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The cultural center was to be the place where attitudes, values, knowledge and skills could be compared, debated and shared. For some students, it was to be a safe haven, a place to retreat from the perceived hostility of an unwelcoming campus community.

Black Issues in Higher Education, 2002

Introduction

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas is a thriving urban research institution currently engaged in planning strategically to obtain Top Tier status. For five consecutive years, UNLV has ranked among the top ten most diverse college campuses in the United States. The Best Ethnic Diversity category designated by U.S. News & Reports ranked UNLV sixth in 2014 and second in 2015 identifying the University as a college where students are most likely to encounter undergraduates from racial and ethnic groups different from their own (Summers, 2014).

In 2012, UNLV applied for and received the Minority Serving Institution (MSI) status with the U.S. Department of Education. This designation is given to eligible colleges and universities that meet certain indicators including, but not limited to, the diversity of the student body based on race or ethnicity and the overall number of students qualifying for federal educational financial assistance. UNLV also met the requirements as an Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and is an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

UNLV Students of Color and Graduation Rates

Fall 2015 enrollment data show that students of color comprised over 50 percent of the undergraduate and over 30 percent of graduate students attending the UNLV. Data reported by Maya Starling and Judd Harbin from the spring 2015 Voluntary System of Accountability, 2-NASPA Campus Activities Consortium Study indicate that 31 percent of UNLV undergraduate students were characterized as first generation and 32 percent low income. (2016, p. 11).

The six-year graduation rate of UNLV students of color between fall 2003 to fall 2008 ranged from a high of 40.5 percent in 2004 and a low of 39.1% in 2008 (IAP Data Warehouse, UNLV Data Warehouse, 2014). With an overall four-year graduation rate of 14 percent, as reported by Megan Rauch in an article entitled, Graduation Rates Remain Low at Nevada’s Four-Year College (2016). In addition, students of color who were members of the fall 2009 cohort graduated at a rate of 40.5 percent by August 2015 (UNLV Office of Decision Support, 2016).
The Development of Multicultural Centers on College and University Campuses

Although minimal literature exists related to the establishment of racial/ethnic cultural centers on college and university campuses, what does exist suggests the impetus to establish such centers dates back to the Black student movement of the late 1960s and early 70s (Patton, 2010). First appearing at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs), Black cultural centers “ushered in an awakening on campuses to the idea of being culturally pluralistic” and “became the symbol of this new inclusiveness” (Black Issues, 2002).

---

**TABLE 1. UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE – FALL 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>NUMBER (#)</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3605</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic of any race</td>
<td>6233</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Other/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8335</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>2230</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident Alien (International)</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(UNLV Institutional Analysis & Decision Support, 2015)

**TABLE 2. GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE – FALL 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>NUMBER (#)</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic of any race</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Other/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2563</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident Alien (International)</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity Unknown</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(UNLV Institutional Analysis & Decision Support, 2015)
The 1970s’ centers provided a safe haven and programming resources for African American students (Wei, 1993). As enrollment of students of color continued to increase during the latter part of the 20th century, college and university campuses established culture and multicultural centers as one mechanism to promote racial and ethnic diversity and meet student needs (Benitez, 2010). Beginning in the mid-1980s, college and university campuses “responded to the increasing needs of Asian and Pacific Islander American, Latina/o, and American Indian students by providing facilities and programming agencies that address their articular cocurricular needs” (Liu, Cuyjet, & Sunny, 2010). Theses centers, according to Benitez (2010), provided a “local context for initiating a range of of political, social, and cultural events to and affirm students’ experiences in pursuing their academic goals while preserving their cultural ties and roots”.

**Multicultural Centers on College and University Campuses Models**

A review of related research, campus visits, and information obtained via the Internet strongly suggests that the establishment of multicultural centers occurs almost exclusively at PWIs. The 2011 Custom Research Brief prepared by the Educational Advisory Board (EAF) of the Student Affairs Advisory Council found that most centers of diversity and inclusion were formed around existing student affairs programs often in response specific diversity-related events or discrimination. Further, the Council found that centers appear to begin as a collection of student organizations which expand to identity-based centers and “finally develop into a centralized organization” (Educational Advisory Board, 2011).

