Crucial Conversations: Cultural Spaces at UC Merced

"Without community, there is no liberation. Dare to be powerful. Dare to use your strength in service of your vision."

-Audre Lorde-

Jonathan Grady, Ph.D. (Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students)
Omar Primitivo (Assistant Director of Social Justice Initiatives)
Kamyr Nekoui (Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Intern)

HONOR THE PAST
RECOGNIZE THE PRESENT
PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

COMMUNITY CARE ACCOUNTABILITY TRANSPARENCY

GOAL: SUBMISSION OF VETTED PROPOSAL WITH TIMELINE BY SPRING 2018
COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

• Active Listening
• Respecting other perspectives/multiple truths
• Confidentiality-while we will be recording this to ensure we capture your truths, no identifiers will be used nor will this recording be shared publically.
• Being present
• “I” statements/Speaking from YOUR experiences
• Give Space/Take Space
• Lean into discomfort
• One Mic
1. Why are cultural spaces important at UC Merced?

2. How can cultural spaces help students and the larger community thrive?
CAMPUS CLIMATE

STUDENT MOBILIZATION

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT
### Table 1. UC Merced Sample Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% of Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate Students(^1)</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate/Professional Students(^2)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty(^3)</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff(^4)</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Doctoral Scholars/Trainees(^5)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Identity</strong></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1,074</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transgender(^6)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Genderqueer(^7)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Identity</strong></td>
<td>White</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Underrepresented Minority(^8)</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other People of Color(^9)</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-Minority(^10)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Identity</strong></td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>1,493</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questioning(^11)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asexual(^12)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22. Location of Experienced Exclusionary, Intimidating, Offensive or Hostile Conduct
Only answered by respondents who believed they had experienced exclusionary conduct ($n = 511$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>% of respondents who experienced conduct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While working at a UCM job</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a meeting with a group of people</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a UCM office</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a public space at UCM</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a class/lab/clinical setting</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a meeting with one other person</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a social networking sites/Facebook/Twitter/cell phone/other form of technological communication</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In campus housing</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off campus</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 38. Source of Exclusionary, Intimidating, Offensive or Hostile Conduct by Position Status (%)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of the Conduct</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents Who Reported an Experience that Affected Their Ability to Work or Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UNDERGRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT STAFF</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHING ASSISTANT/GRAD. ASST./LAB</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACULTY ADVISOR</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACULTY MEMBER</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATOR</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPARTMENT HEAD</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPERVISOR</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO-WORKERS</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAFF MEMBER</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Columns total more than 100% because respondents could select multiple sources.
Table 21. Form of Experienced Exclusionary, Intimidating, Offensive or Hostile Conduct

Only answered by respondents who believed they had experienced exclusionary conduct ($n = 511$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conduct</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>% of those who experienced the conduct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt isolated or left out</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I was deliberately ignored or excluded</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt intimidated/bullied</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2015 Student of Color Conference

• A week after the November 4, 2015 incident students came together at the Students of Color Conference in Berkeley and began conversations on the necessity of our campus having safe spaces for marginalized identity communities (of color, LGBTQPIA+, etc.) to go to in times of crisis....
Mission (2015...)

• Emerging from the work of passionate student activists, The Intercultural Hub strives to promote principles of intersectionality, diversity, inclusivity and social justice by providing students a safe, inclusive space. Through unity, identity exploration, and communication with one another, we hope to build solidarity and foster a culture of acceptance and anti-oppression activism on our campus.
Focus Groups/Outreach

• Focus Groups
  • Facilitated by SJI student interns/staff & Angi Baxter (Coordinator of Women’s Programs & LGBTQ+ Initiatives)
  • Outreach to student organizations and requesting to share in their meeting the same prompts
  • Online feedback form

• Fall Semester 2016
  • Prompts
    • Share your thoughts how the Intercultural Hub can be utilized by you and your organization(s)?
    • How would you use the current space?
    • What do you hop the Intercultural Hub will be or not be?
    • How can the Intercultural Hub help you thrive?
    • Visioning: What does this look like beyond 2016 and on?
From student voices...

• Responses from the questions:
  • *How the Intercultural Hub can be utilized:*
  • Connect across ethnic heritage backgrounds
  • Share events
  • Advertise clubs & events
  • Go to other clubs
  • Spread the word about diversity
  • Networking & marketing
  • A space for students have a space to discuss issues, guide conversations, councilor space
  • Could this space have resources, referrals
  • Need to have international student included in the conversation
  • Reserve for potluck space or even study space
  • A space for you to feel like your part of a community and with the space being so small I don’t know if the space is big enough for these types of issues
  • Safe space for undergrad / safe space for grads
  • Understanding the positionality
From student voices...

• **How would you use the current space?**
  - Not a space to be challenged about your identity or your experiences
  - Publicizing for other organizations (in that way building solidarity)
  - Ensure that people in the space are understanding mission and vision
  - Ideas for programming:
    - Involve more Asian voices in discussions
    - Doesn’t hear solidarity (even considering the achievements of the org/cultural clubs)
  - Programs targeting all backgrounds
  - Broader connections between diff/ groups (yellow peril ↔ black power)
  - Art – as form of healing
  - Bring cultures together
From student voices...

