

**Final Report
Consultation Committee on the Cultural Centers
Yale University**

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Overview

On November 3-5, 2014 the authors of this report visited Yale University, at the invitation of Provost Ben Polak, to conduct a consultation on the University's cultural centers. Members of the consultation team were: Mary Grace Almandrez, Brown Center for Students of Color and Assistant Dean of the College, Brown University; Karen W. Biestman, Associate Dean and Director of the Native American Cultural Center (NACC) and Lecturer, Stanford Law School, Stanford University; Larry D. Roper, Professor, School of Language Culture and Society, Oregon State University; Judy K. Sakaki, Vice President for Student Affairs, University of California (Chair).

In preparation for the consultation, we were provided with specific historical and programmatic information for each of the four centers and various documents such as the University profile data and various University publications. Together, the materials we received provided a clear context

from which to begin the consultation process. Additionally, we were provided with a detailed itinerary of the individuals and groups with whom we were to meet during the visit. The background materials we received were extremely helpful as they allowed us to put the history, evolution, mission, programs and services of the cultural centers into context relative to the strategic direction of the division of student life and Yale University.

Our site visit began with meetings with Kimberly M. Goff-Crews, Marichal Gentry, James Antony and Erin Johnson. These initial conversations were helpful to ensure the consultation team was aligned in its understanding of the charge for the program consultation. Following the meetings with the student affairs leadership, the consultation committee held individual and group meetings with the cultural centers' staff, faculty, student representatives from each of the centers, alumni, and other key administrative stakeholders (Provost Ben Polak, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Lynn Cooley, and Dean of Yale College Jonathan Holloway).

The meetings, individual cultural center background material, and additional documents provided valuable insights regarding the perceived strengths and challenges of each of the centers. The students, alumni, faculty and administrators who participated in the group meetings and individual conversations were engaged and thoughtful in their responses. Participants demonstrated a strong commitment to the centers and unanimously endorsed the cultural centers as being essential to Yale's mission and educational effectiveness. This dynamic struck us as a positive frame to be captured as the cultural centers pursue the future enhancement of their organization, programs and relationships. In other words, the staff of the cultural centers should be buoyed by the knowledge that their student, professional and alumni colleagues at Yale want them to be successful in their future endeavors. Those with whom we spoke were unambiguous in their belief that the work of supporting the identity needs and sociocultural development of students from historically underrepresented or underserved backgrounds is essential to fulfilling Yale's mission and values.

The remainder of the report will convey more nuanced outcomes of our conversations during the consultation process, observations drawn from those conversations, conclusions drawn by the consultation team, and recommendations we offer for Yale University leadership.

Current Condition

This is a moment of extraordinary growth in student life at Yale, most evident with the planned construction of two new residential colleges. With this planned expansion of the undergraduate student body, it is also an important time to convene a conversation about the future of the cultural centers and support for historically underrepresented students at the University. The launching of two new residential colleges and the emphasis on increasing access to low-income students as part of the expansion should bring increased conversation about the types of support structures needed to support the increased presence of historically underrepresented students, in general, as well as those from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

It is a profound and powerful symbolic message that Yale has committed the resources to create access for diverse communities through cultural centers and other institutional initiatives. It is essential that the University reinforce this commitment by building viable cultural structures to respond to the diverse needs of students and support the growth, development and success of ethnic students and the communities that support them – the cultural centers are the most vital institutional structures for demonstrating the institution's promise and possibilities.

The Yale cultural centers are powerful and lively educational settings. The centers play an important role in stimulating “border crossing” and helping students (all Yale students) cultivate intercultural connections. The centers are dynamic intellectual settings that help students enrich their lives. Through the centers, undergraduates get to interact with graduate students, who cultivate pipelines and breathe life into the aspirations of younger students. Inter-generational interactions with alumni are also important for students’ goal direction and situating students in campus legacy.

The cultural centers provide an important foundational experience through which students can acquire essential knowledge and skills that can enhance success in other aspects of life at Yale. The centers are “brave,” not just “safe” spaces that are key to helping students craft narratives to navigate their world at Yale and beyond. Through leadership, risk taking, and engagement with diverse peers, the cultural center experience provides a platform for self-exploration, identity enhancement and social engagement. Centers are where undergraduate character gets shaped, where campus policies and goals are articulated, and where Yale’s commitment to global excellence is demonstrated.