Prepared for a member institution, the 2011 EAF brief entitled, *Developing a Center for Diversity and Inclusion*, sought to answer specific questions related to the creation, structure and oversight; general goals; use and roles of boards; campus and community collaboration; and assessment and evaluation. As shown in Table 3, ten universities were profiled to meet answer these questions.

The diversity and inclusion/multicultural centers at contact institutions reflected three different organizational models: identity-specific, programming and professional point-of-contact, and comprehensive service, summarized in Table 4.
TABLE 3. INSTITUTION PROFILES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>APPROXIMATE ENROLLMENT</th>
<th>CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University A</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>Doctoral/Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University B</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>High Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University C</td>
<td>Mid-Atlantic</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>Very High Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University D</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>9,200</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University E</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>8,700</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University F</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>12,100</td>
<td>Very High Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University G</td>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>15,100</td>
<td>Very High Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University H</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>4,400</td>
<td>Very High Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University I</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>6,700</td>
<td>Doctoral/Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University J</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>High Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION/MULTICULTURAL CENTER MODELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTITY–SPECIFIC</th>
<th>PROGRAMMING AND PROFESSIONAL POINT OF CONTACT</th>
<th>COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divides staff according to the identity group they serve. A second office of intercultural affairs administers diversity initiatives related to faculty recruitment and strategic planning</td>
<td>Employs a few professional staff members, who focus on developing programs and providing resources to students</td>
<td>Employs several full-time professional staff to accomplish a wide range of tasks such as strategic planning, program development, and curriculum design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the EAF Brief (2011), contacts at the institutions profiled favored consolidated center structures “because they reduce redundancies in staffing and finances, promote more streamlined decision-making, and allow for more flexible staff”. Contacts further suggested that a unified or consolidated center that encompassed all diversity initiatives and services was better positioned to promote a consistent diversity agenda than separate offices. Of particular note was the observation that unified offices become hubs for students and student activities that assist in raising awareness among all students. However, several contacts at one profiled institution using the Identity-specific Model, recommended staffing according to function and responsibility rather than by identity or group affiliation because collaboration between and among directors of the different student demographic groups was difficult.
Like most college and university diversity and inclusion/multicultural centers, the goals of the centers suggest concerted and deliberate efforts to promote racial and ethnic diversity and meet student needs at the profile institutions. A sampling of these goals by model type is shown in Table 5.

**TABLE 5. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION/MULTICULTURAL CENTER SAMPLE GOALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTITY –SPECIFIC</th>
<th>PROGRAMMING AND PROFESSIONAL POINT OF CONTACT</th>
<th>COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Create a welcoming and supportive environment for the intercultural student community | • Promote dialogue and interaction among individuals from different backgrounds
• Create a climate of intentional interaction and collaboration between individuals and groups
• Develop leaders for positive social transformation
• Enhance student learning and personal development
• Foster greater awareness and appreciation for diverse cultures and cultivate an intercultural community based on respect and understanding | • Assist with efforts to recruit and retain minority and female faculty, students, and staff
• Create, promote and encourage a supportive, friendly, and welcoming environment that is attractive to people of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, gender identities, sexual orientations, and disabilities
• Develop and strengthen alliances with the community to support diversity inside and outside of the institution
• Monitor and assess institution’s diversity efforts for effectiveness, identification of new and better “best practices,” and publish reports for dissemination
• Promote a sense of community, nationality, and acceptance of differences in ethnicity, religion, economic status, and viewpoints
• Work with academic units to develop multicultural content for classes and organize diversity workshops for faculty
• Partner with student affairs to enhance all students’ satisfaction, not only students of color
• Fund campus committees for multicultural programs |

Collaboration with other university offices and units was identified as an important observation among contact institutions. Collaborations between centers and enrollment services offices were identified as key components for the establishment and implementation of summer bridge pre-college programs for students of color. Other collaborative efforts included institutional research offices to supply quantitative data while qualitative feedback is provided by the center. Further, centers collaborated with faculty in the development of curricular diversity agendas and initiatives.
To track success, centers generally used graduation rate rather than grade point average as most contacts did not consider grade point average as an accurate measure of student success. According to the Brief:

Many variables affect grade point averages, and contacts mention that first-generation students often prioritize completion over academic perfection. Contacts at University, H observe that students of color who participate in their summer bridge and mentoring programs are 20 percent more likely to graduate than those who do not participate.

