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Schoolhouse of Resistance: Critical Counterstories of Grassroots Organizers and
Campus Change Agents in California Cultural Centers

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

by

Marcela L. Ramirez

March 2018

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Eddie Comeaux, Chairperson

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Dr. Rita Kohli

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The Dissertation of Marcela L. Ramirez is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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My wife, Dr. Lissa Stapleton carried me when I could not carry myself. My ancestors reminded me that this moment was for all of us. My grandfathers and my uncle, may they rest in peace, would not let my faith waiver. My parents taught me that anything worth having would not come easy. My father pushed me to speak my truth loudly and boldly. My mother taught me how to navigate and move in this world with deep resolve, personal commitment, resilience, and discipline. My grandmother showed me that grace and kindness always wins. My mother-in-law taught me that under duress there is always a righteous path, a greater good, and plan of action; even when it is not my preferred plan. My siblings taught me that life goes on after disappointment and heartbreak, and that you are your own savior. My tias taught me to work hard and play even harder. This moment is what counts and the next day is not guaranteed. My tios taught me to fight back, speak up, and push beyond boundaries and limitations.

My village of trusted colleagues, friends and loved ones, inspired me to serve my highest self. The participants in this study taught me about deep commitment to community, servant leadership, and conspiring with partners in justice. UC Riverside is the place where my life shifted and deeply rooted itself in the fight for social justice, education, and transformation. Dr. Uma Jayakumar spent quality time with me and provided vital support during challenging moments. Her presence made all the difference. Critical Race Praxis for Educational Research purposefully centered and gave life to this entire case study. Finally, my faculty advisor and committee members gave thoughtful feedback and guided me towards completion. To each and every one of you, thank you.

DEDICATION

To the ancestors, elders, freedom fighters, and youth
who fought for and continue to fight for our liberation.

La Lucha Sigue y El Pueblo Unido Jamas Sera Vencido

Si Se Puede!

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Schoolhouse of Resistance: Critical Race Counterstories of Grassroots Organizers and
Campus Change Agents in California Cultural Centers

by

Marcela L. Ramirez

Doctor of Philosophy, Education
University of California, Riverside, March 2018
Dr. Eddie Comeaux, Chairperson

This case study centers the voices of cultural center professionals and uses historical and present day collective counterstories to unveil visible and invisible forms of resistance, tools and strategies for change, and the ways in which they foster interest convergence within their multiple spheres of influence to advocate for students of color and minoritized communities. Employing Critical Race Praxis for Educational Research this study also reveals institutional domains of dominance that perpetuate systemic racism, status-quo norms, status-quo stories, and race-neutral policies in higher education. The perpetual delegitimization of cultural centers, institutional disinvestment in professional development, systemic erasure of community histories of struggle and resistance, and institutional co-optation of diversity and equity labor, institutionally marginalizes the expertise and racial literacies of cultural center professionals in higher education, and pushes cultural centers to operate in silos. Despite these challenges, cultural center professionals often leverage relationships with student activists, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members to foster transformative changes in higher education.

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EPIGRAPH

The School House of Resistance

by Marcela L. Ramirez

a prediction
a re[demand]
a redefinition

of spaces
and
people who

patch souls
save lives
heal wounds
nourish bodies

the triage room
the hidden room
the dirty basement

the attic of ascendance
the schoolhouse of resistance

- the cultural center

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Higher education obscures reality about how much they have disenfranchised youth ... the sickness [racism] of this society is in the universities ... colleges are unresponsive to young people ... your violator always has a cover story to justify why you are in pain.

- Junot Diaz, Scripps College, September 19, 2017

Acclaimed author Junot Diaz spoke about race relations at colleges and universities in a special lecture at Scripps College on September 19, 2017. In his discussion, Diaz contemplated the ways in which students of color and their allies have engaged in nationwide student protests and massive demonstrations against structural and systemic racism in higher education. Students across the country have put forth a call to action, demanding that colleges and universities recognize and address historical and present-day forms of racism (Chessman & Wayt, 2016). The American Council on Education's comprehensive analysis of students demands across the country emphasizes student needs and desires for (a) changes in leadership and staff who can serve as diversity advocates on campus and in their communities; (b) financial support for cultural resources and paid staff; (c) increased diversity of students, staff, and faculty; and (d) increased multicultural competence and diversity training for all members of the campus community (Chessman & Wayt, 2016). Universities across the country are sites of social unrest and in some cases college administrators have failed to respond adequately and promptly to student needs and concerns (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016; Izadi, 2015).

Meanwhile, the rise of white nationalism and white supremacist activity on college campuses poses a real threat to any sort of progress toward racial equity and

social justice made by student activists and their allies. As reported in *The New York Times*, the Unite the Right Nazi-affiliated white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia occurred in the summer of 2017 (Fausset & Feuer, 2017). Hundreds of Nazi sympathizers held tiki torches and marched through the University of Virginia chanting “blood and soil” and “Jews will not replace us.” Racist chants and marching to protest the removal of a Confederate statue ended in the death of counterprotester Heather D. Heyer, a White woman. She was killed by James Alex Fields Jr., a White man who drove through the counter-protest with his vehicle (Astor, Caron & Victor, 2017). This extreme incident is one of many recent accounts of massive demonstrations, protests, and counter-protests at U.S. colleges and universities.

Today’s heightened levels of student activism have been compared to student demonstrations and civil rights protests in the 1960’s and 1970’s (Rhoades, 2016). The present case study on cultural center professionals recognizes and contextualizes this resurgence of student activism. The National Survey of Student Engagement (2017) surveyed 6,000 students from 26 institutions and found that 1 in 8 identified as a student activist, defined as “part of a group that submitted demands to the administration, participating in or organizing a boycott, and participating in a strike, sit-in or walk-out” (p. 8). Therefore, to fully contextualize this study the third chapter includes a special section on the social and political context of today’s social protests and student activism.

This tenuous social and political climate directly impacts cultural center professionals, who serve as grassroots organizers and campus change agents and are often expected to respond to student activists’ needs and concerns. In line with historical

trends, cultural center professionals who work in student affairs often serve as bridges between student activists and campus administration (Gaston-Gayles, Wolf-Wendel, Tuttle, Twombly & Ward, 2005). Cultural center professionals frequently work alongside student organizers and serve as advocates, negotiators, translators, and accomplices. Campuses often rely on the specialized expertise and student relationships of cultural center professionals to navigate, negotiate, and resolve campus racial incidents (Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). Furthermore, cultural center professionals maintain racial literacies and knowledge that is vital to responding with dutiful care and action on behalf of disenfranchised and minoritized students of color (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). In this environment of social and political unrest, students of color are manifesting their pain in protests, while also working to counteract the effects of structural and systemic racism and color-blind university policies via student activism.

Historically, the University of California, Riverside (UCR) has encountered several of the student demands addressed in the opening paragraph. However, this study explicitly recognizes and affirms the history of 1970's student, staff, and faculty advocacy for cultural support programs and services and the cultural centers. In fact, every cultural center on the campus owes its establishment to student, staff, and faculty advocacy efforts. With respect to student activism, campuses across the country are experiencing what UCR encountered during and after the civil rights movement. As a case study, UCR serves as a historical and present-day site of critical and constructive staff and faculty engagement with student activists. Furthermore, UCR could provide

insight and instructional models for critical engagement, and best practices with respect to cultural support programs and services in higher education.

UCR has a total of eight identity-based cultural centers serving a variety of historically disenfranchised and underrepresented student populations. UCR created the first set of racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers in the UC system. In 1972, Chicano Student Programs and African Student Programs were established to support students academically and increase retention rates. UCR also created the first LGBT Resource Center in California and in all states located west of Iowa. The UCR Women's Resource Center has also existed for nearly 45 years. Asian Pacific Student Programs and Native American Student Programs also claim to be the first in the UC system. The Middle Eastern Student Center is the first in the UC system and in all of California. UCR also created a resource center for Undocumented Student Programs. Programs and services for undocumented students exist at the University of California because of a systemwide student affairs initiative supported by UC President Janet Napolitano. Each of these centers have designated space in the center of campus, paid professional staff, and a temporarily secure funding stream. In the 2014-15 school year students voted to increase their student service fees via the Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum (HESR). HESR funds are directly allocated to seven of the eight cultural centers, with the exception of Undocumented Student Programs, because they have a direct funding stream through the University of California Office of the President (UCOP).

This timely and relevant case study of UCR's cultural centers and cultural center professionals provides insight into the best practices and kinds of support services

necessary to ensure educational equity for historically disenfranchised and minoritized student groups. Studying how UCR arrived at this expansive level of cultural support programs and services may provide a breakthrough in how we research and view the work of cultural centers and cultural center professionals with regard to student outreach and recruitment, as well as retention and graduation rates for students of color. Furthermore, this study captures the challenges faced by cultural center professionals during this time period, and the ways in which they continue to resist systems of dominance and racialized oppression. Finally, collective tools and strategies to overcome institutional roadblocks are also considered.

Introduction to the Study

The following case study captures the lived experiences of cultural center professionals who embody principles of grassroots organizing and leadership during this moment in history. I explore how they are responding to student needs in a political and social climate that is challenging most universities to serve students of color thoughtfully and holistically. I will also provide a contextual frame of understanding for my decision to pursue an investigation into the experiences of cultural center professionals at the University of California, Riverside.

Chapter 1 outlines the problem, purpose of the study, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 reviews the literature as it relates to the work of cultural center professionals in four primary areas: (a) diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives; (b) historical origins and development of specialized positions in student affairs; (c) cultural center professionals in higher education; and (d) theory-to-practice in relation to the

research on cultural centers in higher education. The subsequent section conveys my personal journey as it relates to my decision to study cultural centers and cultural center professionals.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and includes the research methodology, theoretical frameworks, and research questions. The research methods section includes a description of the site selection and participants, as well as discussing sources of data, data-collection methods, data analysis, and quality criteria. In order to contextualize these findings, I have included a critical summary of the social and political climate of student activism during the case-study design and data collection. Chapter 4 outlines the historical and archival research about select students, staff, and faculty advocates for cultural support services and programs at UCR. Chapter 5 summarizes the study's participant findings into overall themes and answers the research questions. In Chapter 6, I provide an analytical discussion and new theoretical concepts and frames to understand the racialized experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education. I conclude this study with concrete recommendations for higher education and student affairs.

Problem Statement

Student activists across the country have put forth a call to action for college campuses and systems of higher education to critically and rapidly respond to the needs of disenfranchised, underserved, and minoritized students of color (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). Research in Rhoades (2016) examines the historical and contemporary role of student activism in higher education and the struggle for a racially just society. Chessman and Wayt (2016) have also documented student demands for cultural resources, cultural

centers, diversity training, and diverse representation of students, staff, faculty, and administration. Meanwhile, conservative state legislatures have made continued threats and taken explicit action to disinvest state funds from programs that directly support minoritized student populations (Fischer, 2017; Jaschik, 2016). Systems of higher education have often refrained from robustly supporting cultural programs and services for students of color, citing state and public financial disinvestments in higher education (Cervantes, 2016). Therefore, students of color and their allies have opted to pay additional student service fees separate from tuition fees to get their needs met (Zahn, 2015).