Yale is made up of a cluster or constellation of diverse communities. The ethnic community centers serve as clearinghouses - intellectual, cultural, professional, community service - for myriad issues, programs and services that connect each to the other and all to the whole, and promote learning opportunities in and out of the classroom for the entire Yale community, as well as students of color.

The cultural centers at Yale have a demonstrated history of adding value to the Yale campus community, the New Haven community, and alumni. It is critically important to the University’s reputation that any response to the consultation be seen as building on that legacy and intensifying the commitment going forward.

The consultation process generated tremendous energy, anxiety and involvement on campus and beyond from those who wished to endorse the value of the centers and offer insights on how that value can and should be heightened. Members of the Yale community have both high and low expectations for the outcomes of the consultation. The high expectations relate to the desire to have the needs and hopes of the community and those associated with the cultural centers be taken seriously. The low expectations are associated with concern that consultations have been done in the past and nothing appears to have been done to act on the recommendations.

Fortunately, current university leadership is seen as supportive, but not necessarily aware, of the full range and complexity of issues associated with leading the centers. This fact is positive, in that leaders are starting from a place of community support and endorsement as they consider the future leadership and direction of the cultural centers. However, there is an embedded expectation that university leaders will take steps to learn more about the centers prior to enacting changes.

Current students as the primary constituents of the centers are key cultural communicators about the current value and effectiveness of the centers and the future potential and possibilities for those spaces. Student perceptions will be given greater attention later in this report. However, it is worth noting at this point that students suggest much greater potential for the centers to enhance the lives of ethnic students and the majority students than is currently realized. Students also provided powerful insight into the unique need and value realized by specific cultural centers and how the programs, services and facilities can be enhanced to meet their evolving needs.

Alumni stories provide a convincing demonstration of the rich legacy and even more promising future for the wellbeing of the centers and for Yale. However, many voiced that they either feel unheard or not recognized as potential sources of support as recruiters, mentors, advisors or fundraisers. Alumni view themselves as bridges to professional and other networks, and are deeply committed to giving back. They welcome inclusion, transparency, and timely information as the future of the centers is navigated.

The cultural center deans, in aggregate, are a sincere and truly caring group of individuals. It was obvious in our conversations that they are committed to what they are doing and each is committed to care for the students of Yale University. The deans of the cultural centers can be characterized as possessing a range of experience; some have been at Yale for a substantial amount of time, which allows them to have both the benefit of longevity and broad knowledge of the University, while others are new to their roles. As university leaders consider the future of the cultural centers, it is fortunate to have as their starting point deans who care deeply about what they are doing and the communities they serve. The consultation revealed the need to give serious attention to the purpose, expectations, budget, facilities and responsibilities of the centers. If resources are to be held constant, there is a need to reframe the dean role and reimagine the mission of the centers.

This will require a community-wide conversation that reflects a conscious choice to function in a new and different way. The current structure is not sustainable, regardless of who performs the role. In their over-forty-five-year evolution, the Yale cultural centers have undergone significant change, growth and differentiation. The historical mission of the centers' work has been to act as internal supports, advocates and sociocultural programmers for specific populations. It is essential that the commitment be maintained, while the path to pursuing that commitment is reexamined.

Messages of excellence abound at Yale University; this ethic must be reflected in the attention and support the University gives to the cultural centers. The remainder of this report will explore obstacles and opportunities to excellence in the cultural centers and support for students who bring mission-enriching diversity to the Yale University campus.

Major Themes

a. Align Centers with a University-wide Diversity Agenda

Through each of our conversations, particularly with university faculty and administration, the consultation committee heard reference to numerous university initiatives and commitments that demonstrate Yale's dedication to diversity. However, to the casual listener/observer these initiatives appear disjointed and episodic, which has the effect of diminishing the magnitude of the University's efforts and message. Yale University would benefit from a broad, but focused, conversation about the University's diversity agenda – a conversation that leads to the clear articulation of the relationship among the values that inform its student recruitment, faculty recruitment, curriculum development, and goals for a reenergized student life. The complex intersection of these areas of strategic emphasis must be addressed as an integrated whole. From the outside, this conversation offers the opportunity to capture this crucial moment in the University's history and ensure a thoughtful and coordinated approach to the future of the campus. An articulated diversity agenda allows for what now appears as incongruent efforts to be approached as one broad initiative with multiple dimensions, staged in their implementation. It would be helpful to embed the conversation about the future of the cultural centers into

the broader conversation about the increased emphasis on enriching student and faculty diversity, broadening the curriculum, and promoting an inclusive campus climate and student life in Yale College. The future direction of the cultural centers must be seen as having strategic and mission-critical importance to the University. The centers are poised to substantively advance the provost's goal of building bridges to multiple communities (including first generation, religious life, LGBT, STEM students, and graduate students), because the centers are already engaged in this work at some level. However, if the centers are to contribute at the level at which they are capable, center leadership needs to be guided in aligning its missions and priorities, with appropriate and proportional job descriptions, budget and staffing. This can only be achieved if the future of the centers is prioritized within a broader strategic conversation.

