

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Report of the Committee on Expanding the Role of the Multicultural Center: Spring 2009

Campus diversity and multicultural education are central to Elon University's mission of "preparing students to be global citizens." Recent studies (Yankelovich, 1998; ACE/AAUP, 2000) show that a diverse learning environment and multicultural education programs:

- Improve student success and campus climate.
- Provide students opportunities to learn from people different from themselves.
- Encourage critical thinking, challenge stereotypes, & improve communication with diverse individuals.
- Prepare students for citizenship in an increasingly complex, diverse society.

New Multicultural Center Mission and Goals

In accordance with Elon University's mission to develop "global citizens" and "foster respect for human differences," the Multicultural Center's mission and purpose are:

Mission: To provide Elon students a transformative multicultural education needed to function effectively in a diverse world.

Purpose: To promote a campus environment of learning and outreach that promotes diverse ideas, backgrounds, and individuals; enables student success; and celebrates historical contributions of diverse groups.

Goals of the Center

1. Provide students from diverse populations a welcoming environment and connections to campus resources.
2. Help all students explore/define their identity, and increase cultural awareness and knowledge of self.
3. Advance students' multicultural understanding for success in the professional world by working with campus constituents to infuse diversity and diverse perspectives into curricular/co-curricular programming.
4. Provide training and resources to address discrimination, bias, misconceptions, and stereotypes.
5. Increase awareness of social issues and taking action in under-served communities.

The Center as Campus Consultant

While this document represents an increase in the overall breadth and depth of programs originating in the Center, a main thrust of this report relates to a greatly expanded role for the Multicultural Center as campus consultant and collaborator. The goal is to connect the Center to departments, offices and programs across campus, thereby ensuring all programs are meeting the needs of students of diverse populations and incorporating high quality multicultural education.

The Need for a Larger and More Visible Center

A newly envisioned Multicultural Center that represents all students, faculty, and staff and is larger and more highly visible is important to creating a sustainable multicultural environment. Such an investment would more emphatically highlight the university's commitment to diversity.

The committee favors having one Multicultural Center on campus that would be large enough to accommodate the many diverse populations, as opposed to separate centers for Hispanic students, gay students, etc. An expanded Center would assist in providing a more welcoming and supportive environment for students of diverse populations. Additional spaces would allow for the expansion of the number and type of organizations that call the Center home. Spaces for a faculty fellow, a larger resource library, and meeting spaces for diversity-related student organizations (current and yet to be formed) are all important.

As the campus enjoys the growth in diverse populations, careful consideration should be given to merging or intermingling multicultural support and education together on campus in one central location. Currently a variety of offices support students of diverse populations. The creation of a new and more prominent Multicultural Center should dovetail efforts to increase collaboration between all offices that support students of diverse populations. The new Center can physically embody or symbolize these new efforts at collaboration and unity.

Rationale for Multicultural Education

Campus diversity and multicultural education are central to Elon University's mission of "preparing students to be global citizens." Recent studies show diverse learning environments enhance student learning. Daniel Yankelovich revealed that Americans support diversity in higher education, recognize diversity has a positive impact on the campus and student success, and encourage campuses to take explicit steps to ensure campus diversity in order for students to learn how to function in a multicultural and global economy. Research by Professor Patricia Gurin of the University of Michigan and recent studies from the American Council on Education and the American Association of University Professors illustrated that students actually learn better by interacting and exchanging ideas with people different from themselves. Diverse classrooms and courses dealing with cultural differences enhanced student intellectual growth by challenging long-held beliefs and ideas.

These studies reinforce that a diverse learning environment and multicultural education programs:

1. Improve student success and campus climate,
2. Provide students opportunities to learn from people different from themselves,
3. Encourage critical thinking, challenge stereotypes, and improve communication with diverse individuals,
4. Prepare students for citizenship in an increasingly complex and diverse society.