This study asserts that the perpetual and systemic disinvestment in cultural support services and programs at the hand of state legislatures, university governance boards and university administration is rooted in racism. Furthermore, state disinvestment in cultural support services and programs marginalizes the needs of students of color and stifles the racial literacies and expertise of cultural center professionals in higher education. In order to equitably and holistically serve disenfranchised communities of color, higher education must work with grassroots organizers and campus change agents to propose solutions from the bottom-up rather than the top-down (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Furthermore, research on collective forms of grassroots organizing and resistance efforts with respect to cultural center professionals is scarce. Empirical evidence and inquiry designed to answer the call of student activists is urgently needed, particularly during this time in our nation's history, with its resurgence of racial consciousness and social and political critique.

Student activists are rightfully concerned about the lack of attention and value given to student demands for cultural centers and cultural support services and programs. Grassroots organizers and campus change agents across the United States are demanding greater degrees of complexity with regard to student identity and programming efforts, more multicultural competence and cultural sensitivity training, and the recognition of systemic racism and barriers to equity in higher education (Chessman & Wayt, 2016). This study is an attempt to fill gaps in the literature with respect to cultural centers in California, and to map a way forward for cultural support programs and services that are student-centered and promote equitable outcomes for disenfranchised and minoritized students of color.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this critical case study is to investigate the experiences of cultural center professionals at the University of California, Riverside by capturing their personal counterstories and day-to-day experiences. The study explores their self-perceptions of institutional challenges and personal agency, as well as instances of value-based collision, compliance and collusion within the system. Cultural center professionals may not have formal positions of authority but they can utilize change strategies that are often undocumented or unnoticed by the institution (Kezar, 2011). Documented here are the day-to-day practices of cultural center professionals and their perception of the role and function of cultural centers in higher education.

Additionally, I have designed this study to document historical resistance efforts, provide evidence of the benefits of cultural support programs and services, and answer

the call to action of student activists who demand that systems of higher education meet their needs. Throughout, I center the voices of cultural center professionals in higher education, using collective counterstories to unveil forms of resistance to status quo norms, status quo stories, and race-neutral policies in higher education. In essence, this case study explores bottom-up solutions and showcases best practices to fill gaps in the literature.

Furthermore, via the application of Critical Race Praxis for Educational research (CRP-Ed), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and grassroots leaders and change agent theory, I uncover the tools and strategies as well as forms of resistance cultural center professionals use to influence institutional change on behalf of students. Finally, in this study, I name institutional obstacles or systemic domains of dominance that inhibit the growth and improvement of cultural support programs and services. I also name instances of delegitimization which prohibit cultural center professionals from utilizing their racial literacies and expertise.

Significance of the Study

The contemporary context of social unrest and student activism demands a redefinition of the role of student affairs in higher education and, more importantly, a redefinition of the role of cultural center professionals at colleges and universities. This critical case study's practical contribution is a fundamental shift in how higher education conducts research on the work of cultural centers and cultural center professionals, particularly as campuses increase student diversity and become minority-serving institutions.

A central component of my work here explores and explains the institutional context for the University of California, Riverside (UCR). UCR has historically responded to community agitation and student activist demands for cultural programs and services while navigating an increasingly diverse student population. The UCR story can act as a model for campuses with growing diversity in their student populations. As a case study, UCR could potentially shape and influence the future of cultural centers in higher education with an emphasis on California's growing population of students of color.

Research also suggests that the expansion and growth of cultural centers, targeted student services, and cultural programs in California is noticeably distinct (Stewart, 2011). The California State University and the University of California have seen tremendous growth in cultural centers in the past ten years. This growth trend has coincided with the membership increase of cultural center professionals who are joining the California Council of Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE). The founding members of CaCCCHE had the initial idea for the organization in the Cross Cultural Center at the University of California, Irvine. In fact, the University of California has often led the way in supporting the creation of cultural centers throughout the state. I follow this train of thought and observation to claim that the experiences of cultural center professionals in California are noteworthy.

In this study, I define cultural center professionals as student affairs practitioners who create and implement cultural programs and services for targeted student populations in identity-based resource centers on college campuses. The aforementioned

definition of cultural center professionals is a combination of functional descriptions by Sutton and McCluskey-Titus (2010) and the California Council of Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE). For example, cultural center professionals are described as practitioners who design recruitment and retention programs on college campuses for targeted populations. They are also involved in social justice education and diversity initiatives; they are expected to manage conflict and serve as resources, consultants, and advocates for students (McCluskey-Titus, 2010). CaCCCHE and Stewart (2011) contend that the work of cultural center professionals occurs in a variety of institutional departments including, but not limited to, multi-cultural centers, cross-cultural centers, racial-ethnic specific centers, women's centers, gender and sexuality centers, LGBT centers, religious and spiritual centers, and undocumented student centers.

Cultural center professionals have an emerging yet limited body of empirical research on their experiences in higher education and student affairs (Abdullah, 2012; Conerly, 2017; Patton, 2010; Ranero, 2011; Stewart, 2011; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010; Toya, 2011). On the one hand, cultural center professionals are often presumed experts in the co-curriculum who build bridges between theory and practice (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). On the other hand, as documented by Abdullah (2012), cultural center professionals have an uneven range of access to professional development and training as well as varying degrees of multicultural competence. Meanwhile, Sutton and McCluskey-Titus (2010) show that career typecasting of multicultural affairs and cultural center professionals can limit their ability to move up in the field. Overall, cultural center professionals warrant a robust platform of empirical research that documents their

perspectives in higher education and student affairs. I aim to broaden the discourse on serving students of color directly through the experiences of cultural center professionals in California.

Currently much of the research into the value of student diversity and diversity education centers on the experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at predominately White institutions (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; Park & Denson, 2009; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007). Public institutions in California have record numbers of compositional student diversity, and although the institutions are historically White-serving, I assert that the work of cultural center professionals is uniquely shaped in response to a critical mass of students of color. The research on cultural support programs and services for students of color must center the experiences of cultural center professionals who may also serve as grassroots organizers and change agents within systems of higher education.

Furthermore, research on cultural centers and cultural center practitioners calls for a centering of race and racism in policy-making (Patton, 2010; Patton, Ranero, & Everett, 2011; Stewart, 2011). Cultural center professionals must exercise subversive strategies to push themselves into policy-based conversations and provide a racialized context of the issues. Systemwide and institutional policies on campus admissions, campus climate, student protests, student conduct and sanctions, critical hate and bias incidents, sexual violence and sexual assault, and protections and support for undocumented students, all have racial implications and disparate impacts on communities of color. When given access to campus working groups, cultural center professionals are able to ask questions

about culturally relevant care and critical interventions for disenfranchised and minoritized student populations. The next section discusses related literature in detail to show how I arrived at the current focus on cultural center professionals in higher education.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is comprised of four major themes that offer context for understanding the role of cultural center professionals in higher education. The first section lays out the contemporary organizational context for diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and their relationship to cultural centers and cultural center professionals. The second section outlines the historical origins of specialized student affairs positions, which are rooted in the college student activism and civil unrest of the 1960s. The third section summarizes the current, albeit limited, research specifically on cultural centers in higher education as it relates to cultural center professionals. Finally, the fourth section discusses theoretical foundations for the work of cultural center professionals and how theory relates to practice in the field. The organization of the literature review flows from contemporary organizational sites of practice to a review of the historical perspective and current context for cultural center professionals in higher education, ending in an examination of theoretical frames of research as they relate to cultural centers and cultural center professionals.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives

Much of the contemporary research regarding the actual practice or process of implementing targeted diversity initiatives focuses on diversity trainers and diversity educators from the business management sector or human resources, and discusses corporate diversity trainers and consultants (Dobbin, Kalev, & Kelly, 2007; Monaghan, 2010; Weithoff, 2004). Meanwhile, cultural center professionals who also serve as

diversity educators on college campuses are not studied as a specific population or subgroup. Cultural center professionals who implement services for targeted student populations on college campuses are a distinct category and noticeably understudied population. Pope, Mueller and Reynolds (2009) claim that “despite the significant role that student affairs has assumed for multicultural issues, the literature supporting and guiding these efforts has been, arguably, rather scant” (p. 640). This study makes a clear distinction between cultural center professionals who may also serve as diversity educators in higher education versus those in the business management sector or corporate America.

Private sector professionals who serve as consultants are hired for a short period of time and remain outside of the institution. Large corporations can pay for diversity consultants and trainers that remain outside of the institutional structure. Meanwhile, public institutions are scrutinized with regard to how taxpayer dollars are spent, and their financial resources are often limited, resulting in professional positions required to perform diversity education within the institution (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007). The ability to work outside of the system is a luxury that on-campus diversity educators do not benefit from and the navigation of those dual relationships—to those they serve and to the larger institution—can be a challenge. Meyerson (2003) outlines a strengths-based frame and suggests that everyday leaders can make change from within the system. This study will then explore the ways in which cultural center professionals may challenge institutional barriers from within the system as they use their personal agency to advocate for institutional changes on behalf of students.

Various institutional or organizational structures can house diversity initiatives or equity and inclusion programs. Cultural centers and cultural support programs on college campuses often fall under the category of targeted diversity initiatives for historically underrepresented or minoritized student populations. In other words, cultural centers are one of many strategies of support for historically underrepresented students, under a large umbrella of campus-wide diversity initiatives, which can be housed in either academic affairs, student affairs, or offices of equity, diversity and inclusion (Shek, 2013). Shek (2103) surveyed 101 cultural centers across the country; she found that 70% of cultural centers report to student affairs, 8% to academic affairs, 9% to multicultural affairs, and 7% to the chancellor's office. Shek's findings suggest that organizational structures, reporting lines, and competing financial priorities can result in discrepancies with regard to institutional support and value for cultural centers and cultural support programs.

Shek's (2013) research on cultural centers has a broad national scope and creates a baseline of inquiry for further research specific to California cultural centers at public institutions. For the present study, I am specifically interested in the five racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers at UCR as an exemplary model of targeted support services for students of color. As a point of comparison, California-specific examples of various reporting lines for cultural centers include the Chicana/o Resource Center at California State University, Fullerton, which historically reported to academic affairs and now has a second reporting line to student affairs; the cultural centers or "Campus Community Centers" at the University of California, San Diego, which are housed under the office of equity, diversity and inclusion; and, finally, the cultural centers or "Ethnic and Gender

programs” at UCR, housed under student affairs and funded through student service fees. The present study goes beyond the organizational structures of the cultural centers to explore the daily lives of those who work within the cultural centers and how they navigate their institutions despite or in spite of organizational challenges.

Campus climate and campus culture can also determine the perception and value of campus-wide diversity initiatives. Bauer (1998) defines campus climate as “the current perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that define the institution and its members” (p. 2). Students, staff, and faculty perceptions can converge or diverge with regard to the role, function and purpose of diversity initiatives, thus either fostering or negating climates of inclusion on college campuses. Furthermore, campus culture, as defined by Kuh and Hall (1993) is “the collective, mutually shaping patterns of institutional history, mission, physical settings, norms, traditions, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions” that provide a frame of reference, interpretation, and meaning making for individuals (p. 2). The perceived value of cultural support services and programs are attached to historical narratives, traditions, and practices that are individually subjective.