In addition to graduation rate, centers used student advisory boards, interaction tracking, post-program surveys, and qualitative studies. At one contact institution, the nature of interactions with students who come to its center allows staff to gauge programming needs and overall campus climate.

**The Evolution of Multicultural Centers at UNLV**

Former Vice President for Student Services, Dr. Robert Ackerman, is attributed with starting the Multicultural Student Affairs program at UNLV (UNLV Media Relations, 2000). Created in 1990, Minority Student Affairs (MSA) was located in the Student Services building and “designed to aid minority students academically” (Consolidated Student Senate, 1990). Under the directorship of Wayne Nunley, the MSA began with an operational budget of $5,500 and requested funding ($15,000) from CSUN to implement programs and activities to meet its stated mission and goals. These initial proposed activities include:

- Picnic for all minority students to disseminate materials about minority student organization and MSA
- Workshops and seminars on self-esteem and career development
- Student talent shows, clinics, showcases (fashion shows, hair styling, etc.)
- How-to cook demonstrations (i.e., Soul food, Mexican food, Indian food, or Chinese food)
- Heritage/history week commemorations
- Speakers, conferences, panels
- Faculty/Student mentoring program coordinator
A review of CSUN senate meeting minutes during the 1990s through mid-2000s suggests the existence of an important and strong relationship between MSA and student government. This relationship included Senate annual approval of MSA programs and activity funding up to $15,000 and regular reporting and updates.

In 1991, the name of the unit was changed from Minority Student Affairs to Multicultural Student Affairs to “make more students, including non-minority students, feel welcome” (Ciaravino, 1991). Director Tony Gladney envisioned a unit that promoted cultural diversity. In the 1991 article, *Minority Student Affairs Office Changes its Name*, Gladney is quoted as saying, “Everyone should be able to learn about different cultures. I’m here to help everyone.” Under the leadership of Velicia Heron, efforts began during the fall 1992 to create an MSA peer mentoring/tutoring program along with a call for representatives of student organizations to “provide direct input with the diversity process” at UNLV (Office of Student Information, 1992).

The Ethnic Student Council (ESC), established by and advised through the MSA, sponsored a number of activities designed to increase and enhance student interaction, learn about each other, and celebrate differences and inclusion. One program of particular note developed and implemented by the ESC and MSA was the Cultural Leadership Retreat. Today, the Cultural Leadership Retreat “is a three-day, two-night weekend with interactive workshops designed to facilitate students understanding of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice to explore leadership within a diversity society” (2016 Cultural Leadership Retreat, 2016).

A search of documents accessible via the UNLV Libraries Digital Collection related to Multicultural Student Affairs suggests that the unit became associated administratively with the Office of Student Involvement and Activities at some point between 2001 and 2004 and was renamed Student Diversity Programs and Services and is now known as Student Engagement and Diversity.

In 2009, a multicultural center was opened on the UNLV campus. The Multicultural Center-Centro Multicultural (Center-Centro), under the administrative leadership of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (now Office of Diversity Initiatives), provided office and meeting space for student groups, space for university staff and community group events and meetings, and served as well as served as the administrative home for part of the staff while (UNLV Media Relations, 2009). The decision to open the Center-Centro in large part was as a result of student protests at the 2007 opening of the new UNLV Student Union because it did not include a designated space or area for a multicultural center (Carlovsky, Guthrie, Redman, & Wood, 2011). As a result of the protests then UNLV President, David Ashley, promised students that space would be found on campus for a multicultural center. With UNLV’s
first Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion heading this effort, Dr. Christine Clark, Houssels House was identified as the location of the multicultural center.

Envisioned by Dr. Clark to “become a catalyst for creating and sustaining a shift in climate from one of monoculturalism and isolation to one of diversity and inclusion”, the Multicultural Center-Centro Multicultural was established to provide a “centralized space and resources for UNLV students, staff, faculty and community members engaged in education, research, and service related to diversity and inclusion (UNLV Media Relations, 2009). The Center/Centro provided paid and volunteer opportunities for twenty-five to thirty students (Carlovsky, Guthrie, Redman, & Wood, 2011), while hosting several projects diversity-related events and activities each semester (Bryant, 2016).