b. Enhance Student Support, Engagement and Community

It is important to state emphatically that the centers are not cultural monoliths; they represent spaces for rich cultural exchange among a diverse array of students and community members. At the same time, each of the centers has a unique cultural footprint that reflects the particular needs of its community; attention must be given to the explicit leadership needed to advance the community. Later in this document we will offer our insights into the distinctive issues for each of the communities served by the four cultural centers.

The centers have symbolic and instrumental value. Symbolically they are powerful in what their presence communicates to prospective and enrolled students about the values of the University and the value the University has for diversity; the centers represent a strong attractor. Instrumentally, the centers are “anchors” to multiple stakeholders and foundational to the development of a sense of community. Additionally, the leadership experiences afforded students provide them with transferable skills that they can apply in other parts of their lives at Yale, in workplaces, and in post-college civic engagement.

The cultural centers play a significant role in deepening the educational experience and enriching life at Yale; student faculty and alumni view them as hubs of intellectual vitality and dynamism. In addition to hosting faculty talks and alumni events, these centers facilitate integrated learning and community engagement with local organizations (e.g., tutoring at The House, ESL programs at La Casa). The centers are essential sites for identity development, peer education, wellness counseling, academic advising, graduate and professional planning, and where service agendas are shaped. Centers empower discussions about service as well as class, culture and ethnicity. In our discussion with faculty, it was acknowledged that an important role of the centers is to “forestall revolution,” as well as to drive diversification of the faculty and curriculum.

If the centers are to achieve the incredible promise expressed by members of the Yale community with whom we spoke, there must be renewed emphasis on community-specific student support, concerted efforts to strengthen the sense of community within and among centers, enhanced connections among students and alumni, and deepened efforts to foster engagement among the centers and the New Haven community. Those who spoke to the consultants have high aspirations for the centers. The expectations they expressed have at the core a focus on increasing support for the centers in ways that will enhance the vitality of those spaces.

Enhancement of the centers may call for expansion of the missions and target audiences for the centers' programs and service. For example, currently, the centers perform the role of offering a safe space for international students. Participation in the centers and connection with other students is helpful for assisting international students in acquiring the skills to navigate race as a

social dynamic, a new experience for those for whom racial dynamics may not have been a persistent presence in their lives prior to coming to Yale. However, service to international students has not been articulated as part of the mission of the centers. Nor has service to graduate students, who also make use of the centers. Graduate students play a crucial role in the centers, both as staff who often serve as mentors and the “adult” presence during centers’ evening hours, but also as important stakeholders whose own intellectual and professional lives are to be nourished and supported. These roles need to be institutionalized and supported in addition because they often provide the pipeline to the academy and can further diversify the professoriate, at Yale or elsewhere.

It may be important to formally build into the service and programming missions of the cultural centers responsibility for supporting the needs of graduate and international students.

c. Develop and Sustain a Culture of Leadership

The current leadership structure for the cultural centers is problematic at best. The mix of responsibilities associated with the director/dean role is confusing to those in the role and not well understood by student, faculty and alumni stakeholders. Because of the range of responsibilities, extensive time demands, and community expectations of the position, the current director/dean role is unsustainable. The simple analysis is that there should either be additional staff assigned to the centers or the position should be redesigned with more streamlined responsibilities focused on the needs of the centers’ respective communities.

Position descriptions for the dean/director role must be written in a way that accurately reflects the true demands of the roles. This will allow authenticity and integrity in the recruitment, hiring and supervision process. Although there is institutional capital associated with deanship titles, the expected division of duties serves to undermine the communities’ need for a full-time director; this theme was articulated strongly by all four deans, faculty, student groups, and alumni. The portfolio of duties and expectations needs to be equitable, reasonable, and clearly articulated across centers.