Additionally, Jayakumar and Museus (2012) created a typology of campus cultures arguing that each of these campus climates produce various results. Cultural center professionals might work in environments where institutions can push students to assimilate into White culture (Euro-centric), allow students to gain targeted services under the guise of multiculturalism without changes to the status quo (diversity-oriented), or exhibit a commitment to recognize historical and current manifestations of racism and racial exclusion (equity-oriented) (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012). Institutional campus

climate and campus culture matter and can ultimately impact the work of cultural center professionals on a day-to-day basis, particularly those who use theoretical frameworks in practice that are at odds with the dominant campus culture.

The overall social environment or campus culture and campus climate often frame the diversity discourse that cultural center professionals are responding to; for example, movements to diversify the student body and provide college access for all students are often race-neutral and uphold the status quo (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). Shek (2013) notes that “strategizing for the future with conflicting notions of valuing diversity and rendering race invisible thus needs to take into account the evolving cultural resource centers as sites of expertise, education and empowerment” (p. iii). Diversification based on representation and numbers alone does not lead to racial equity and inclusion. I use this foundation to argue that the specialized role of cultural center professionals as grassroots organizers and campus change agents is critical to the institutional discourse on diversity and diversity initiatives.

The perspectives and practical expertise of cultural center professionals are needed to complete and uphold the democratic principles of cultural pluralism, which contemporary diversity discourse and multiculturalism seem to promote (Chang, 2002; Chang, Chang, & Ledesma, 2005). The notion that every perspective counts is an underlying value of diversity. The insight and expertise of cultural center professionals who implement targeted diversity initiatives on college campuses could teach us how contemporary diversity discourse can either uphold institutional structures of power or dismantle them in order to promote equity and inclusion (Astin & Astin, 2000; Harrison,

2011). I argue that research on the effectiveness of targeted diversity initiatives must also center the experiences of cultural center professionals who serve as grassroots leaders and institutional change agents to transform higher education's public institutions from within the system (Kezar & Lester, 2011).

The above section discussed the contemporary context and placement of cultural centers as one type of diversity initiative and considered the role of cultural center professionals who may also serve as diversity educators. The next section provides a historical narrative with regard to the creation of specialized student affairs positions in response to student unrest and student activism during the civil rights movement.

Student Affairs: Historical Origins and Development

Scholars have noted the role of student affairs practitioners changed during the civil rights era and particularly from the 1950s to the 1970s (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). The death of *in loco parentis*, described historically as the campus responsibility to take the "place of the parent", combined with the rise of student movements toward independence and empowerment, led to the shifting roles of student affairs practitioners as mediators, peacekeepers, and advocates for the student voice (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). Staff members who had previously assumed the role of secondary parents and guardians now served as advisors and guides to adults who were fully capable of making their own decisions. Student affairs practitioners during the civil rights movement held multiple roles and were asked to provide support and discipline within reason (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). Gaston-Gayles and colleagues (2005) assert that "The civil rights era and the student protest movement promoted the maturation of student affairs as a

profession, namely adding the roles of educator, advocate, mediator, and change agent to the mix” (p. 277). Thus, the overall challenges of the civil rights era birthed a new set of institutional expectations and political management roles for specialized administrative positions in student services.

Student services’ ability to manage and deal with student crisis and student unrest elevated their position. As a result of their new level of influence student services on most campuses earned an administrative seat in the President’s cabinet. A new position titled Vice President of Student Affairs was created during this time. Furthermore, the Dean of Students position, which often served a dual role as the Vice President for Student Affairs, also assisted universities in meeting the educational needs of all students by fostering student growth and development (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). The core identity and foundation of student affairs practice is embedded in the aforementioned value system that advises practitioners to serve in the dual role of change agents and peace keepers while making attempts to remain student-centered. During this time, student services professionals navigated contentious and hostile racial climates that continued to foster student unrest, therefore creating the need for specialized departments and mid-level management positions in student services.

Patton (2010) and Stewart (2011) suggest that student activism and student demand for targeted cultural programming is at the root and foundation of cultural centers and multicultural student services in higher education. The 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* called for an end to segregated schools and students of color attended predominately White institutions (PWIs) for the first time

in history (Cobham & Parker, 2007). Nine years prior, the 1947 federal court case *Mendez v. Westminster* in Orange County, California set the precedent for dismantling school segregation nationwide. While the laws may have changed, race, racism and racist acts were prevalent on college campuses, leading students of color in the 1960s and 1970s to demand targeted services, an expanded educational curriculum that reflected their cultural upbringing and history, and staff and faculty that reflected the newly diverse student population (Cobham & Parker, 2007; Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). The historical origins of Black, Chicano/Latino, Asian, and Native cultural centers are connected to the student activism of the 1960's and 1970's, which includes the civil rights movement and the Chicano movement (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). Student demands for diverse staff and faculty representation and additional resources at this time were also connected to the expansion and creation of Ethnic Studies programs on college campuses (Patton, 2010).

Until recently the research on cultural centers and multicultural student services was relatively thin. Limited discussions of cultural centers and multicultural affairs as a functional area began to appear in the late 1970s and 1980s, and were often included in the scholarship on the foundations of student services in higher education (Pope, et.al, 2009; Stewart, 2011). Patton (2004, 2006) wrote the first piece of empirical research that explored the origins of Black Cultural Centers at PWIs. Patton (2006) was the first study to introduce a line of research inquiry and examination into ethnic-specific cultural centers and ultimately multicultural centers in higher education. Patton's (2006) qualitative study on Black student perceptions of Black Cultural Centers found that these cultural counterspaces served as a "home away from home" where students came to deal

with climates of covert racism at PWIs (p. 640). The cultural centers also served as spaces for social gatherings, meetings, advising, and first-year transition programs. She describes the role of cultural centers as places that facilitate identity development, improve campus climate, increase retention, and provide academic and social opportunities (Patton, 2006). Students of color viewed the staff as having the knowledge, skills, and abilities to help them transition in their first year, and saw them as responsible for creating a friendly atmosphere that made students feel wanted and welcomed (Patton, 2006). In addition to Patton's work there are two more empirical studies that document the historical foundations of Black Cultural Centers as a result of student activism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Ohio State University (Pinchback-Hines, 2013; Roseboro, 2005). From the basis of her initial body of research, Patton (2010) wrote a foundational book on cultural centers in higher education.

Stewart (2011) expanded the research on cultural centers with an instrumental book on multicultural student services (MSS). Stewart discusses the differences between MSS at private, liberal arts colleges, public institutions, community colleges and minority-serving institutions such as historically Black colleges and universities and tribal colleges. The notion of similar social justice frameworks in diverse contexts is a salient theme in Stewart's work. Patton's (2004, 2006, 2010) research focused on student experiences with racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers at PWIs, while Stewart's (2011) work made intersectionality and multiculturalism a focal point for MSS. Additionally, recent research on multicultural affairs and cultural centers exhibits a growing concern for how to work with multiracial students and international students, and how to construct

intersectional spaces that support students with different abilities (Abdullah, 2012; Pinchback-Hines, 2013; Ranero, 2011; Shek, 2013; Welch, 2009). Student affairs practitioners and cultural center professionals, in particular, are presumed experts in identity development and are expected to articulate how students grow and develop with regard to their surroundings and college environment (Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). This underlying tension between how to bridge academic thought and everyday practice warrants further exploration and is addressed in an upcoming section of the literature review. For now, the next section discusses the current research on cultural centers and multicultural student services and summarizes the ways in which cultural center professionals can impact the quality of student experiences on college campuses.

Cultural Center Professionals in Higher Education

A major issue for this study is the existence of information gaps in the actual practice and day-to-day experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education. The problem is acute since there are only a handful of empirical studies on the personal experiences of cultural center professionals and how they make meaning of their work (Abdullah, 2012; Conerly, 2017; Ranero, 2011; Rosado & Toya, 2016; Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010; Toya, 2011). Cultural center professionals are often underfunded positions in need of professional development and demonstrated financial support from the university (Abdullah, 2012). Furthermore, as cultural center professionals strive to achieve measures of student success, they must contend with restrictive institutional policies as well as unwritten rules and practices that mediate racial equity (Ranero, 2011). As Ranero (2011) points out, cultural center professionals are in charge of progressive

measures of racial equity. Meanwhile institutional policies and practices create barriers and roadblocks that inhibit their success. Nevertheless, they contribute directly to student success via strategic relationships with various stakeholders.

In a recent study, Conerly (2017) examined cultural center professionals at a predominately White institution and discussed their relationships and interactions with students, staff, and faculty. Their professional experiences were characterized by strategic partnerships with stakeholders, and their perceptions of engagement in meaningful work that was directly connected to their personal identities (Conerly, 2017). Meanwhile, Toya (2011) found that cultural center professionals' interactions with students contribute directly to students' sense of belonging and retention rates on college campuses. Cultural center professionals manage a range of multiple roles as advisors, advocates, mediators, and recruitment and retention specialists (Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). Universities over rely on the expertise of cultural center professionals to resolve racial conflicts and inadvertently pigeonhole and plateau the professionals' career prospects and consideration for other leadership roles (Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). Other than the aforementioned studies, the experiences and expertise of cultural center professionals are missing from the broader discourse on cultural centers in higher education. Meanwhile, the historical development, institutional structures, and theoretical foundations of multicultural student services and cultural centers have a growing body of empirical research. A thorough review of the existing literature on cultural centers in higher education reveals the information gaps that warrant further empirical research and

inquiry into the experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education, the possibilities for which I discuss below.

First and foremost, the impact and historical development of multicultural student services and cultural centers has received some attention, and highlights how student, staff, and faculty advocacy during the 1960s civil rights movement formulated demands for cultural support services and programs (Kupo, 2011; Shuford, 2011). This body of work also includes foundational research on Black cultural centers (Patton, 2004, 2006; Roseboro, 2005), and Chicana/Latina, Asian, and Native American racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers (Patton, 2010). There is also research on intercultural or multicultural centers (Pinchback-Hines, 2013), women's centers (Dela Peña, 2009), LGBT centers, religious and spiritual centers as well as literature on overall minority affairs (Stewart, 2011; Travers, 2009). This body of work is limited, although currently growing and branching out into specific areas of study for each type of cultural community or identity-based student service area. For example, there exists a growing and recognizable trend toward the creation and expansion of racial/ethnic-specific centers in California (Schuford, 2011; Stewart, 2011). As such, the University of California and California State University systems have expanded Black, Chicana/Latina, Asian, Native American, LGBT, and undocumented student resource centers in response to student activism, yet there is limited empirical research as to how cultural center professionals are navigating this new terrain of identity-specific student services. This is a noticeable gap in the literature and a line of empirical research that warrants further inquiry.

Second, recent work has been written on the organizational structures and institutional challenges faced by multicultural affairs, cultural centers, and diversity initiatives as functional areas in student services (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011; Stewart & Bridges, 2011; Shek, 2013; Welch, 2009; Yosso & Lopez, 2010). The literature on organizational trends and change management is vital to understanding the role of administrative diversity leaders and chief diversity officers (Williams, 2013; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2013), yet this work also leaves out the perspectives and experiences of cultural center professionals. The California Council on Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE) presents at national conferences with respect to starting and building an organizational structure for a cultural center. This organizational and managerial approach is useful in practice and encompasses another area of needed research. CaCCCHE provides a network of support for cultural center professionals across the state of California and currently does not have the capacity to finance or support research initiatives. Individual members of the organization, myself included, are invested in doing this research on a scholarly level. As the incoming President of CaCCCHE, I aim to make scholarly inquiry with respect to cultural centers and cultural center professionals a priority for the organization.