Conflicting observations and recollections exist related to the reasons the Multicultural Center-Centro Multicultural closed after three years. According to Carlovsky, et. al. (2011), possible reasons for the closure included:

- The desire for the design and administration of Center-Centro to be more student based and focused rather than faculty and community focused
- The perception that the Center-Centro excluded students who were not women and/or LBGTQ
- The lack of understanding of the purpose of the Center-Centro
- The lack of information or misinformation about the Center-Centro
- The lack of university support and funding

In 2011, discussions between the new ODI and Student Affairs leadership resulted in the Multicultural Center-Centro Multicultural, including the facility and associated programmatic efforts, being transferred to Student Engagement and Diversity (CED). Upon that transfer, CED, with the assistance of multiple professionals and graduate assistants representing each identity group, developed an action plan that created the UNLV Center for Social Justice (CSJ) (Bryant, 2016). Under the Student Engagement and Diversity, CSJ currently “serves as a resource for students, staff, faculty and community members to unite around, educate about, and advocate against social injustices that affect our campus, local, national, and global communities. The CSJ promotes the empowerment and collaboration of all individuals through creating an awareness, community space, and providing support in order to take action and transform lives in the realm of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice” (Center for Social Justice, 2015). In addition, CSJ as a favored meeting location for student organizations and is the home of the Leadership and Civic Engagement minor.
In late 2015, student-led protests at institutions such as Harvard, University of Missouri, and Princeton, focused on issues of race, marginalization, gender equality, and campus climate (Wong & Green, 2016). UNLV’s student-led protest held “in solidarity with Mizzou”, was organized to “diversity deficits they believe to be common at colleges nationwide” (Ley, 2015). During the November protest, UNLV students requested more robust and comprehensive minority student services, the establishment of a multicultural center, more professors of color, and the removal of the Hey Reb! mascot because of its perceived ties to the pro-slavery Confederate Army.

Although not the impetus, the November 2015 student-led protest reaffirmed and reconfirmed a decision made earlier fall 2015 to establish a comprehensive and sustainable academic multicultural resource center at UNLV. Preliminary discussions about the new center established a vision that defined it as an academically aligned unit that would provide a supportive environment and foster a greater awareness, appreciation, understanding and respect for marginalized and students of color. In addition, it was envisioned that an academic multicultural resource center, while not duplicating existing services and programs would be positioned to serve as an intersecting campus resource that provided access and linkages to research, people, information, and services.

**Creating the UNLV’s Academic Multicultural Resource Center**

As stated previously, the November 2015 student-led protest reaffirmed and reconfirmed a decision made earlier fall 2015 to establish a comprehensive and sustainable academic multicultural resource center at UNLV. Dr. Harriet E. Barlow, former UNLV Graduate College Associate Dean and Assistant Vice President of Diversity Initiatives, agreed to the opportunity to establish an academically aligned unit that would provide access and linkages to research, people, information, and services specifically for students of color in the form of an academic multicultural resource center. In addition, the “Center”, while not duplicating existing services and programs, would be positioned to serve as an intersecting campus resource within the Provost area that would provide a supportive environment and foster a greater awareness, appreciation, understanding and respect for marginalized students and students of color.
Logic Model

With the assistance of UNLV Law Professor, Dr. Rachel Anderson, the working action plan was developed utilizing a logic model. A logic model is a tool often used to assist in the planning and implementation of a project or program. Generally resulting in a graphic depiction of the logical relationships between resources, activities, outputs and outcomes, logic models are also used to evaluate program effectiveness. (Wikipedia, 2016)

The completed logic model provided the framework to ensure that UNLV students, faculty and staff, would be active participants in the development of the “Center”, including but not limited to: the design and implementation of programs and services to meet identified needs; processes that promoted and encouraged a positive environment; and evaluation and assessment tools that document progress and supports ongoing change and development. In addition, the completed logic model answered four major questions in the planning process of the “Center”. The questions and answers are as shown in Table 6.

Using the logic model as a road map, input from UNLV faculty and staff was solicited from students, faculty, staff, organizations, departments and units to assist in the foundational development of the “Center”, including its overall design, mission, and vision. Meetings with over 50 identified stakeholders took place during spring 2016. In addition, UNLV Associate Professor of History, Dr. Maria Casas and Las Vegas Community Activist, Ms. Hannah Brown, agreed to serve as lead campus and community liaisons in the overall development, design, and implementation of the “Center”.

