and promotion
- collaborate with existing units to provide programs and services, i.e. Campus Center, Center for Urban & Multicultural Education (CUME), Office for Multicultural Development (OMPD), Office for Women, and others
- communicate to the larger Indianapolis region the campus' commitment to civic engagement
- conduct regular assessment of usage, center programs, etc.. (in house or external reviews /evaluations)
- develop an Advisory Council that includes students, faculty, staff and community members who will serve to assure the sustainability of the Center with a focus on the Mission and Vision of the MC.

Structure:

- The MC should have a Director to oversee all operations
- The MC Director should report directly to the CDO
- Each campus community of focus, African American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American students, as well as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, GLBT and women will have a Director in the MC
- The MC should employ new faculty with dual reporting lines, to the MC and their respective disciplinary departments?
- The MC should employ graduate assistants as staff who would assist in student programming, mentoring, and general office operation
- The MC should provide faculty with incentives to engage in service to the MC (e.g., grants for community engagement; research grants to recruit students assistants; course release for mentorship opportunities)

Clarifying Details re: “multiple units” within the MC:

- Identifiable space must be dedicated for a specific community of students - a space that is a welcoming, culturally affirming, and imparts a sense of ownership in response to the Diversity Performance Indicators. In keeping with a theme of “inclusion with focus,” the dedicated spaces will include those established for African American, Latino/Hispanic American, Native American, and Asian Pacific Islander American communities at IUPUI.
- The dedicated spaces will be proximal to each other and serve as a “counterspace” in order to foster inter-cultural conversations and programming, e.g., identifying and raising

awareness of common experiences/issues as students of color at predominately white institutions. (The term, “counterspace,” is a concept discussed in Critical Race Theory and can be found in such resources as Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction and* Solórzano, D.G., Ceja, M. & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students.)