Third, much is written about what theoretical foundations drive the work of cultural center professionals with respect to student development theory (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton & Renn, 2009), racial/ethnic identity development theory (Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton & Cooper, 2012; Ortiz & Santos, 2009; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001, 2012), and overall measures of student retention and success (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado

& Gurin, 2002; Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). Cultural center professionals are expected to employ these theoretical paradigms and constructs in their programming efforts, yet empirical research on how this works in practice and whether they are actually trained to use a theoretical lens is almost non-existent.

For example, there are bodies of research that specifically outline how a student affairs practitioner's multicultural competence must be measured (Abdullah, 2012; Cuyjet & Duncan, 2013; Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004). Meanwhile, Abdullah (2012) and Conerly (2017) have documented persistent institutional disinvestment in staff training and professional development. The next line of research inquiry must explore what level of institutional investment in professional development allows cultural center professionals to meet those standards. The individual staff member's personal and professional training, educational background, and theoretical literacy may not align with the expectations and standards of multicultural competence outlined by organizations such as the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) (ACPA & NASPA, 2010, 2015).

This study aims to connect these various bodies of literature and fill a gap in the research with respect to the lived experience of cultural center professionals in higher education. Understanding the daily experience of practitioners is vital in order to bring the voices of cultural center professionals into the diversity discourse with respect to the role of cultural centers in higher education. Contemporary discourse on diversity and research on diversity educators does not often include the narratives, voices and lived

experiences of cultural center professionals (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007; Astin & Astin, 2000; Jackson & O'Callahan, 2009; Mayhew, Grunwald & Dey, 2005, 2006; Pope, Mueller & Reynolds, 2009; Williams & Wade-Golden, 2007). I formulate a centralized inquiry into the lived experiences of cultural center professionals in California to fill in this gap and add to the existing literature base. The next section frames the discourse on cultural center professionals' presumed competence and expected use of theoretical frameworks to build bridges between theory and practice.

Theory to Practice

The stark divide between academic thought and student affairs practice must be explored in further detail (Jackson & Ebbers, 1999). Cultural center professionals and their day-to-day practice are caught between various communities of thought around how to implement targeted diversity initiatives on college campuses. On the one hand, cultural center professionals may or may not have access to critical discourse on diversity or diversity initiatives; on the other hand, they certainly do the work on a daily basis. hooks (2003) acknowledges that there is a gap between theory and practice. She argues that critical written discourse is usually read by those with educational privilege, and she addresses the incongruence between thoughts and behaviors. Furthermore, hooks (2003) argues that integration is not enough and educators must challenge behavior not just thought. Saying the right words alone does not lead to corrective actions and behaviors. Cultural center professionals and the centers they work in are expected to shift behaviors and thoughts for students, staff, and, at times, faculty. Scholarly assumptions are made about what cultural center professionals must know and how they must run their centers.

Limited research has asked about their experiences or knowledge, although one study (Abdullah, 2012) did attempt to measure their multicultural competence. Measures of presumed knowledge or predetermined skill sets do not get at day-to-day practice or experiences in implementing cultural programs and services.

The specialized nature of the work of cultural center professionals is often discussed through various theoretical orientations in student development, racial/ethnic identity development, social justice, and critical race theory (Howard-Hamilton, Hinton & Hughes, 2010; Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011; Yosso & Lopez, 2010). A practical use of student development theory is emphasized in most student affairs graduate programs. Most student development theories came out of studies of White men and did not include the experiences of women or people of color (Komives & Woodard, 2003). For this reason, another community of scholars calls attention to resituating race within current student development frameworks (Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton & Cooper, 2011; Patton, McEwen, Rendon & Hamilton, 2007; Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). This results in cultural center professionals who are caught between the use of color-blind student development theories and racial/ethnic-specific identity development theories. For example, both Patton (2010) and Stewart (2011) discuss the practical use of student development theories, racial/ethnic identity development theories, and critical race theory in the work of cultural centers and multicultural student services. Stewart's (2011) work in particular expands the recommended use of racial/ethnic identity development models and also includes ways to engage sexual orientation, gender diversity, and religious and faith-based diversity.

Another community of thought is comprised of critical scholars (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Harper, 2012; Solorzano and Bernal, 2001; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) who question the effectiveness of democratic pluralism and place the centrality of race and racism as a permanent fixture in social institutions. The notion that every perspective counts is not enough to correct centuries of perpetual inequities in social outcomes. Color-blind philosophies of self-determination do not result in corrective measures that ensure equitable results for minoritized groups. Furthermore, Cobham and Parker (2007) state that merit-based initiatives perpetuate color-blind policies that limit access for historically underrepresented students of color.

The use of critical race theory is recommended in order to explore microaggressions, racial realism, interest convergence, the Black/White binary, and color blindness in the work of cultural centers (Patton, Ranero, & Everett, 2011; Stewart, 2011). Critical race theory scholars believe that the narrative around social justice and multiculturalism has failed to address systemic racism and produced “racially inept” institutional policies (Cobham & Parker, 2007, p. 91). Discourse analysis of institutional mission statements, diversity statements and diversity recruitment efforts can illuminate the challenges cultural center professionals are responding to and describe how they strategize or advocate for institutional changes that center student needs.

A tangential theoretical body of research connects higher degrees of multicultural competence with a broadened worldview for cultural awareness, moral development and ethical decision-making (Cuyjet & Duncan, 2013). The abstract connections between multicultural knowledge, theory, and practice are often explored through universal

morals, values, and ethics in the student affairs profession. Other theoretical frames include multicultural competence and social justice advocacy. Actions against injustice, allyship across groups, and disruptions of power, privilege, and oppression are seen as signs of heightened multicultural competence (Reason & Watson, 2011).

Furthermore, the two largest student affairs organizations, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), previously joined forces to define professional competencies for “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” (ACPA & NASPA, 2010). The organizations have recently released a new joint framework for this area of student affairs competencies titled “Social Justice and Inclusion” (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). The challenge for the next genre of research is to examine the actual behavior of cultural center professionals when theory is translated into practice and the impact they have in creating inclusive campus cultures for racially diverse populations (Museus & Jayakumar, 2012).

Additional frameworks include intersectional models, which are now part of the contemporary discourse (Patton, Ranero & Everett, 2011; Stewart, 2011). Staff experiences with diversity initiatives as a way to facilitate cross-racial interactions also warrant further research (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2006). For cultural center professionals, changing minds in order to foster cross-racial interactions is only half of the work. I specifically want to explore and examine how cultural center professionals experience the intersections of theory and practice in their day-to-day work. Cultural center professionals are often presumed experts in the co-

curriculum who are expected to build bridges between theory and practice. The current books on cultural centers come from this school of thought (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). Yet higher education researchers scarcely study cultural center professionals and their workplace experiences (Shek, 2011). Empirical research on the practice and process of program implementation of cultural support services is missing from the literature and this study proposes to fill in this gap. The exploration of what it means to actually do the work on college campuses is a worthy intellectual line of inquiry.

This section summarized the research that is relevant to a scholarly understanding of the role of cultural center professionals in higher education. First, I reviewed the historical origins of their specialized positions as they relate to the civil rights movement. Next, I discussed the current albeit limited research on cultural centers and multicultural services as they relate to the work of cultural center professionals. I outlined the discussion of theoretical frameworks used to build bridges between theory and practice such as student development, racial/ethnic identity development, and critical race theory. The literature review also raised issues and challenges cultural center professionals face when using theoretical frameworks that are counter to the dominant campus culture. Finally, the literature review suggested further areas of empirical research that center the experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education.

Decision to Study Cultural Centers

In this section, I describe my relationship to the research topic and discuss how I arrived at my decision to study cultural centers in higher education. Cultural centers have been at the core of my professional and adult development. My passion for cultural

student services began when I worked at a multicultural leadership center as an undergraduate at California State University, Fullerton. I was an older non-traditional student and was hired for an on-campus job which had formerly belonged to a graduate student. I served as the director of a program titled EMBRACE – Educating Myself for Better Racial Awareness and Cultural Enrichment. This was a transformative experience and ignited my desire to sharpen my critical lens and framework for social justice education. Andi Sims, who was the director of the multicultural center at CSUF, encouraged me to attend graduate school at California State University, Long Beach and pursue a career in higher education.

While in graduate school, I began working for the office of student life and cultural centers at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. I was a coordinator for student activities and temporarily ran a Native American student center while the department searched for a permanent director. I even staffed the African Student Center during a temporary change in leadership. Cultural programming was a good fit; I elevated student voices, needs, and concerns and designed programs that fostered cultural and racial/ethnic identity development, which coincided with part of my training as a college counselor. I often rose to the challenge, filled in any vacancies that occurred, and took on a variety of extra projects during my two and a half years in this department. I acquired a breadth of experience in cultural programming and social justice education during this time.

When I began working at UCR, I started in a department focused on the development of diversity initiatives, and once again did programming for a wide array of

student populations including students of color and LGBT students. I found myself immersed in creating cultural programs, working with clubs and organizations, and advising students of color. During this time, I worked closely with a coalition of student advocates who wanted to establish a cultural center that served populations from the Middle East and North Africa. When the office of diversity initiatives was disbanded and my position as the coordinator ended, I became the Founding Director of the Middle Eastern Student Center at UCR, the first of its kind in the UC system and in California.

I served in this position for nearly two years and institutionalized the new cultural center within the student affairs division. It was my role and responsibility to establish the center and create a strong foundation for future growth. I developed a transition plan for the next generation of leaders from within the Middle Eastern community to take over in the second phase of the center's growth. During this time, I was also a full-time doctoral student at UCR. I found myself at a crossroads professionally and decided to leave the position in order to dive deeply into the doctoral experience. From this base of extensive practice in the field, cultural centers in higher education ultimately became my field of study and research topic.

During my third year of doctoral studies, I came across an advertisement for the highest student leadership position in the UC system. The position of UC Student Regent was established in 1975, to create a place for students to participate in the shared governance of the University of California by serving on the Board of Regents. I applied and was selected after a four month interview process to serve as the 42nd UC Student Regent. I mention this because becoming the Student Regent had a large impact on how I

experienced and viewed this research process. For a two year term, I held the highest level of access to information across the University of California system of undergraduate, graduate, and professional education and research. This level of access and policy experience informs the context for my research and views on the work of cultural centers within a broader scope.

I am situated to give a thorough analysis of the role of cultural centers in higher education and specifically within the University of California. Any departmental bias or narrow-mindedness I might have had were overshadowed by the responsibility I held as a public trustee of the University of California. I had access to information that I cannot talk about much less write within this narrative. What I can share is that my view of cultural centers is now within the broadest context possible and this allows me to analyze the literature within a large scope. I can narrow in and get close to the phenomenon because of my previous role as a cultural center professional. I have sustained my network and connections to cultural center professionals across the nation and, because of my former position on the board, I can also step back and see the bigger picture. My role as the 42nd UC Student Regent built in the cognitive dissonance and practical distance needed to think about the role of cultural centers in higher education holistically. I am the prime investigator for this study with a perspective that is unique, and I have the ability to write an analysis that is broad, comprehensive, and ground-breaking.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this section, I discuss my philosophical paradigm and positionality, outline the research design, and describe the research methodology, theoretical frameworks, and research methods that informed the study. I followed a line of experiential inquiry into the lives of cultural center professionals via the analysis of personal narratives within an intrinsic case study (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014; Patton, 2002; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Yin, 2009). I utilized critical race praxis for educational research (CRP-Ed) and critical race theory (CRT) as methodological tools to situate and frame the context of this case study (Delgado & Stefanic, 2012; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Lynn & Dixon, 2013). Furthermore, I utilize and discuss the origins of grassroots leaders and change agent theory as a theoretical framework (Burns, 1978; Kezar & Lester, 2011), and describe the application of tempered radicalism as a research framework (Meyerson, 2013). The next section begins with my philosophical paradigm and worldview.