In other words, to fulfill its mission, Elon University must foster a more diverse environment and enhanced multicultural education in terms of opportunities for learning in and out of the classroom as well as through recruitment and retention of students, faculty and staff of diverse populations. In 2007, Elon University reaffirmed its commitment to these goals by making diversity an institutional priority. The committee on Expanding the Role of the Multicultural Center was assembled in February 2008 by the Provost and the Vice President for Student Life in recognition of the university's role in preparing students to live and work in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society. Recruitment progress has been made in recent years, but more work must continue to be done. Additionally, the Multicultural Center has long worked toward providing programming to support students of diverse populations and campus celebrations of diversity. In order to fulfill the university's commitment to fostering diversity and multicultural education, there must be continued work to:

1. Diversify the campus population.
2. Promote an environment, both in and outside of the classroom, which is welcoming and supportive of all people.
3. Deepen opportunities for students to learn about their own identities and gain understanding of people and cultures different from themselves.

We thank and acknowledge the work of the numerous studies and reports focused on diversity and campus climate that have been issued over the years at Elon University, such as the 2004 Academic Council Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Diversity. Virtually all have come to the same conclusion: change is necessary. This committee hopes this report will create real and measurable change through an official, university-wide implementation/action plan with identified goals, and concrete strategies for achieving them.

Terminology: “Diverse Populations”

Across higher education many terms are used in the field of multicultural affairs to describe diverse students. Even within diversity categories such as race, religion, or culture, there exist varying degrees of difference. Additionally, the committee recognizes there are numerous types of diversity on campus. These types range from obvious classifications (such as race, religion, ethnicity and physical disabilities) to less apparent but no less important forms of diversity (such as sexual orientation, socio-economic status, mixed race backgrounds, geographic origins, and more). For this reason, we have intentionally chosen to use the term “students, faculty and staff of diverse populations” to be more inclusive of all forms of diversity represented on the campus, regardless of one’s background, throughout this document. As a result, all students, faculty, and staff will understand their inclusion within the term “diverse populations”.

Altering the Course: The Philosophy behind Developing a Truly *Multicultural* Center

Political Implications and the History of the Center

This committee recognizes the numerous political implications involved in the call for an “expanded role” for the Multicultural Center. The Center originated for the purpose of creating programs and support for African-American students. African-American students, faculty, staff and alumni have expressed concerns that expanding the Center will result in less support for the African-American population, a devaluing of the African-American experience on campus, and a decrease in caretaking for the history of African-Americans at Elon University.

Therefore, expanding the role of the Center represents both opportunities and threats. Expanding the role of the Center is complicated because numerous offices and departments across campus (El Centro de Español, Isabella Cannon Center for International Studies, Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, and others) work with students of diverse populations. Some of these offices are housed in student life and some are housed in academic affairs. Some are formally charged as support centers for specific groups of students, while others serve in less formal roles. Through improved coordination and collaboration, the entire campus can reinforce the university’s value of diversity and multicultural education, preserving and building on past success.

Philosophy and Greater Benefits

In approaching our charge, this committee has articulated that the Center must work with a larger umbrella of diverse populations on campus. This will require that the Center collaborate with all the offices and departments already supporting any number of diverse populations. If the Center does not make such an intentional shift to expand its work and reach out to all departments and programs, then the university will never have a truly *Multicultural* Center and diverse populations on campus will remain segregated.

With this in mind, the committee suggests the following basic tenets as the Center moves forward:

1. The university must continue to value and stay true to the Multicultural Center’s original role of supporting African-American students on campus. This includes maintaining a safe space for African-Americans and preserving and celebrating the history of African-Americans at Elon.
2. The Center must lead the campus in redefining and working with a broader umbrella of diversity.
3. Because support for students of diverse populations and multicultural education initiatives are more important than reporting lines or divisions between academics affairs and student life, the Center must begin the process of reaching out to and collaborating with all programs and departments working with students of diverse populations.

More consciously uniting the numerous groups and offices supporting campus diversity and multicultural education will result in a significantly stronger presence and voice for diverse populations and a more diverse learning environment on campus. This effort will also decrease confusion for incoming and current students, faculty and staff by creating more of a “one-stop-shop” through collaboration and linking of multicultural resources across campus (both physically and on the university website). This approach will also help to promote an intercultural atmosphere on campus, which will in turn increase success and retention for an even larger population of students, faculty and staff from a wide range of backgrounds.