At the same time, however the center leadership positions are designed, the functioning of the center deans/directors must be constructed as an intentional, institutionally-sanctioned professional community. Currently, the deans/directors are rarely convened as a colleague group and as a result they miss valuable opportunities to share promising practices, engage in common learning, or jointly plan and problem solve. There are significant shared needs among the centers/directors that can be fulfilled by strengthening the culture of leadership, including: the need for validating their roles during times other than showcase opportunities (e.g., alumni weekends, admissions events); cultivating deeper understanding of the true value for and understanding of the possibilities that cultural centers have for higher education, generally, and Yale, specifically; scoping the position responsibilities to reflect a more realistic portrayal of depth of the director role; understanding and acknowledging the hidden dimensions of the role and codifying those roles; creating an institutional frame to clearly define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the cultural centers; creating a sustainable mission, vision and plan for the future functioning and development of the centers; creating focused direction and support for the directors as a group (essential for the retention and professional development of directors); convening a conversation to strategize ways to establish more uniformity in the center director role; creating a context in which the directors have the opportunity to meet regularly to share, plan, learn and develop with each other; and rethinking the director role so as to allow for balance and attention to the most essential aspects of the position.

Because diversity is expressed as a major theme in the University's current leadership agenda, it is essential that cultural centers develop, in concert with others, a clearer sense of direction that articulates and grounds their work as being mission critical. In their current condition, the centers are defined by a good deal of activity, with little sense of direction and prioritization – committed people doing a lot of work. The cultural centers would dramatically increase their value to students and the University if they were to align their energy towards a clearly defined destination. Such clarity would also help give focus to the position descriptions and professional responsibilities of the cultural center professional staff, while also charting a shared destination for the staff as a whole. In the current context, it appears staff members view their roles through the individual frames of what each of them does on a day-to-day basis. The outcome of this approach, as described by the cultural centers' staff and colleagues across campus, is a silo mentality, characterized by individualization of jobs. The individualized approach to jobs allows staff to pursue activities that most interest them individually, but don't necessarily serve the mission of Yale, the cultural centers, or the division of student life.

Cultural centers would be significantly strengthened if they were to develop a culture anchored on a shared mission, shared identity and collaborative relationships, within the frame of serving specific community needs.

Mission and leadership continuity are extremely important for stabilizing community. By creating a culture of leadership within and among centers, institutional knowledge and leadership effectiveness can be increased; it also delivers a clear message to cultural communities that the high-level functioning of the centers is a major priority. For example, the current structure suggests there is not full understanding or appreciation of the demands of each center, as evidenced by the fact that interim deans are expected to commit only 10 hours per week to the centers, which does not adequately address the unique needs of these communities.

The leadership structure of the centers and the working titles of center leadership must be rethought and reframed.

d. Reinforce Organizational Structure

The future success of the centers demands that they have an administrative champion. In the current structure, the centers operate as isolated entities, where each director/dean must self-advocate and create a vision for his or her center's future individually. If the cultural support program at Yale is to advance, all centers must advance with institutional support that emanates from an affirmed institutional commitment, not based on the persistence or persuasiveness of a particular center leader, student community or alumni group.

University leadership should reconsider the reporting direction of the centers. The centers need a supervisor-advocate who can act as their voice in advancing essential issues within the administration and help preserve the integrity of the centers. There is a strong need for more assertive support and advocacy of the centers, especially when tough decisions need to be made or conflicts need to be resolved. In the current arrangement, the centers are one aspect of an already overloaded professional portfolio. Given the professional mentoring needs of the centers' leadership and the high-stakes nature of the work done in the centers, attentive and accessible supervision is imperative.

Staff turnover is an issue in some of the centers. There are perceptions in some communities of "revolving door directors" - this dynamic is exhausting and frustrating for students, and creates an absence of sustained and valuable institutional knowledge for Yale. Directors (current and

future) would benefit from strategic planning, self-studies, regular performance evaluations, professional coaching, succession planning, professional development opportunities, and assessment protocol development -- support that can only come from more engaged supervision.

The collaborative model in use by residential college deans may provide guidance of a current institutional practice that better shares resources (human and fiscal), and provide training (i.e., "deans' school") and professional development support, which could be mirrored in the centers. The Woodbridge Fellows Program, similarly, may offer a model for visible partnerships and signify institutional commitment for graduate assistants within the centers.