Philosophical Paradigm and Positionality

In this study, I applied a constructivist paradigm in line with Creswell (2009) and Crotty (1998), which informed my thought process and decision to use qualitative inquiry via the analysis of personal and historical counternarratives (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014; Patton, 2002; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The assumptions and beliefs of the constructivist worldview posit that individuals seek to understand and make meaning of the world in which they live and work, through a subjective viewpoint and the interpretation of their experiences and interactions within a specific context (Creswell,

2009; Crotty, 1998). As a critical researcher, I have no desire to present an objective case study that is viewpoint neutral. In fact, explicit criticality and subjectivity is what makes this study unique and contributes to a scholarly understanding of the design and development of spaces and practices that foster social and racial equity. In this case, the research participants' viewpoints were the subject of study due to a foundational belief that individuals construct and give meaning to their experiences within a specific context.

Furthermore, the subjective meaning or personal interpretation of the cultural center professionals' experiences was the subject of study and the phenomenon in question (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). The public research institution and the cultural centers themselves made up the situational context. Crotty (1998) also states that the generation of meaning is a social process based on interaction with other individuals. Furthermore, the participants' subjective meanings were negotiated socially, historically, and culturally given their set of experiences (Creswell, 2009; Crotty, 1998). Therefore, the social context, historical influence, and campus culture of the public research institution and its cultural centers are described thoroughly in this critical case study.

In the same fashion, my interpretation of an individual's perspective was based on my own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Creswell, 2009; Crotty, 1998). As a researcher and former colleague, I had to contend with my personal relationships with the participants and had to responsibly conduct this study with a heightened disposition of care and concern for my professional community. My role as the researcher was to interpret individual stories and inductively develop patterns of meaning from a participant's subjective viewpoint (Creswell, 2009; Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014).

I asked open-ended questions to elicit participants' views and stories, while the actual context and setting were bounded and used to triangulate data and gather more information. This process of knowledge construction allowed for multiple points of data collection that served as the basis for inductive qualitative inquiry, and aligned with the chosen case study methods, which are discussed further in future sections.

The chosen constructivist paradigm and qualitative methods of inquiry were used to examine the ways in which participants made sense of their work experiences and engaged in meaning making through an analysis of personal narratives (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). I explored how meaning making influenced staff members' behavior and decisions with regard to their role as student affairs professionals who work in racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers. I explored the meaning and essence of the individual's lived experience (Best & Kahn, 2006; Lichtman, 2012). I was concerned with what cultural center professionals experienced and how they made meaning of those experiences (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). I aimed to understand the point of view of cultural center professionals, and how their individual perspectives and perceptions influenced their decision-making behaviors in day to day work life.

Theoretical and Analytical Frameworks

The qualitative case study examined personal narratives and investigated how cultural center professionals strive to make change and shift institutional power structures from within the system. First, I used critical race theory (CRT) and critical race praxis for educational research (CRP-Ed), to expose and illuminate institutional and organizational power structures and barriers for cultural center professionals who work with minoritized

student populations (Delgado & Stefanic, 2012; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Lynn & Dixson, 2013). I then applied grassroots leaders and change agent theory to explore the experiences of cultural center professionals working within institutional structures of higher education (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Finally, I used tempered radicalism (Meyerson, 2003) as an additional research framework to describe the behavior and decision-making process of cultural center professionals working within the system. Each of these theoretical frameworks is outlined below.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) has roots in 1970's legal scholarship and critique. The late professor Derrick A. Bell is considered the founding father of critical race theory (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Critical race theorists foreground race and racism in systems of governance, laws, policies, institutions, and research to illuminate how inequities are maintained for people of color in status quo environments that ultimately serve whiteness and White supremacy (Lynn & Dixson, 2013). Conversations between legal scholars and researchers in the 1970's demanded the use of new concepts and terms that identified experiences at the crossroads of identity and structural or systemic oppression (Lynn & Dixson, 2013). For example, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) coined the term "intersectionality" to describe the experiences of Black women at the crossroads of race and gender who called attention to structural inequities due to the interlocking nature of marginalization from multiple systems of oppression, in this case racism and sexism. Kimberlé Crenshaw and Richard Delgado contributed greatly to CRT's expansion in the legal realm (Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado and Stefanic, 2012).

In education, Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate are recognized as the scholars who forwarded CRT in K-12 education (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995). Daniel Solorzano was influenced by Kimberlé Crenshaw and other legal scholars, and he began using CRT in higher education (Solorzano, 1997). Assumptions embedded in CRT theories challenge the status quo and push against institutional barriers that limit access to underserved populations (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Foundationally, CRT in education centers racial considerations at the core of individual lived experiences in response to systemic and institutional oppression (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Racial microaggressions and the psychological and physical impacts of racial battle fatigue are often explored (Smith, Yosso & Solorzano, 2011). CRT has since evolved into an interdisciplinary research theory influenced by sociology, history, ethnic studies, and women's studies (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

The tenets of CRT were developed and used to examine structural and systemic inequities that impact the individual lived experiences of people of color. The CRT tenets are described as follows: 1) challenges dominant ideology and color-blind conceptions of equality, 2) asserts racism as endemic and a deeply ingrained part of everyday life, 3) commits to social justice, 4) recognizes the importance of experiential knowledge and counter stories, 5) considers interest convergence as a way to foster systemic change, and 6) uses interdisciplinary frameworks (Delgado & Stefanić, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Master narratives and counternarratives are also fundamental in the application of this theoretical foundation (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

As previously mentioned in the literature review, CRT is recommended as a theoretical framework when studying cultural centers and the impact of microaggressions, racial realism, interest convergence (Bell, 1980), the Black/White binary, racial battle fatigue (Smith, Yosso & Solorzano, 2011), and colorblind ideologies (Patton, Ranero and Everett, 2011; Stewart, 2011). Furthermore, Yosso and Lopez (2010) have utilized CRT to study how cultural centers serve as counterspaces, and sites of community building and resistance. The tenets of CRT map the landscape that cultural centers professionals must navigate.

This study primarily applies CRT racial realism, the value of experiential knowledge and counterstories, and interest convergence in relation to the experiences of cultural center professionals. Race and racism is a central theme with respect to the work of cultural center professionals who work in racial-ethnic specific cultural centers, and this study poses a challenge to race-neutral diversity discourse and diversity initiatives. Additionally, this study affirms the importance of experiential knowledge as it relates to working in counterspaces historically established to disrupt status quo spaces and status quo stories. The focus on uplifting and giving voice to experiential knowledge is rooted in a historical focus that promotes corrective measures to achieve equitable outcomes in an educational system that has from its inception privileged those with a higher class standing (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Cultural center professionals navigate systemic barriers and roadblocks and look for opportunities to foster and expand interest convergence in order to create inclusive campus climates for students of color.

Cultural center professionals affirm the reality of racial realism in everyday life. As Stovall (2004) states, “CRT poses a call to work. It’s one thing to know and analyze the functions of race. It is yet another to engage in the practice of developing and maintaining a school with an anti-oppressive, anti-racist agenda in an age of conservative educational policy” (p. 10). Cultural center professionals are at the forefront of racialized critique in practice. They make decisions about their daily practice from a racialized lens, assert their personal agency in spheres of influence, and define any strategies necessary to foster interest convergence with stakeholders. In essence, CRT situates the foundation from which critical race praxis is enacted. The degree to which critical race praxis is enacted effectively depends on an individual’s critical consciousness and subsequent actions and behaviors. The next section describes the origins and use of critical race praxis for educational research (CRP-Ed) in further detail.

Critical Race Praxis for Educational Research

The origins of critical race praxis in the legal realm began with Eric Yamamoto’s work. Yamamoto (1998) defined critical race praxis as “a critical pragmatic process of race theory generation and translation, practical engagement, material change, and reflection” (p.114). Yamamoto called on CRT legal scholars to integrate progressive race theory with antistatutory practices and bridge the gap between the academy and those fighting and struggling on the frontlines for racial justice (Yamamoto, 1997). As described by Stovall (2006): “Eric Yamamoto argues for a critical race praxis that pays enhanced attention to theory translation and deeper engagement with frontline action” (p.253). Stovall (2006) further states, “the process for developing praxis (theory plus

practice) becomes an inclusive strategy aimed at facilitating an understanding between groups of color and the systemic structures that impede development and justice” (p.245). Stovall (2004, 2006) applied concepts of critical race praxis to his work in K-12 education. Jayakumar and Adamian (2015) pushed forward and expanded Critical race praxis for educational research (CRP-Ed) in the educational policy arena.

Critical race praxis for educational research (CRP-Ed) is rooted in Paulo Freire’s teachings and asserts that “praxis involves action and reflection rooted in critical consciousness” (Freire, 1970; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015, p. 31). Adamian (2016) further describes CRP-Ed and states that as a research paradigm and advocacy platform “CRP-Ed requires engaging with methods rooted in critical consciousness, theory, and practice, while honoring the knowledge and voices of local communities and simultaneously naming the spaces of distress” (p. 10). CRP-Ed embodies the notion that an individual working toward social and racial justice must reckon with the tensions that arise in the push and pull of liberation and oppression (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015).

The four tenets of CRP-Ed include: 1) relational advocacy toward mutual engagement, 2) redefining dominant and hegemonic systems, 3) research as a dialectical space, and 4) critical engagement with policy (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). CRP-Ed, as described by Adamian, states that these four tenets, “support the ways in which educational scholars approach research, troubling and problematizing oppressive policies and practices” (Adamian, 2016, p. 10). The four tenets are further described as follows:

Tenet 1: Relational advocacy toward mutual engagement. Working toward the good of the collective or greater community requires working within the community,

with members of the community, and within institutional structures, rather than in complete isolation, although the relationship with self is also negotiated and reflexive in nature. Furthermore, relational advocacy is a multilayered approach where power shifts can occur within these different spheres of influence; relationship with self, self and others, self and institution. Therefore, working within the system requires navigating and negotiating through crisis, discomfort, struggle, and forms resistance (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Cultural center professionals must move with the needs and desires of the community while negotiating, navigating, and, at times, translating the limitations of institutional policies within their aforementioned spheres of influence and resistance.

Tenet 2: Redefining dominant and hegemonic systems. In line with critical race theory, race and racism are recognized as everyday acts as well as other forms of oppression and domination (Delgado & Stefanic, 2012). The normalization of institutional racism and color blind policies are contested, challenged, and named in order to strengthen counterstories and counterhegemonic ways of challenging dominant narratives (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Recognition of racism alone is not enough. In order to transform institutions, discourse must shift and invisible systems of domination and cultural erasure must be made visible. Cultural center professionals rely on the histories and struggles of people of color to demonstrate their contributions and challenge colorblind master narratives that erase their stories.