In May 2016, President Jessup and Provost Chase joined over 100 members of the UNLV collegiate community at a planning session where the findings of the stakeholders’ meetings were presented. Focus group sessions and meetings continued throughout the summer with students and faculty who indicated interest in serving on an advisory group and or being further involved in programs and

The key to understanding and improving campus climate is in framing the problems and solutions correctly. If we are looking to put minority students at the Center of the campus climate concern, then identity centers are one working solution that provides a safe space on campus for students to receive services that meet their individual needs. However if we continue to examine campus climate through a dominate, traditional lens, minority students will always be the individuals who are lucky to gain access to higher learning. (Thomas, 2011)
activities of the “Center”. These meetings and sessions set priorities, established the direction and mission, and name of the “Center”.

**TABLE 6. LOGIC MODEL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What resources are necessary for success of the “Center”? (Input) | • UNLV students, faculty and staff participate in developing, revising, and evaluating proposed and ongoing programs and practices.  
• Sufficient staff with expertise and leadership and administrative skills to establish and operate the “Center”  
• Sufficient financial resources and technical support to operate the “Center”  
• Community stakeholders to participate in developing, revising, and evaluating proposed and ongoing programs and practices and to assist in the identification of resources, services, and opportunities external to the UNLV campus that |
| What activities will the “Center” undertake? (Activities) | • Encourage campus community (students, faculty and staff) to seek support and achieve common goals  
• Increase engagement, awareness and access to information, support, and services  
• Increase linkages between and among UNLV students, faculty and staff |
| What is produced through those activities? (Output) | • Campus community seeks, supports and achieve common goals  
• Increased access and participation in Center programs and the use of the physical space  
• Linkages established between and among the UNLV campus community  
• UNLV deemed inclusive and accountable and campus and community stakeholders  
• Increased knowledge and utilization of available campus resources, programs, and services  
• Increased utilization of and participate in Center programs and the physical space  
• Information, programs and resources provided directly by the “Center” the linkages established will improve the overall academic experiences of students |
| What changes or benefits will result from the “Center”? (Outcomes and Impact) | • Maintained MSI/HIS designation while pursuing or obtaining Tier I status  
• Increased retention of students, faculty and staff – particularly people of color, first generation, queer, women, etc.  
• Increased satisfaction of students, faculty and staff – particularly people of color, first generation, queer, women, etc.  
• Increased student academic success and graduation - particularly students of color, first generation, queer, women, etc. |
The Intersection

During the first summer meeting with students, the students were insistent that the name of the “Center” reflected the uniqueness of the UNLV student body and their values. In addition, the “Center” name would have to be one that was inclusive where all students - regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or gender identification, national origin, age, or sexual orientation – would be welcomed and reflected a sense of belonging and safety for the entire UNLV collegiate community. After much discussion, Dr. Maria Casas suggested “The Intersection”; and all agreed that this was the perfect name.

The name of the “Center”, The Intersection, is derived from the work American civil rights advocate and leading scholar of critical race theory, Dr. Kimberle’ Crenshaw. Intersectionality, first coined by Crenshaw in 1989, is the study of overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). With origins rooted in Black feminism, today discussions and interpretations of intersectionality have broadened to include many different definitions. According to Olena Hankivsky (2014):

Intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., ‘race’/ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion). These interactions occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments and other political and economic unions, religious institutions, media) (p. 4).

The role, mission and vision of The Intersection were developed based on feedback from the UNLV campus community and stakeholders. In addition to the consensus feedback that The Intersection should focus on first generation students while not duplicating existing programmatic efforts, other themes emerged related to the role of the center within the university structure. Broadly, these themes included navigation, training opportunities, resources and programming as presented in Table 7.
**TABLE 7. PROGRAMMIC THEMES AND ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>ACTIVITY FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Navigation                      | • A place to “get answers”  
• Focus on first generation students and families (undergraduate and graduate)  
• Referrals (on/off campus resources including financial aid, admissions, food banks, shelters, etc.)  
• Identification and coordination of existing programs and services  
• Include non-traditional, international, refugee, disabled, veteran, women, students of color, faculty, staff, etc. |
| Training and Development        | • Cultural competence (in/out of the classroom; for students and faculty)  
• Trainings: Safe Zone, Dream Zone, Title IX, etc.  
• Racial, ethnic, gender identity awareness training and assistance  
• Academic writing  
• Career planning |
| Opportunities                   | Resource                                                                                              | On-boarding assistance for first generation and non-traditional graduate students  
• Research program for faculty in the area of “differences”  
• Textbook repository  
• Support for underrepresented faculty  
• Internship, service learning, and research opportunities |
| Programming                     | Mentoring (student-student; staff-student; high school-UNLV student)  
• Targeted mentoring/support (Ex: My Brother’s Keeper; women; GLBTQ-1A2++; etc.)  
• Admission/financial aid information sessions for targeted student populations  
• Career planning for targeted student populations (Career Services/City of Las Vegas)  
• Connecting faculty to students and students to faculty  
• Discussion groups (ex: book club)  
• Graduate student symposium/seminar for undergraduate students  
• Cosponsored speaker series with academic units and departments |
| Other                           | Scholarships  
• Students of Color events/activities  
• Coordination of programs/services with the social service sector (Lincy)  
• Student consultants to work with faculty on aspects of inclusion  
• Grant writer  
• Align with Top Tier goals, objectives, and language  
• Practicum/internship/research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students  
• Collaborations between CAEO, Honors College, ASC, etc. |