Strategic Objectives and Implementation Plan through 2014

To facilitate a campus-wide, aggressive and sustained effort to support and increase campus diversity, and enhance multicultural student development and multicultural education, the following strategies and implementation plan have been identified for the years 2009-2014:

Strategy 1: Expand Support and Services for Students of Diverse Populations

Strategy 2: Develop a Comprehensive Multicultural Education Experience for All Students

Strategy 3: Maximize Internal and External Collaborations

Strategy 4: Expand Professional Staff of the Multicultural Center and Collaborate with Faculty

Strategy 1: Expand Support and Services for Students of Diverse Populations

The historic roots of diversity at Elon University, as well as the foundational work of the Center, are entwined with African-American student community on campus. Therefore, primary to the functioning of the Center and the success of making Elon a diverse campus has been providing high quality services and support for African-American students. In the same spirit, the Center must now expand and enhance mentoring offerings to provide support and services for the constantly expanding populations of diverse students at Elon.

1. **Campus Diversity Statement:** Develop a statement, endorsed by senior staff and including input from across campus, to clearly explain the value of diversity and its centrality to the university’s mission.
2. **Co-Curricular Support/Mentoring**
 - a. Expand SMART (Student Mentors Advising Rising Talent) program to assist all incoming students of diverse populations with transition skills, campus resources and social networks needed to transition to a majority institution.
 - b. Provide support for LGBT students and education about sexual orientation by planning and implementing a Safe Zone program, assisting Spectrum (Elon gay-straight alliance student organization), ensuring policies and services meet needs of the LGBT community and further developing a faculty/staff affinity group based on sexual orientation.
 - c. Develop additional transition experiences focusing on both the academic and social needs of first year students of diverse populations, such as a summer first year experience program for Watson and Odyssey scholars.
 - d. Consider emergency financial support funds to assist students of diverse populations.
 - e. Collaborate with the Career Center on a “Beyond Elon” series, leveraging internship and job prospects for underrepresented students and partnering to hold a multicultural career fair.
 - f. Create a Multicultural Leadership Roundtable (student representatives from each multicultural student organization) as a student advisory board to identify diversity needs/initiatives and collaborate on student multicultural programs across the campus.
3. **Scholarship/Student Success Programs:** Work with Advancement and Admissions to expand the current scholarship offerings and overall population of diverse students; develop a video and other means for students to communicate to donors about the impact of scholarships and support programs.

4. **Assessment:** Institutionalize the use of campus climate surveys to monitor the accomplishment of campus climate goals and distribute an annual climate report to be discussed with the entire campus.
5. **Policies:** Streamline processes for handling discrimination charges and develop policies/practices that foster and promote best practices and a campus environment supportive of students from diverse backgrounds.

Strategy 2: Develop a Comprehensive Multicultural Education Experience for All Students

In order to succeed in a complex and changing world, Elon students must encounter and learn from diversity in meaningful ways. In collaboration with major campus stakeholders, the Center will develop a comprehensive multicultural education program to provide the university community with experiences focusing on acceptance and celebration of individual identities, identifying/dismantling stereotypes, and fostering values of respect. Through a dynamic range of speakers, celebrations of diverse cultures, interactions among students, curricular and co-curricular programs, and new technology resources, the Center will work with all campus constituents to develop a comprehensive multicultural education experience on campus.