Tenet 3: Research as a dialectical space. Research in many ways is not objective and impartial. This tenet recognizes the role of research in affirming and bolstering racial hierarchies when research is conducted without a critical lens, and when research does

not explicitly reveal positionalities rooted in the status quo. The objective of CRP-Ed is to employ research methods that will lead to greater degrees of social and racial justice and, ultimately, liberation (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). This study recognizes that critical and purposeful research can bolster advocacy platforms and raise the voices of minoritized communities.

Tenet 4: Critical engagement with policy. For critical engagement with policies, procedures, and practices to occur one must be deft at recognizing moments of interest convergence expansion and constriction. There are moments in boardrooms, meetings and day-to-day conversations where dominant narratives can be challenged or shifted toward greater degrees of social justice and equity for minoritized communities. CRP-Ed necessitates a high degree of consciousness in individuals who can recognize those moments and act in the best interests of those who need it most. Colluding and letting these moments pass can lead to greater degrees of harm and marginalization, meanwhile affecting the relationship with self, self and others, and self and the institution.

In this study CRP-Ed is used to reflect on, describe, and analyze how cultural center professionals navigate and work with various stakeholders to foster points of interest convergence and leverage spheres of influence. Cultural center professionals who support and advocate for minoritized and underserved communities challenge the status quo and are often at odds with institutional power structures. The process of change making is seldom smooth and requires commitment, compromise, and the ability to navigate points of contention and recovery on the days when one's advocacy is ineffective. Grassroots organizing allows cultural center professionals to foster horizontal

spheres of influence in order to leverage power and relationships when challenging institutional policies or norms. The following section on grassroots leaders and change agent theory describes these subversive forms of leadership and bottom-up strategies for change within institutions.

Grassroots Leaders and Change Agents

Kezar and Lester (2011) conducted a large multi-campus study to outline the ways in which staff and faculty worked as grassroots leaders and change agents on college campuses. The authors define grassroots leaders as “individuals who do not have formal positions of authority, are operating from the bottom up, and are interested in and pursue organizational changes that often challenge the status quo of the institution” (pg. 8). The research is rooted in conceptualizations of shared leadership and views grassroots leaders as a collective group of people. This frame aligns with my study on cultural centers professionals as a collective group of change agents at UCR.

The literature on leadership in higher education does not often study the process of leadership or the collective as a phenomenon (Kezar, Contreras-McGavin & Carducci, 2006). Furthermore, Kezar and Lester (2011) define leadership as “an effort by groups or individuals to create change” and “leadership is not synonymous with authority” (pg. 4). Cultural center professionals are often classified as entry-level or mid-level student affairs practitioners who do not have the formal authority given to an associate vice president of equity and diversity or a chief diversity officer. Those positions of authority have a documented body of empirical research while cultural center professionals do not (Williams, 2008, 2013; Williams, & Wade-Golden, 2007, 2013). In this case the work of

cultural center professionals aligns with grassroots leaders and change agent theory because their leadership in practice is also non-hierarchical, collective, and non-institutionalized (Kezar & Lester, 2011).

Cultural center professionals, like grassroots leaders, create their own structures, networks, and support systems (Kezar & Lester, 2011). The creation of the California Council for Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE) is an example of this grassroots phenomenon. My decision to employ grassroots leaders and change agent theory is in response to Kezar and Lester's (2011) call for a "comprehensive understanding of the experiences, role, strategies, and practices of bottom-up or grassroots leaders in educational settings" (pg. 8). My study describes and analyzes these conditions for cultural center professionals in higher education. The tools and strategies they may utilize to effect change are outlined in the following research framework.

Tempered Radicalism

Meyerson (2003) describes tempered radicals as "people who operate on a fault line. They are organizational insiders who contribute and succeed in their jobs. At the same time, they are treated as outsiders because they represent ideals or agendas that are somehow at odds with the dominant culture" (pg. 5). Meyerson outlines five strategies that everyday leaders can utilize to effect institutional change. The first strategy is to resist quietly and stay true to oneself, which is characterized by deliberate acts that resist the status quo, but are too quiet to stir action. These actions may include psychological resistance, self-expression, or behind-the-scenes action (Meyerson, 2003). For example, the cultural centers and cultural center professionals in this study have murals and

artwork in each of the office spaces that honor elders and activists who fought for the rights of Asian, Black, Latinx, Middle Eastern, and Native communities. The artwork is considered a passive educational opportunity that reflects an individual's values.

The second strategy is to turn personal threats into opportunities. This includes strategic responses to difficult interactions such as interrupting momentum, naming the issue, correcting assumptions or actions, diverting the direction, using humor, and delaying a response (Meyerson, 2003). These strategies require a high level of self-awareness and emotional management during stressful moments. When cultural center professionals are invited to meetings and participate in committees or work groups, they can influence an institution's response to critical issues on campus and center the experiences of those who are marginalized in discussions. This allows for comprehensive solutions and problem solving strategies that account for unintended consequences and serve the widest range of student needs.

The third strategy of tempered radicalism is to broaden impact through negotiation by stepping back, looking inward, identifying deeper goals and alternatives as well as using third parties to resolve conflict (Meyerson, 2003). Cultural center professionals can leverage relationships with stakeholders and build horizontal spheres of influence and advocacy. Allies and accomplices who are highly regarded by the institution can intervene and support minoritized community members. For example, faculty allies can initiate conversations about institutional change and work with cultural center professionals to negotiate for resources and support programs for students of color.

The fourth strategy is leveraging small wins, timing battles wisely, and framing positive meaning. Cultural center professionals work closely with students to create programs and workshops that raise awareness of inequities or experiences of exclusion on the campus. When these programs are well attended they can begin campus-wide conversations about critical issues that affect multiple populations. Finally, the fifth strategy is organizing collective action to effect change. Cultural centers are sites for community building, networking, and making connections with students, staff, and faculty that are like-minded. Coalitions and spaces of solidarity as well as discussion groups are often hosted by cultural centers. Each of these strategies of tempered radicalism were identified during data analysis and explored in light of perceived institutional challenges.

In summary, each of the aforementioned critical theoretical frameworks serves a specific purpose. CRT asserts the research study's assumptions and beliefs in the five tenets of critical race theory, with a particular emphasis on racial realism, the value of counterstories (Solorzano and Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2006), and interest convergence (Bell, 1980). Critical race praxis for educational research is a methodological tool that frames and grounds the critical analysis of this case study. This study expands the application of CRP-Ed in a student affairs context and builds upon the CRP-Ed research conducted in a teaching and policy context (Adamian, 2016; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). A methodological framework rooted in the centrality of race and racism explicitly fills in the gaps and counters the colorblind neutrality of grassroots leaders and change agent theory.

While grassroots leaders and change agent theory explores the impact and influence of power in administrative hierarchies, it does so without an explicit racial analysis. Minoritized populations and professionals of color have varying degrees of access and limitations to spheres of influence within an institution. Furthermore, while grassroots leaders and change agent theory accounts for a broad range of advocacy tools and strategies, it does not account for the limitations of influence or lack of influence given to professionals of color because of systemic and institutional racism. I use grassroots leaders and change agent theory to study cultural center professionals as a group of people who are not in hierarchical positions of power. The complementary use of CRT and CRP-Ed allows me to assert a strong and meaningful racial analysis and critique of the experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education.

This critical case study builds on the work of Kezar and Lester (2011), who applied this framework to study faculty and staff broadly as grassroots leaders in higher education, although they completed their work without explicitly accounting for institutional barriers rooted in colorblind policies and coded racist narratives. I use CRT and CRP-Ed to fill in this gap and provide a critical racial analysis. Finally, I use the tools and strategies of tempered radicalism to capture and categorize the range of experiences with respect to actions and behaviors that move institutions toward change. I combed through the data and looked for the responses and strategies cultural center professionals used to navigate perceived institutional challenges (Meyerson, 2003). The following section outlines the research questions for this study.

Research Questions

The purpose of this investigation is to explore the racialized experiences of cultural center professionals who work at UCR. The research questions for this study include the following:

- 1) How and in what ways do cultural center professionals perceive themselves and their role within the institution, and how do they make meaning of their personal and professional experiences within their spheres of influence?
- 2) What are the ways in which cultural center professionals perceive their ability to effect institutional change? What tools and strategies are employed?
- 3) How and in what ways do cultural center professionals perceive the campus racial climate and their role within the campus diversity discourse? How do they believe they are viewed by members of the campus community?

Methods

The sections below outline the research methods for this case study. Case study design is the chosen method and rationale for a single case study with multiple sub-units of analysis (Yin, 2009). The chosen research site is described, followed by a discussion on participant selection, data collection, data analysis, and quality criteria.

I employed case study research methods in this investigation because they allow a form of “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). As noted above, the social, historical, and cultural aspects of an individual’s experiences are central to understanding the experiences of cultural center professionals, and these are explored deliberately in case study design.

The research design constitutes a single case study with a complex embedded design (Yin, 2009). The single case is context bound and lies within one public research institution in California.

In this case study, the University of California, Riverside is the single case. Five racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers (Asian, Black, Chicana, Native and Middle Eastern) and their respective professional staff members constitute two embedded subunits of analysis (Yin, 2009). The centers themselves constitute one sub-unit of analysis and the professional staff members constitute the second sub-unit of analysis (Yin, 2009). The cultural center professionals are the primary phenomenon and foreground this case study. The cultural centers are the contextual background and serve as an embedded subunit of analysis, which allowed me to explore a line of inquiry into the experiences of the professional staff at each of the cultural centers. I was directly interested in the experiences of cultural center professionals who serve as grassroots leaders and institutional change agents in the aforementioned cultural centers.

Prior empirical studies on cultural centers in higher education have used similar case study designs and collected data at multiple sites within a single institution (Patton, 2004, 2006; Pinchback-Hines, 2013; Welch, 2009). A distinctive quality for this study is the inclusion of five cultural centers, while other studies have selected three or four centers (Conerly, 2017; Welch, 2009). Overall, I employed a similar case study design using qualitative inquiry with a central focus on cultural center professionals as the primary sub-unit of analysis. Cultural center professionals have been studied through the use of qualitative methodologies such as ethnographic methods and grounded theory

(Ranero, 2011; Toya, 2011), while other researchers have used quantitative measures (Abdullah, 2012; Shek, 2013). I utilized case study via qualitative inquiry which required multiple sources of data collection. The convergence of data via triangulation offered an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2009). I comprehensively provide breadth and depth of explanation in my interpretation of the experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education. Furthermore, the study captures the historical, social, and personalized context for the participants during data collection. I describe the site selection process further in the paragraphs that follow.

Site Selection and Description

The University of California, Riverside (UCR) is a public research institution that is a part of a ten campus system. I choose UCR as a unique case because it is a minority serving institution and most of the research on cultural centers has been conducted at predominately White institutions (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). The population of students of color totals more than 85% of the student body, which is higher than any other institution in the UC system with the exception of UC Merced, which is located in the central valley. UCR is one of the most racially diverse campuses within the UC system. Student demographics for fall 2017 are as follows: 40.8% Hispanic/Latino, 34.2% Asian, 12% White, 3.6% African American, 5.7% two or more races, .01% Native American or Alaskan Native, and .02% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (University of California, Riverside, 2017). UCR fall 2017 total enrollment was 23, 278 students with 20, 069 undergraduates and 3,209 graduate students.