*The Mission of The Intersection*

The Intersection serves as a comprehensive and sustainable resource center for UNLV first generation students, students of color, faculty and staff. It will be an intersecting campus resource that provides access and linkages to research, people, information, and services.
**The Role of The Intersection**

The Intersection is a safe, healthy, physical space for students, faculty, and staff to gather, exchange ideas and information, and develop a shared sense of community at UNLV. Programs, services, and initiatives are designed to stimulate academic engagement, promote intellectual development, and encourage best practices.

The Intersection seeks to serve as a key partner in UNLV’s efforts to retain and graduate first generation college students and students of color at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Through sustained developmental programming and partnerships with academic colleges, departments, and community stakeholders and organizations, students are empowered, engaged and nurtured to succeed.

**The Vision:**

- To serve as a one-stop campus resource that provides access and linkages to people, information and services
- To provide a physical space for students, faculty and staff to gather, exchange ideas and information, and develop a shared sense of community
- To promote student satisfaction, faculty enrichment, and promote staff development

**Goals and Objectives of The Intersection**

**Teaching**

To establish partnerships with academic departments and faculty to:

- Develop a summer academic academy to help acclimate entering first generation and students of color to academic life at UNLV (College of Liberal Arts)
- Provide service learning opportunities for students to engage in an academically rigorous, community-based, leadership and knowledge projects designed to help students learn about the experiences of different racial and ethnic groups (Department of Sociology/Service Learning Initiative for Community Engagement in Sociology)
- Coordinate specialized training for teaching faculty based on the prescribed UNLV Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs) generally, and specifically those UULOs that address Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness and Citizenship and Ethics

**Research**

- To provide and encourage opportunities to support faculty and graduate students in their academic research pursuits.
Service

- To provide first generation students, students of color, and faculty with an academic forum to gather, exchange ideas and information, and develop a shared sense of community.
- To develop a healthy, supportive network among diverse first generation and non-traditional UNLV students.
- To facilitate the transition into college for first generation students and students of color through initiatives including the development of a comprehensive inventory of support resources, coordination of mentoring networks, and navigation assistance.

The designation of The Intersection as an official UNLV unit will be determined at the March 2017 meeting of the NSHE Board of Regents. With approval anticipated, an official opening of The Intersection is planned for spring semester 2017. Together, with the ad hoc advisory group, lead by Dr. Maria Casas and Ms. Hannah Brown, The Intersection staff will continue to move forward in stabilizing efforts to serve as a comprehensive and sustainable resource center for UNLV first generation students, students of color, faculty and staff.

The following represents a partial list of key programmatic activities anticipated, being developed or completed by The Intersection:

Identity Mark:
Visiting Assistant Professor of Art, Monica Maccaus, assisted in identifying UNLV graphic arts students willing to design an identity mark for The Intersection. Undergraduates Jonathon Estrada and Alain Datuin created the design based upon input received from The Intersection staff, students, and information provided to them about the goals, purpose, and mission of the center. The approved mark and explanation appear on page 21.