The centers are in need of support staff. In addition to student (both undergraduate and graduate) staff, there is a need for more administrative assistance. Students are engaged and passionate as temporary and part-time help, but limited in their sustained contributions. The centers would greatly benefit from permanent institutionalized support in the form of 1) assistant deans, and/or 2) administrative assistants.

Because staffing is both stretched thin and divided, operational hours are constrained (e.g., 6-10 p.m.), which limits programming, counseling, advising, and community building - indeed compromises the mission of the centers as relevant spaces for students.

Reconsider where the center directors should report within the University's administration. Ensure that the person to whom the center directors report has sufficient time and professional background to provide leadership for the desired outcomes.

e. Stabilize and Leverage Financial Resources

The financial condition of the centers is uneven. This situation leads to disparities among the centers and contributes to the feeling that university leadership does not equally value the centers. Among the specific financial conditions to be addressed are:

- x Stabilize the funding among the centers, providing consistent institutional allocations.
- x Not all centers have endowments. Target fundraising to establish endowments for each of the centers.
- x The centers could benefit from dedicated fundraising.
- x Directors could use support in budget development and management, particularly ways to leverage resources.

Student organization funding is extraordinarily competitive and limited within the centers. Evaluating and leveraging centralized funding sources would alleviate the already constrained options currently in the centers, while also freeing the directors from the challenging and controversial role of distributing highly coveted but limited resources.

It may also be helpful to re-evaluate centralized contributions to half-time graduate assistants (i.e., restore the 20-20 arrangement). This would aid significantly in staffing.

f. Attention to Physical Infrastructure

There is significant perceivable unevenness in the condition and space available in the various cultural centers. Particularly, the physical condition of the CASA and AACC requires serious attention. The disparity among the centers sends a negative message to students, prospective students, visitors and alumni. Moreover, several members of the college community have expressed concerns that delays and/or unresponsiveness to basic maintenance requests greatly affect daily operations and perceptions of administration's support of these spaces. Because of the size of some centers, additional space for large group meetings needs to be identified for communities that cannot host events in their own centers due to space constraints.

All centers should be ADA compliant and safe. Spaces that are inaccessible, unventilated, or even dangerous due to asbestos or electrical shock risk, pose an immediate and urgent call to action. Neglected, outdated buildings - and furnishings or equipment - do not foster a welcoming environment.

Proximity to campus, exasperated by the street traffic of some of the centers, (CASA, AACC, NACC) affects access to and use of the centers, as does the physical condition.

Center directors also serve as facilities managers, responding to requests from outside entities to use their buildings. There should be a clearly articulated usage policy that focuses on granting use of the space based on alignment with the center's mission.

As the future of the centers is envisioned, it is important that the process be comprehensive and include a plan for addressing the long-term physical presence. To date it appears the approach to housing the centers has been on a space-available basis. It is important that Yale bring the same strategic, mission-critical view to the future of the centers that it brings to academic programs and research initiatives. It must invest in and plan for future development, sustainability and excellence. Clearly, diversity will be a defining feature in Yale University's future. The physical presence of the cultural centers will offer visible evidence of the quality of the institution's commitment.

g. Reinforce Outreach and Enrichment

The centers have a broad range of functions, including community outreach, which is often not articulated as a prominent dimension of the centers' work. Community outreach offers crucial opportunities for students to connect with relevant social issues and engage in service to others; the centers are an important link between Yale and the local community. The outreach role of the centers represents an essential link to the community, which must be sustained and enhanced.

All of the centers have ties to groups and organizations in the greater New Haven community. Because engagement in community partnerships and service is an important value at Yale, strategic support in the form of staffing and budget needs to be leveraged to fulfill the mission.

The centers also serve as bridges and anchors for alumni of color. Alumni often return to their respective centers because they were and continue to be sources of support and engagement for communities of color. Alumni outreach is a major responsibility for center directors. Formal partnerships with Alumni Relations and Advancement offices to assist with these relationships (and at times mitigate conflicts) may be beneficial for all parties. The centers also serve as access points for families and loved ones.