Robert B. Reich, a UC Berkeley professor of public policy and former U.S. Secretary of Labor has publicly said, “UCR is the campus of the future, today” and Ted Mitchell, the Undersecretary of Education has said, “I wish we could clone UCR all over America” (University of California, Riverside). UCR is one of the most diverse colleges in the nation and has remarkably achieved parity in undergraduate six-year graduation rates for students of color (Warren, 2017). The campus overall has a 72.9% six-year graduation rate. The campus also received the 2016 “Project Degree Completion Award” for innovation in boosting graduation rates from the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (Warren, 2017). There is a 72.5% six-year graduation rate for Pell Grant recipients, and a 72.3% six year graduation rate for non-Pell Grant recipients (University of California, Riverside).

Cultural Centers at UC Riverside

Demand for and design of cultural support programs and services is not accidental. Historically, students, staff, faculty, and community members have demanded the resources and services they needed to succeed. UCR has a total of eight independent cultural centers serving an array of targeted student populations. I have chosen to focus my investigation on the five racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers which serve African, Asian, Chicanx/Latinx, Native, and Middle Eastern students. Although the centers work together closely, I exclude the women’s, LGBT, and undocumented student resource centers. A comprehensive review of the history and development of women’s services, LGBT and undocumented student centers is outside of the scope of this study. The

following section provides a description of each of the five racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers in order of historical significance.

Chicano Student Programs (CSP) is the first Raza resource center in the UC system and was founded in 1972 by faculty and students in Chicano studies as well as the student group Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) (Chicano Student Programs, 2016). African Student Programs (ASP) was the first Black resource center in the UC system and was founded at a similarly agreed upon date in 1972 by faculty and students in Black Studies and the Black Student Union. Previously named the Black Student Center, the space changed its name to African Student Programs in 1998 (African Student Programs, 2016). Native American Student Programs (NASP), founded in the mid-1980s by faculty and student leaders, is the first American Indian resource center in the UC system. The history of the Native American Student Association at UCR goes back to the 1970s, predating the creation of the student center (Native American Student Programs, 2016). Asian Pacific Student Programs (APSP) was founded in 1989 by a coalition of student clubs and organizations in the Inter Asian Club Council (Asian Pacific Student Programs, 2016). This center is also the first in the UC system to serve Asian Pacific Islander students specifically. The Middle Eastern Student Center (MESC) was founded in July, 2013 by fourteen founding student members with the support of staff and faculty allies (Middle Eastern Student Center, 2016). I served as the center's founding director during this time and can confirm that the MESC is the first of its kind in the UC system and in California.

I conducted research on the historical development of each cultural center using their websites and social media accounts. Each of these cultural centers has its own historical timeline and unique story of organizational development and growth. What the cultural centers have in common is that each began as a result of student and faculty advocacy on campus and each is the first cultural center in the UC system to serve their targeted student populations (African Student Programs, 2016; Asian Pacific Student Programs, 2016; Chicano Student Programs, 2016; Native American Student Programs, 2016; Middle Eastern Student Center, 2016). I also had informal conversations with former directors and each of the current directors to confirm historical trends of student and faculty advocacy for the cultural centers. A thorough review of the institutional conditions with respect to the establishment of each cultural center is discussed in the historical findings section.

I chose one site for this case study in order to centralize the effects of environmental and institutional factors across departments (Yin, 2009). Size, target population served, physical location, and actual numbers of staff differ for each cultural center. For example, four of the cultural centers are in Costo Hall while the newest cultural center is in the Highlander Union Building (MESC). At the time of data collection, all of the cultural centers had directors. Three of the cultural centers had two program coordinators (ASP, APSP, CSP), while two cultural centers had one program coordinator (NASP and MESC). All the cultural centers report to the Assistant Dean of Students and are associated with the Dean of Students cluster; this cluster of student service units is housed within Student Affairs.

Collective Programs and Services

Collectively the cultural centers provide outreach, recruitment, and retention services for minoritized populations on campus. The centers also provide comprehensive support services for individual students and a variety of student clubs and organizations. Each of the cultural centers has a student advisory council or umbrella organization that hosts members of the racial/ethnic-affiliated cultural groups. Examples of the umbrella organizations include Asian Pacific Islander Student Advisory Council, Black Student Union, Middle Eastern Student Assembly, Native American Student Association, and Raza Assembly. The cultural center staff provide student clubs with organizational support, event management, leadership training, and financial resources. They also facilitate event coordination to build an organization's capacity and facilitate collaborations amongst various groups on campus.

Cultural center staff assists with cultural events and celebrations, film and speaker series, peer mentorship programs, and graduation celebrations. Additionally, the staff provides individual student support, life skills, welcome events, parent and family programs, financial literacy, non-academic advising, and referrals. The cultural centers also coordinate educational support and academic preparation programs; they also assist with student club and organizational youth outreach and college readiness programs. In recent years there has been a shift toward graduate preparation and graduate readiness programs in partnership with other campus departments. The cultural centers also collaborate with housing and residence life to host cultural theme halls and train resident assistants in culturally relevant practices and programs.

Participant Recruitment

A purposeful and complete sample was used to determine the research participants for this study (Creswell, 2009). I drew on public data, such as campus organizational charts and the staff directory, to identify staff members who worked in the five previously mentioned cultural centers. I interviewed a breadth of cultural center professionals with various social characteristics and a wide range of racial, ethnic, sexual, and gender identities. The criterion for research participants was based on at least one year of full-time employment as a director, program coordinator or administrative assistant in one of the cultural centers. Educational attainment or degree completion was not a determining factor for participation, but may have been a requirement or desired qualification by human resources on the campus. I also interviewed two supervisors in order to triangulate the data shared by the cultural center professionals.

The scope of my study was determined by the number of cultural center professionals who met the participant criteria and were able to participate in this study. The invited participants worked in one of the cultural centers and met the participant criteria during the data collection period. With the addition of two supervisors the total number of possible participants for this study was 18. One administrative assistant and two program coordinators had less than six months of experience and did not meet the selection criteria, bringing the total number of eligible participants to 15. One of the 15 professionals who met the criteria was unable to participate, bringing the final participant total to 14 cultural center professionals.

Selected participants were contacted via email using the publicly available contact information in the university's online staff directory. Using email addresses gleaned from the publicly available listings in the staff directory via the campus website, I emailed relevant staff a request for their participation in this study. I made appointments for those who had more questions and sent personal invitations to the selected participants who worked in the cultural centers. If an individual had more questions via email, in person, or by phone, I answered those questions directly within a one week time period. I followed up no more than once based on the contact information they provided such as an email address or phone number. The individual had 30 days to respond to my follow-up. If I did not hear from them I did not follow-up a second time. There was only one eligible participant that I was unable to interview due to scheduling conflicts.

Collective Participant Description

This section collectively summarizes the 14 research participants' personal backgrounds, work experience, educational backgrounds, and current positions and job duties. I describe the group overall and employ pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. I also use gender neutral language to describe their experiences and use pseudonyms instead of gender pronouns. Because UCR is explicitly named as the site for this case study, participant identities could be revealed if connected to specific positions, racial/ethnic backgrounds or gender. Therefore, I studied the participants as a collective and chose not to single out individual participants in order to protect their identities. I purposefully refrain from connecting an individual participant to a specific position or a specific cultural center, unless they spoke directly to those experiences in their personal narrative.

Participant ages ranged from those in their mid-twenties to those in their late-fifties. Three participants were from military families: one was born on the east coast and the other two were born outside of the United States, but they all settled in California. The remaining eleven participants were all born and raised in southern California. Participants included eight women and six men. Six participants self-identified as mothers. Two participants were raised by single parents. Two participants self-identified as members of the LGBT community. Thirteen of the fourteen participants identified as people of color. Finally, racial and ethnic identifiers that were shared by participants include Asian, Black, Chicax/Latinx, Middle Eastern, Native, and White.

Participants who were interviewed had a range of work experiences. As a collective they previously worked in corporate companies, community organizations, city and county jobs, local non-profits, museums, and libraries. The participants held positions in accounting, finance, vocational training, teaching, graphic design, and computer programming. Those who worked on campus prior to acquiring their current positions were located in direct student service areas or academic departments. Their years of work experience ranged from one to 30 years in higher education. The participants' educational backgrounds also varied. Thirteen of the participants held bachelor's degrees in a wide range of fields: political science, ethnic studies, Asian American studies, Native studies, biochemistry, accounting, history, and psychology. Eight of the participants were alumni of the institution and five of those alumni went on to get master's degrees. In total, seven participants hold master's degrees in public policy, business administration, public administration, and four of those are in higher education.

Participants interviewed included cultural center directors, program coordinators, administrative assistants, and two supervisors. No student workers were interviewed for this study. One of the supervisors was the direct report for the cultural center directors, and the other was the direct report for the administrative assistants. Directors are responsible for decision-making regarding the uses of the budget; they monitor expenses and allocate the correct use of funds for programs, as well as complying with university policies. Directors also delegate tasks in the department, provide managerial oversight, participate in committee work, foster community partnerships, conduct outreach, design recruitment and retention programs, run diversity trainings for the campus and the community, assist with case management, and, finally, set yearly goals and priorities for the cultural centers.

Program coordinators are responsible for advising clubs and organizations as well as student leaders. They also support student organizations with their annual events. The coordinators are generally in charge of event planning and programming, and supervising students. They often serve on institutional work groups and committees, foster community engagement, and conduct outreach. The coordinators market events, facilitate educational workshops and training for students, attend staff meetings, and develop program collaborations. They are involved in a wide range of social, cultural, and academic programming. Each of the centers has a peer mentorship program as well as cultural celebrations, graduation ceremonies, and outreach events organized and executed by the program coordinators.

Administrative assistants are responsible for supporting the directors and coordinators with any transactions required to put on their events and programs. Each administrative assistant supports two of the cultural centers and assists as necessary when someone from the team is out on vacation or out on leave. They take their day-to-day direction from the directors of the cultural centers and also report to the management services officer in the dean of student's office. They have a wide range of duties that include handling budget reports and reconciliations, payroll, new hire and volunteer paperwork, travel reimbursements, purchase orders, entertainment requests, electronic payments, and work orders for physical plant or technology repairs. Administrative assistants are an integral part of making the cultural center's programs successful and ensuring that the department's finances run smoothly and comply with institutional policies and procedures.

Data Collection

Data collection and interview procedures as suggested by Creswell (2014) and Lichtman (2012) are employed throughout the study. Case study requires triangulation of data and the use of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). For this study, some of the data collected is comprised of individual participant interviews, student newspaper articles, event announcements and flyers, as well as relevant documents for each of the cultural centers. Another portion of the historical data came from oral histories and storytelling of significant events or individuals during participant interviews (Thompson, 2017). Additionally, I reviewed the cultural centers' websites for descriptive information, and followed their social media accounts, such as those on Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram, to get a sense of the range of student services offered in the cultural centers. Finally, I also used my personal field notes and journal entries as data. Each method of data collection is discussed further in this section.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Participants were interviewed in person to gather qualitative data for this case study. As suggested in research methods for qualitative inquiry, I used semi-structured interviews with individual participants to ask about their lived experiences (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014; Kvale, 1983). I outlined a semi-structured interview guide in order to predetermine topics for each discussion. The first interview focused on a participant's personal background and professional journey. This interview included a discussion of any strategies or tools they may use to advocate for change on behalf of students. The second interview focused on the historical foundations of the cultural center in question and how the participant perceived its role and function at UCR. I also inquire about the participants' perceptions of the campus racial climate during this interview. I split up the interviews topically and allowed time during the second interview for each participant to add any comments or discussion items they may have found relevant to the conversation.