1. **Multicultural Education as a Core Elon Experience:** Multicultural education should become a prominent aspect of an Elon education, prominent enough to function as an Elon Experience and to be given consideration as a graduation requirement.
 - a. The Multicultural Center should prepare a proposal for the General Studies Committee to formulate a process for students to engage in a Multicultural Education requirement. Students might a combination of options, such as completing a Diversity Certificate Program, ME designated courses (e.g. ANT 121 Cross Cultural Encounters, GST 200 level "Culture of" Egypt, China, Japan, etc.) and/or a substantial cultural immersion experience, in the U.S. or abroad.
 - b. Develop a Multicultural Education Certificate program, focusing on identity development and cultural competency, based on the work of the 2006 Student Life Diversity Committee.
 - c. Identify and create Cultural Immersion Experiences, to be posted on the Elon Experience Transcript. Short-term immersions might include attending religious ceremonies, Occaneechi Tribal Council events, MLK Day of Service, or rural or farming community experiences. Global Immersions would focus on experiencing life from the point of view of another culture.
2. **Transformative Multicultural Education Experiences**
 - a. Implement "Difficult Dialogues" workshops and discussions to teach students how to approach, confront and discuss difficult or taboo topics related to diversity and difference. This annual series will help students work and talk with others different from themselves.
 - b. Infuse Multicultural Education into New Student Orientation and Elon 101:
 - i. Require all incoming first-year students to complete a mandatory online awareness assessment and diversity training tool.
 - ii. Include Multicultural Education tools in faculty development and Elon 101 classes.
 - iii. Provide training for Orientation Head Staff & Orientation Leaders.
 - iv. Collaborate with Orientation and Student Activities on a themed campus-wide Multicultural Education program, with speaker/presentation for the first week of classes.
 - c. Develop a residential Multicultural Learning Community/"real world" immersion house which dovetails with the Multicultural Certificate Program and enhances multicultural competence.
 - d. Collaborate with the Isabella Cannon Center for International Studies to develop an International Dialogue Lecture Series (e.g., Human Rights, Law, Global Economy, Civil Liberties).
 - e. Explore creating a first year summer experience engaging students in multicultural experiences.

- f. Incorporate Multicultural Education into Student Leadership Development
 - i. Develop the current DEEP program (Diversity Education Emerging Program) into a premier diversity peer educator program providing trainings, workshops and programs.
 - ii. Provide Diversity training for all student leaders through summer common leader training (for Resident Assistants, Orientation Leaders, Moseley Front Desk staff, etc.).
 - iii. Work with the Center for Leadership to develop a diversity and leadership training workshop for student leaders in all student organizations and programs.
 - iv. Develop a plan for an ESTV student-led, diversity themed talk-show featuring diverse perspectives and a WSOE diversity themed talk-radio show.

3. Multicultural Education for Faculty and Staff

- a. Partner with Human Resources and the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning to develop an online diversity education tool and to invite consultants for faculty & staff training.
- b. Design a series of faculty/staff “Lunch and Learn” workshops to broaden awareness and learn strategies for teaching, advising and working on a diverse campus.
- c. Investigate piloting a cultural immersion trip for faculty & staff from across the university.

Strategy 3: Maximize Internal and External Collaborations

In order to more fully support students of diverse populations and enhance multicultural education, the Center must collaborate across a broader spectrum of the university. A wide range of strategies is needed, including committees, advisory groups, co-programming, and work with entities across the county and state.

1. Internal Collaborations

- a. Develop a Multicultural Faculty/Staff Network to serve as a safe haven for new faculty/staff of diverse populations and aid in recruitment and retention, interviews, welcoming efforts, networking, professional development opportunities and recognition.
- b. Form a stronger partnership between the Center and Admissions to attract and recruit students of diverse populations by meeting with and training Admissions staff, assisting in Watson/Odyssey selection, assisting with Multicultural Experience Weekend and providing a student liaison.
- c. In partnership with Alumni Relations, develop stronger ties with alumni of diverse populations in order to enhance opportunities for alumni and current students.
- d. Partner with University Advancement to develop the Center’s case statement in order to engage foundations, grant agencies, alumni and other donors in support of endowing and relocating the Center, preserving the history of the African-American Resource Center, adding scholarships for students of high financial need and enhancing the Center’s Library resources.
- e. Develop the Multicultural Coalition, with cross-departmental representation, to review the campus climate for students of diverse populations, coordinate campus diversity programming, review services and coordinate student recognition events for students of diverse populations.
- f. Form a Multicultural Advisory Council to advise the Center on future planning.

2. External Collaborations

- a. Create a Hispanic-Friendly Campus: Offer campus-wide discussion and education efforts to prepare for changing demographics in future incoming classes and further relations with the local Hispanic community through collaborations with organizations like Centro La Comunidad, Blessed Sacrament, etc.