Because of the prominence of the centers for external entities, it would be helpful to be more explicit about the outreach and engagement expectations of the centers and to have associated responsibilities articulated in the position descriptions of directors. There is much external value to be gained from having centers engaged in the life of the local community and as gathering spaces for alumni and families. To be sure this benefit is realized, university leadership should illuminate this as an expectation.

h. Reconcile History and Destiny

In Yale's current context, the ethnic communities for which the cultural centers were created have become less clearly bounded, as increasing numbers of multiracial and multiethnic students have come to the University. In addition to the opportunities presented by the presence of students of mixed-race heritage, acknowledgement of personal characteristics such as gender, social class, sexual orientation, spirituality, and other personal variables within individual ethnic groups makes for greater complexity in responding to the identities and developmental needs of students. The outcome of these powerful intersecting identity dynamics suggests that the work of cultural centers, and the role of professionals in those spaces, is not as straightforward and narrowly focused as it has historically been. This fact was endorsed and articulated in various ways by many of the individuals with whom we spoke.

The aforementioned identity themes and the paradoxes embedded in making sense of the current landscape provide a foundational question for making sense of the future of cultural centers at Yale University. The question before Yale is not an "either-or question" – either we serve the needs of ethnic students based on our traditional model or we abandon our traditional model and move towards a new intercultural, non-specific program focus. Instead, the University is posed with a – "how do we, while at the same time" question. That is, how do we honor our institutional commitment to address historical social inequities and act on our institutional vow to address the specific cultural needs of various ethnic groups while at the same time acknowledging and addressing the fact that the identities and socio-cultural needs of students are more complex and nuanced than those accounted for in the mission, formation, and current functioning of our cultural centers' offerings? Addressing this question requires an acknowledgement that both the founding missions and the contemporary call for reenergized leadership are each worthy of the institution's commitment, best thinking and effort. This dilemma strikes the consultation committee as being mission-worthy work for all leaders at Yale University.

As the University moves forward in supporting the cultural centers, it should consider ways to effectively manage the tension between the current and future needs of the community, as contrasted with press from some alumni to hold functioning constant or to move backward to a past way of functioning. The challenge is to reaffirm commitment to the founding values of the centers while also evolving the functioning of the centers in ways that reflect an understanding of the needs and characteristics of current and future students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are listed in order of priority:

1. Attention to physical infrastructure – University leadership should do an immediate, thorough assessment of the physical condition of each cultural center and invest in and plan for future development, sustainability and excellence of each of those centers. The University should as soon as possible address concerns with the CASA and AACC. Issues of ADA compliance, safety and security are essential.
2. Develop and sustain a culture of leadership - The leadership structure of the centers, the working titles of center leadership, and the relationship among center professional leadership must be rethought and reframed. As part of articulating the role, the University should establish a process that allows for student input on center directors and experiences with the centers. The University should begin efforts immediately to fill the positions that are currently staffed on an interim basis.
3. Reinforce organizational structure - University leadership should reconsider the reporting direction of the centers. The centers need a supervisor-advocate who can act as their voice in advancing essential issues within the administration and help preserve the integrity of the centers. Reconsider where the center directors should report within the University's administration. Ensure that the person to whom the center directors report has sufficient time and professional background to provide leadership for the desired outcomes.

Additional thought: it could be advantageous to have a dean supervise the center directors; this would allow for a more coherent voice to represent the centers and offer a more aligned leadership culture. A clear qualification for such a supervising dean would be someone who understands the Yale culture and can be a uniting, collaborative force among the centers and a thoughtful advocate in student life, with the provost and president.

4. Stabilize and leverage financial resources – Initiate efforts to stabilize and equalize the financial resources available to the centers. Make efforts to create more predictability in the budget management process.
5. Initiate a process to align cultural centers with a university-wide diversity agenda - Yale University would benefit from a broad, but focused, conversation about the University's diversity agenda – a conversation that leads to the clear articulation of the relationship among the values that inform its student recruitment, faculty recruitment, curriculum development, and goals for a reenergized student life.
6. Enhance student support, engagement and community - There must be renewed emphasis on community-specific student support, wellness, concerted efforts to strengthen the sense of community within and among centers, enhanced connections among students and alumni, and deepened efforts to foster engagement among the centers and the New Haven community. Enhancement of the centers may call for expansion of the missions and target audiences for the centers' programs and services, specifically graduate and international students, as well as focus on STEM disciplines.

7. Reinforce outreach and enrichment – The University must be more explicit about the outreach and engagement expectations of the centers and express those expectations and responsibilities in the position descriptions of directors.
8. Reconcile history and destiny – University leadership should convene a group to develop a statement reaffirming the educational value of the cultural centers. Embedded in the document should be a reaffirmation of commitment to the founding values of the centers, as well as evolving the functioning of the centers in ways that reflect an understanding of the needs and characteristics of current and future students.