



## Executive Summary

With student Success as central to our mission, and Equity as the foundation, it becomes imperative that we, at College of the Canyons (COC) invest in serving students whose needs have not been fully addressed, and whose opportunities have been limited. A multicultural center is part of the efforts to rectify historical structural/practices that have disadvantaged some students and advantaged others, and serves as undeniable evidence of the college's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

### Why a Multicultural Center?

Students who are identified as African American/Black, Latinx, Foster Youth, First-generation, LGBTQ, Veteran, and Disabled are negatively and disproportionately impacted as measured by various success measures that are traditionally tracked in higher education (Persistence, Degree/Certificate completion etc.). Additionally, student voices gathered through various methods on campus (i.e. surveys, focus groups, meetings, faculty-student interactions) underline the types of student-needs that are currently unmet.

"Felt more comfortable in a speech class with more Hispanics"  
-Exit Survey

One way that *minoritized* students have been able to navigate the higher education system is through Multicultural centers that have historically been a response to diversification of the students and their needs. These centers have been shown to increase a sense of belonging, community building, and promote empathy.

### The Vision



A *resource* for the entire campus community.

A dynamic *learning space* with deliberate programming and opportunities to support and *facilitate dialogue* between all members of COC regarding gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality and intersectional identities, with the goal of promoting an inclusive and equitable campus.

An opportunity to *build community* and serve as *bridge* to existing resources.

A welcoming place that contributes to the mission of Canyons Completes' Strategic goals of Access, Success, and Engagement found on Equity-Mindedness.

### Structural Logistics

A critical component of a multicultural center is the centralized, visible, and accessible physical space for providing the services that are envisioned and for accomplishing the mission of the multicultural center. The team strongly recommends that this space be incorporated in the Educational Master plan of the college under the Student Development division directed and lead by student-facing entities.

## Integration

Since this center is in addition to, not in place of existing programs and services, integration of this center into various departments and divisions on campus is key. Specifically we envision the following direct partnerships:

Serve as a resource for Student Development Clubs & Organization (e.g. ASG, Gender & Sexuality Alliance, Latinx Alliance, Black Student Union, American Association of University Women (AAUW)).

Partnership with Student Services programs will be key in connecting students to existing resources and providing “warm hand-offs”. These services include and are not limited to: Financial Aid, EOPS, CalWorks, Career Center, The Learning Center, DSPS, Community Education, and Student Health Center.

Partner with Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to coordinate activities and workshops with the Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Course.

Promote OER/ZTC programs as they are directly related to making higher education more accessible for all students.

Civic and Community Engagement partnership to co-facilitate events and workshops particularly in participatory democracy and deliberative dialogue.

Partnership with Human Resources/Office of Diversity & Inclusion, the multicultural center would help host, promote and coordinate on-going equity-minded/implicit bias/macroaggressions trainings for all interventionists on campus (e.g. faculty, administrators, staff, peer advisers, retention advisers, TLC tutors).

“It took me 4 years to get up the courage to ask for help and go and find resources outside the classroom”

- EMP meeting student participant

## Evaluation Plan

The center’s effectiveness in meeting the broader desired outcomes of closing equity gaps, and increasing student engagement will be periodically evaluated. After the launch of the Multicultural Center, a 3-year and 5-year impact assessment will be conducted to identify strengths and weaknesses of the center in order to make improvements as needed. This evaluation will include an assessment of student experience as well as student success outcomes particularly among students who have been identified as disproportionately impacted (i.e. African-American/Black students, Latinx Male students, LGBT students, First-generation students etc.).

Jess Love, Flavio Medina-Martin, Debbie Morlett, Anthony Morris, Cindy Stephens, & Preeta Saxena

**Equity Minded Practitioners**

**LEAP 2019**