• *How can the Intercultural Hub help you thrive?*
  • Appeal to more students—cultural club, more credibility-information, database for club/organization resources
  • Networking/recruitment and retention
  • Definitely emphasis on healing; we sit asking ourselves what can we do, don’t know how to handle situation that has really impacted us
  • Have a way of connecting with the community; how can we work with them and change policies
From student voices...

• **Visioning: What does this look like beyond 2016 and on?**
  • Offices for different populations (similar to bright success center); it’d be great if there was a room for students to meet with clubs and orgs and for that to be a space where people can come together to discuss;
  • Also a space where you can talk and feel like you’re not being judged (beyond clinical)
  • Feels like a prison → great if it had art, etc. it would help brighten up the room, contrast to dull architecture; *(this is for the current space)*
  • Front desk, main table
  • Calendar on the wall with different color markers for different club events
  • Space should accommodate students to learn about intersectionality
  • Robust budget to do this
Online Feedback

• What is your vision for the space?
  • My vision of the cultural center is to provide a space for students involved in cultural organizations and clubs to promote intersectionality and diversity within organization events and meetings. This encompasses networking through interest forms, calendar invites, and event collaborative planning, providing permanent infrastructure for the advancement of diversity and inclusion within the undergraduate and graduate student population.
  • Colorful, lots of student made art; not super quiet; student-led programming (like creating space to talk, to heal, to create); lots of resources (pamphlets on anything, books on/about identity, information to places/services on campus)
Online Feedback

• What is your vision for the space?
  ● I would like this space to remain a cultural center (as I have heard other initiatives had their eyes on expanding it to more than that). I would like this center to be a space where students of different cultures can not only feel comfortable and safe exploring their culture but also share it with other students who are interested. I would like to see programming that showcases and reflects the diverse student population at UC Merced.

  ● Books where we can learn about our culture/power/healing processes, Cultural Music playing in the background, space for students to just relax and take a break. At least one professional staff member that welcomes students in. And I also want that professional staff member to have an office (not a cubicle) so students can confide in the staff member and possibly report the incident.

  ● I want this space to be warm and welcoming to the students who enter. I want it to encourage discussion with posters on the walls of leaders from diverse backgrounds (but not the highly famous leader, but the ones that got lost in history). I also want this to be a space where students can just take a break, de-stress, and heal. <3
Online Feedback

• What is your vision for the space?
  • Cultural awareness, inclusiveness
  • Fun facts about different cultures, upcoming multicultural events
  • A space that showcases & celebrates the richness of the various identities that make our Bobcat community. I imagine a table for us to meet and some couches and a teapot, coffee pot and microwave with educational resources such as scantrons/blue books/pencils. Magnets/flyers with the resources available on campus. I would imagine the programming to revolve around connecting different identities, educating us on comradeship/allyship, advocacy. Accessible would be 9 am - 8 pm hours, always someone there, promotion of space everywhere.
  • I imagine resources available, like a book bank, healthy snacks available, tampons and pads available, condoms available, art work on the wall, regular educational/social justice programming, a director, student interns, a resource wall, a place to advertise diversity events on campus, a space to de-stress, a space for self-care, a space for organizing, a space for multicultural student organizations to use, a space for students of color to feel safe, a space to study and learn, a space to challenge oneself, a healing space, a sanctuary space...
“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we do not live single-issue lives.”

-audré lorde
SUSTAINABILITY
GOAL:

SUBMIT A VETTED PROPOSAL TO VICE CHANCELLOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS, CHARLES NIES AND OUR CHANCELLOR BY MAY 1ST.
TRANSPARENCY

TOWN HALLS
Public forums for students, staff, and faculty to attend and both ask questions and offer solutions.

ONLINE SURVEY
Considering the entire campus community will not be able to attend town halls, surveys will be available.

INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
An option for those desiring to meet in person but not wanting to pose public questions or comments.

Transcripts from town halls will be posted publicly.

Dr. Jonathan Grady, Onar Primitivo, and Kamyar Nekoui will all host separate meetings.
WAYS TO GET INVOLVED...

TOWN HALLS
February 15th 2018 @ 4:30-6:30pm | COB2 110
April 17th 2018 @ 5:30-7:30pm | COB 105

ONLINE SURVEY
Dean of Students website from March 1st to April 6th

FOCUS GROUPS
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
Feb. 20th 4-5pm
Feb. 21st 12-1pm
If interested please email spierce2@ucmerced.edu

GRADUATE STUDENTS
Feb. 20th 4-5pm
Feb. 21st 12-1pm
If interested please email oprimitivo@ucmerced.edu

STAFF
Feb. 21st 12-1pm
If interested please email jgrady2@ucmerced.edu

FACULTY
Feb. 20th 12-1pm
If interested please email oprimitivo@ucmerced.edu

INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
AVC/DOS Dr. Jonathan Gady has an open door policy (KL 113) and is able to make an appointment, please email jgrady2@ucmerced.edu
Assistant Director of Student Life Onar Primitive also has an open door policy (KL 167) and is able to make appointments, please email oprimitivo@ucmerced.edu
AVC/DOS Intern Kamiyahr Nekouei is available by appointment (knekouei@ucmerced.edu) in addition to office hours on Monday and Friday from 8am to 10am, and Wednesday from 9am to 10am (KL 113)
QUESTIONS?