- b. Display semester-long art exhibits of local artists, oppression and freedom movement artifacts, and traveling exhibits (e.g. Smithsonian Multicultural Art exhibit, Library of Congress American Memory collection and Law Library of Congress collection on diversity-related rulings).
- c. Host the Alvin Ailey Performing Arts Experience Workshop for a five-day intensive dance workshop, a performance and a seminar focusing on the history of African-American dance.
- d. Charge the Multicultural Student Council (student representatives from all campus diversity programs and organizations) with hosting a “Diversity Leaders of Tomorrow” conference for NC college students, presenting multicultural education programs in local high schools and partnering with the Morgan Place (Ball Park) community on initiatives (youth programs, historical preservation and celebrations).

Strategy 4: Expand Professional Staff in the Multicultural Center & Collaboration with Faculty

To increase support and retention of students of diverse populations and enhance multicultural education across campus, Center staff and university faculty and staff must grow and continue to develop professionally.

1. **The Multicultural Faculty Fellow:** The Multicultural Faculty Fellow is an appointment given to a current, full-time faculty member to work with faculty and staff to promote diversity awareness, infuse diversity into the curriculum, and provide a bridge between curricular and co-curricular programs. The position will be appointed by the Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students and the Provost, in consultation with the Academic Deans and the Director of the Multicultural Center.

2. **Professional Staffing:** Throughout this plan, the work of the Center will expand to more fully support, mentor, recruit, and retain students of diverse populations, as well as to provide enhanced and increased campus-wide multicultural education for all students, faculty and staff. To meet these challenges and truly serve as a campus Multicultural Center, the current staffing model must be expanded. Current Assistant Directors with part-time collateral positions will need to become full-time, additional staffing will be needed at the Associate Director level, and the role of the Director will need to be expanded. Currently the staff of the Center includes the Director, ½ time Assistant Director, ½ time Assistant Director, ¼ time Assistant Director, and a full-time Program Assistant. The staffing needed to support this plan calls for moving to a professional staff of 4 FTE (a Director, an Associate Director, two full-time Assistant Directors), a Faculty Fellow with two course releases per year and a Program Assistant. Specific enhancements include:
 - a. Generate interest for and identify the Center’s first Multicultural Faculty Fellow position in 2009-2010 to begin work no later than fall 2010.
 - b. Combine the two half-time Assistant Directors into a full-time Assistant Director for the beginning of the 2010-2011 year.
 - c. Shift the ¼ time Assistant Director to a full-time Assistant Director to coordinate the growing multicultural education programs for the beginning of the 2011-2012 year.
 - d. In 2012-2013, explore methods for enhancing the role of the Director of the Multicultural Center. This position should be seen as the central voice and expert for both the growth of the students, faculty and staff of diverse populations and campus wide multicultural education. The committee recognizes the need for an administrator, with expertise and experience in the field, to serve as campus ombudsman while still overseeing the operations of the Center.
 - e. In order for the Director to fill this enhanced role, it will be necessary to have a seasoned Associate Director within the Center in 2013-2014. Depending on the size and scope of the Center’s programs at that time, this position may be a completely new role or be a promotion of one of the Assistant Director positions.

Funding Needs

ENDOW THE MULTICULTURAL CENTER \$ 3,000,000

The Multicultural Center should be a visible campus destination where students, faculty and staff gather to learn, discuss, and participate in campus wide programs. As the Center's programs grow and expand, additional space and resources will be needed to support a wider range of diversity organizations, campus programs, a larger resource library, additional staff offices, and spaces for students, faculty and staff gatherings and trainings. Naming the Multicultural Center after a generous donor would add prestige to the proud history of the center.

NEW ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSES TO SUPPORT THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR THE MULTICULTURAL CENTER \$ 305,000

1. Multicultural Education Programs \$ 27,000

To facilitate students encountering and learning from diversity through intentional experiences that lead to self-awareness and skills for working with people different from themselves, the Center will develop a comprehensive multicultural education program. Experiences will include the Multicultural Education Certificate program, celebrations of cultural heritages, difficult dialogues training, short and long-term cultural immersions.