Service Learning Initiative for Community Engagement in Sociology (SLICES):
The Intersection is a client of the Service Learning Initiative taught by Sociology Assistant Professor, Dr. Anna Smedley. During the 2016-17 academic year, SLICES students researched scholarship opportunities and procedures for first generation students and students of color; coordinated and facilitated sessions to further define from a student perspective success; and identified mechanisms to increase and enhance a sense of student belonging in the UNLV educational process.
**Cultural Competency Training:**
In April 2017, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) will conduct a 2-day cultural competence training session at UNLV. This specialized training for teaching faculty will incorporate the prescribed UNLV Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs) generally, and specifically those UULOs that address Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness and Citizenship and Ethics. In addition, the April 2017 training will be coordinated with the assistance of Laurel Pritchard, Director of Undergraduate Programs and Mary-Ann Winklemes, Instructional Development and Research Coordinator.

**Electronic Initiatives:**
A website will be developed to provide important information about The Intersection programs and activities.

An inventory, modelled after the College Board former CollegeKeys Compact Inventory, will identify university programs and services specifically designed to address the needs and challenges of first generation students, students of color, and low-income students. The inventory will be organized in the following manner: Preparation (Getting Ready); Admissions and Financial Aid (Getting In); and Achievement and Success (Getting Through).

A database of internal and external diversity and intersectionality experts will be developed and made available via the website. The database will serve as a networking tool to explore potential research grant opportunities. In addition, graduate students, faculty, staff, and community-based researchers will be allowed to join the database to connect with those who share common interests.

The Intersection programs, activities, and events of interest will be communicated via a periodic newsletter and social media presence.

**Referral Consultation:**
The Intersection, serving as a point of contact for students and others with general questions or concerns, will connect them to the appropriate university department, resource, or support unit.

**Mentoring:**
A mentoring program will be developed specifically for first year first generation students and students of color. An upperclass trained mentor will be paired with a first generation student and/or student of color who will assist their mentee manage and navigate through their first year college experience.
Focus areas of the program will include, but not be limited to, academic success and financial responsibility.

**Student Success:**
Working with the UNLV Academic Success Center, an initiative will be explored to provide academic support and assistance in developing and refining the academic success skills of first generation students and students of color.

**Parent and Family Support and Outreach:**
This program will provide parents of first year students, first generation students, and students of color with programming, information and resources that will assist them in being an advocate, resource, and partner in their student’s success. The program will help parents learn how to use UNLV programs and services to communicate, collaborate, and plan with their student to help them be successful.

**Campus Development and Education:**
In collaboration with the academic departments and units, The Intersection will develop coordinate, facilitate, or participate in programmatic efforts (workshops, seminars, trainings, etc.) that promote diversity and inclusion through an academic lens.

**Cultural Competence Group (CCG):**
Identify and train faculty members on how to incorporate cultural competence into course content regardless of discipline. Once trained, the CCG will provide training and assistance to faculty in developing student learning outcome assignment and assessments integrating cultural competence into the process.

**Research and Faculty Support:**
The Intersection will provide support to students and faculty in their academic and professional pursuits through participation in approved research, assessments, and surveys of mutual benefit in areas to include, but not limited to, curricular development on race, ethnicity, immigration, gender, and sexuality, and other identity studies.

**Career Exploration and Preparation:**
A career preparation program that will prepare students of color for life after graduation. The program will be designed in collaboration and consultation with Career Services to build a sense of community and enrich lives through opportunities and workshops that enable career development.
A Celebration of Achievement:
An annual campus-wide ceremony that honors the academic achievements of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students of color.

Student Consultant Group (SCG):
Conversations are planned with Dr. Anna Smedley (SLICES) and Mary-Ann Winkelmes (Instructional Development and Research) to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Student Consultant Group. The SCG would be comprised of a trained staff of student consultants to focus, with UNLV teaching faculty, on inclusive learning and teaching practices.

Located on the first floor in room 121 of the UNLV Student Union, The Intersection provides a safe, healthy, physical space for students, faculty, and staff to gather, exchange ideas and information, and develop a shared sense of community at UNLV. Programs, services, and initiatives are offered that stimulate academic engagement, promote intellectual development, and encourage best practices.
References

2016 Cultural Leadership Retreat. (2016). Retrieved from UNLV Involvement Center:
   https://unlv.collegiatelink.net/organization/CSI/calendar/details/822593


Liu, W. M., Cuyjet, M. J., & Sunny, L. (n.d.). Asian America Student Involvement in Asian American Culture Centers. In L. Patton, *Cultural Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity; Theory; and Practice.* (pp. 45-64).