- a. Multicultural Education Certificate program (cohort program) \$10,000
- b. Celebration of Cultural Heritages \$ 7,000
- c. Workshops/speakers on multicultural education \$10,000

2. Multicultural Immersion Experiences 50 at an average of \$2,000 \$ 100,000

The Center seeks to create immersion experiences across the state and globe. This fund will provide initiative grants for students to design their own immersion experiences (including living "in the shoes" of a student at an Historically Black College or University, traveling to Egypt to explore ancient religions, living in Alamance County farming communities, home stays with families in Costa Rica, cross-cultural or religious pilgrimages over fall or spring breaks).

3. Additional Staffing (one FTE Assistant Director and one Associate Director) \$ 100,000

- a. One FTE Assistant Director
- b. Associate Director

4. Multicultural Faculty Fellow \$ 17,000

The Faculty Fellow will liaison with faculty and staff in promoting and infusing multicultural education into the campus curriculum. This respected faculty member, with experience in multicultural education, will be appointed by the Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students and the Provost to support research, resource development, and campus workshops. Two course releases and a budget for faculty development workshops and professional development.

5. Multicultural Faculty Scholars Program \$ 19,000

Modeled after the successful Service-Learning Faculty Scholars and CATL Scholars, this program will be created by the Faculty Fellow, Center staff and the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. Each year this faculty cohort program will allow 5-10 faculty members the time and training to design or re-design courses to effectively utilize pedagogies and best practices of multicultural education.

- a. Eight faculty scholars @ \$1,000 stipend and \$6,000 budget \$14,000
- b. Grants for course development (two at \$3500) \$ 7,000

6. Student grants and support programs for additional 40 Odyssey students **\$ 42,000**

The Watson and Odyssey programs support first generation and low-income students who have received scholarships and an Elon Experiences grant. These campus programs have proven they help these students succeed at Elon and beyond. These programs change individual students' lives and impact the entire campus.

As donors give money to name scholarships for students to have access to an Elon education, funds will be needed to assist these students with purchasing computers, books, and otherwise being able to fully participate in the life of an Elon student. These expenses listed here do not include scholarships or an Elon Experience grant.

- a. 40 at \$750 each per year for books, etc. (\$3,000 for 4 years) \$30,000
- b. 40 at \$300 per year for program support \$12,000

Committee Members

MarQuita Barker	Assistant Director of Residence Life and Multicultural Center
Joy Baxter	Class of 2009
Kathleen Edwards	Assistant Director of the Kernodle Center for Service Learning
Danny Glassmann	Assistant Director of Residence Life and the Multicultural Center
Charles Irons	Assistant Professor of History
Kim Johnson	Associate Director of Admissions and Director of Multicultural Recruitment
Prudence Layne	Assistant Professor of English & Coordinator, African/African-American Studies (Committee Co-Chair)
Darris Means	Assistant Director of Student Life and Leadership Development for Elon Academy
Sylvia Munoz	Director of El Centro
Keadrick Peters	Class of 2010
Kristine Silvestri	Class of 2010
Phil Smith	Assistant Chaplain (Committee Co-Chair)
Jeff Stein	Associate Dean of Students
Jalonda Thompson	Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs & Leadership
George Troxler	Dean of Cultural and Special Programs
Leon Williams	Director, the Multicultural Center
Michael Williams	Director of Campus Center Operations and Conferences

The Charge

The Committee on Expanding the Role of the Multicultural Center was charged with the following:

1. Clarify the mission of the center to build on its strengths, and reflect an expanded role for diversity education activities.
2. Review, revise, and further develop the 3-year strategic plan of the Multicultural Center, defining new programs and resources needed, and developing a suggested implementation timetable.
3. Write a case statement on the contributions of diversity education to a well-rounded education for students. This statement will be available for use by Institutional Advancement as appropriate for fundraising.
4. Compose an interim report by the end of this academic year (Fall 2008), with a final report by May 1st, 2009.

References

Does diversity make a difference? Three research studies on diversity in college classrooms. Executive Summary. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education and American Association of University Professors. (2000).

Yankelovich, Daniel. *Survey of attitudes on diversity in higher education: Overview*. Address to the Ford Foundation Conference on Diversity. October 1998.