The interview questions asked for information about the participant's work experience and history, the details of their day-to-day experience, and what meaning they make out of those experiences (Kvale, 1983). During the interviews participants also shared their recollections of founding members and significant events for each of the cultural centers via oral histories (Thompson, 2017). At times, it was a struggle to separate the individual's personal narrative from their connection to the center. In some

instances, it was almost as if the center was an extension of them. I had to push and ask poignant and specific follow-up questions to clarify their personal and professional experiences, rather than giving a greater degree of weight and voice to their perspectives of the cultural center.

The semi-structured interviews were conversational in nature. I went back and forth between questions as topics came up organically during our discussion. I covered every topic with each participant, although not necessarily in the same order. Each interview had a distinct flow based on the participant's engagement with each topic. Follow-up questions were asked to seek further clarity or explanation from participants on topics of interest. The interviews were conducted in person, recorded, transcribed, and shared with participants to check for accuracy in the transcriptions (Creswell, 2014). I interviewed participants two times for 60-90 minutes each. Most interviews were completed within a two week period, although the availability for an interview was determined by the participant's schedule (Kvale, 1983).

Student Newspapers

The Special Collections and University Archives on the fourth floor of the Thomas Rivera Library houses copies of the *Highlander* newspaper going back to its first edition in 1954. The *Highlander* is a weekly news source published by Associated Students at UCR. I reviewed issues of the *Highlander* in the special archives from 1970-75 and again from 1982-92. I choose these years because they encapsulate the founding years of the cultural centers with the exception of the Middle Eastern Student Center. Since the MESC was founded in 2013, most of the articles which mentioned the MESC

were found online. I also reviewed the self-published student newspaper, *Nuestra Cosa*, a campus newspaper started by students involved in Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) and Chicano Student Programs in the early 1970s.

The student newspaper articles and photos were used to triangulate data and confirm any documented information shared in participant interviews. The chosen news stories were used to get a sense of the student experience at UCR before and after the founding of each cultural center. I searched specifically for news stories that related directly to the cultural centers, and any that documented the student experiences for those of Asian, Black, Chicana/Latina, Native, and Middle Eastern or Arab descent. I used these stories to complement participant interviews and formulate historical summaries of each of the cultural centers.

Documents and Social Media

Documents collected for this study included some of the cultural centers foundational documents, either as primary or secondary sources; for example, I used departmental mission statements, historical timelines, brochures, event flyers, and photos. I also collected the Highlander Empowerment Referendum, which outlines how student service fees fund the cultural centers. The governing by-laws for the Referendum Student Advisory Committee (RSAC) and the by-laws for the Diversity Council via Associated Students of UCR (ASUCR) were also instrumental for understanding how students are directly involved with the cultural centers. The cultural center websites and social media accounts also served as a basis for summarizing co-curricular programming and student services.

Field Notes

Field notes taken during the interviews, such as observations or personal reflections were also used as data. The reflexive nature of qualitative research and my role as the researcher is taken into account in the categorization or documentation of field notes (Creswell, 2014). The notes taken during this time served as a basis to clarify ideas, document interpretations, and make observations of the environment and participants. Research notes and journals throughout this process were used to account for researcher reflexivity, analytical thought processes, positionality, and other points of wonder.

Data Analysis

First and foremost, I explicitly share the personal and professional experiences, assumptions, and beliefs I bring to the phenomena under consideration (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). As a former cultural center professional, I have had my own experience, and distinctly separate that from the experience of my participants. During the initial review of participant interviews, I used Dedoose, an online platform for analyzing qualitative data. Rather than coding each transcribed interview by hand, I used an online coding tool in Dedoose, which generated reports and interview summaries in Excel spreadsheets based on selected descriptive codes. The interview and demographic summaries served as a basis for comparison across interviews (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The comparisons allowed for work experiences or social identity factors, such as gender, race/ethnicity, and education, to stand out in the participants' personal narrative when those factors were relevant to their perceived institutional or departmental experiences. I also used the comparisons to document tools and strategies for change.

Data analysis is defined as an interpretation of the data by retelling a story (Best & Kahn, 2006). I selected interpretive themes to frame the answers to my research questions. I used applied interpretive research methods during the coding process. The coding process followed the established pattern of descriptive, thematic, and analytical coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Richards, 2009). An initial review of the interviews was used to describe and summarize the stories shared by each participant. Primary coding was descriptive in nature and led to the search for themes across interviews (Lichtman, 2012; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Richards, 2009). I searched the data for personal and professional experiences; perceptions of campus climate and culture; perceived institutional challenges and responses; interactions with students, staff, administration, faculty and alumni; and any strategies or tools discussed for implementing change. I then summarized what was discussed by the participants.

Secondary coding was applied in the thematic phase and data interpretation of participant narratives was used to outline shared experiences and perspectives (Bogden & Biklen, 1982). During the thematic phase I used the previously discussed constructs from critical race theory, grassroots leaders and change agents theory, as well as tempered radicalism. I used this process to develop major themes from the interviews in order to answer each of the research questions (Lichtman, 2012; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Finally, the multiple layers of coding led to categories and themes which outline the findings of this study (Lichtman, 2012; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

This study is interested in the participants' perspectives about their work experience, and how that perceived experience informs their decisions to work in

racial/ethnic-specific cultural centers. Furthermore, this study explores how they make sense of their experience in order to make decisions about their practice with regard to their perceived abilities as change agents. From this vantage point, I ask why and in which ways staff members tell their stories to shape meaning about their work experience and perceptions. What the story or narrative reveals about the person and the world they came from provides the context and conditions for behavioral choices (Best & Kahn, 2006; Labov & Waletzky, 1997; Reissman, 1993, 2013).

Quality Criteria

Standards of qualitative validity and reliability are followed in accordance with what is outlined in Creswell (2014) and Yin (2009). Measures of qualitative validity and reliability include triangulation of data, member checking, thick description, peer debriefing, clarifying biases, and the use of an external auditor (Creswell, 2014). Multiple sources of data are used in this case study to enhance construct validity, such as participant interviews, archival research, document analysis, and field notes. Furthermore, the institution, cultural centers, and participants are described in detail in order to provide a full understanding of the social, historical, and environmental context of the case. Research biases, assumptions, and worldview are addressed at the onset of the study. Standards of qualitative reliability include explicit use of case study protocol and the development of a case study database. A consultative procedure serves as a basis for determining preliminary themes and the analysis of narratives during the research process. I presented preliminary findings and interpretations to the participants to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation and account for member checking. An external auditor

served as a third party reviewer who is not familiar with the research topic to enhance the clarity and conveyance of ideas, as well as to verify the procedural descriptions and steps taken to arrive at the findings (Yin, 2009). The explicit procedures of data collection and analysis lead to heightened levels of qualitative reliability for the case study (Yin, 2009).

Limitations

For this study, I focused on the cultural center professionals as a phenomenon and a group of people. An organizational analysis of the cultural centers is not presented in this study. The organizational design, departmental budgets, position descriptions, salary ranges, and union vs. non-union representation are mentioned as areas for further exploration and inquiry. Future studies could explore the impact of these factors on professional experiences. Additional limitations of this study involve the inconsistency of oral histories and participant memories (Thompson, 2017). Historical records are incomplete and the facts or descriptions of events may have been incorrect or misinterpreted based on the inaccuracy of individual memory (Thompson, 2017). The ability to triangulate every participant's stated claim was limited in part by the availability or coverage of incidents mentioned in student newspapers. My historical summary of the cultural centers is based on a synthesis of the best information available, but my ability to verify details and fact check is limited to the accuracy of information presented in print or in a participant's memory. The websites for the cultural centers also contained some inaccurate information or inactive links. For this reason, I followed social media to get the most current information on events and programs.

Social and Political Context of the Study

*History is not the past, it is the present. We carry our history with us.
We are our history.*

– James Baldwin, *I Am Not Your Negro*

Before diving into the findings of this study, I must convey a sense of the present moment and political era in which participants reflected on their experiences. The rise of student activism and massive demonstrations at colleges and universities is central to understanding and contextualizing the findings of this study. The environment during this study's development, data collection, data analysis, and completion was a tumultuous period in U.S. politics. Keeping in mind James Baldwin's quote above, I must describe in some detail the social, political, and environmental context of this lived moment in U.S. history.

On November 8, 2016, white nationalist movements deploying coded racist conservative rhetoric under the guise of free speech, reached a point of governmental takeover with the election of the 45th President of the United States. *The New York Times* announced the 2016 Republican Presidential nominee won 307 Electoral College votes vs. the 232 votes given to the first Democratic Presidential woman nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton ("Presidential election results," 2017). Meanwhile, the popular vote was overwhelmingly in favor of Clinton, the former U.S. Secretary of State, by nearly 3 million votes (Begley, 2016). As Inauguration Day approached on January 20, 2017, the 45th President sparked a national outcry of progressive resistance efforts from people of color, immigrants, women, and the LGBT community. The inauguration was poorly attended and many elected officials boycotted the event (Foran, 2017). On January 21,

2017 social and political unrest and activism resulted in the largest Women's March on Washington in history. The intersectional platform of the Women's March and unity principles supported reproductive rights, LGBTQIA rights, worker's rights, civil rights, disability rights, immigrant rights, environmental justice, and an end to violence (Alotta, Bandle, Billoo, Burroughs, Campbell, Choimorrow et al, 2017).

The first 100 days of the 45th Presidential Administration set a course of reversal for many executive policies that had been put forth by former President Barack Hussein Obama (Wall Street Journal, 2017). A total of 31 executive orders, since President Truman's record-holding 57 executive orders, were signed during the first 100 days (Cohen and Payson-Denney, 2017). The BBC News summarized the executive orders, which covered a range of issues such as increased border security and two travel bans affecting majority Muslim countries, which prevented Syrian refugees from entering the country. Former President Obama's climate change policy was reversed, as well consumer protections and regulations on corporate businesses and waterway construction. Furthermore, the 45th President withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and authorized construction of the controversial Keystone XL pipeline and Dakota access pipeline. He also moved to ban international abortion counseling and services, and to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act otherwise known as ObamaCare (BBC US and Canada, 2017).

Prior to the 45th Republican regime, the presidential election of former U.S. Senator of Illinois, Barack Hussein Obama, who went on to become the first Black President of the United States, brought joy and excitement for many young people who

would personally experience what their ancestors had only dreamed of: a time when race was seemingly no longer a factor in reaching the highest position of governance in the United States. President Obama's two terms in office were narrated through post-racial and color-blind philosophies of self-determination that seemed to reach their societal peak during his presidency (Cobb, 2012). In a parallel historic moment that is still unfolding, state-sanctioned gun violence and the murder and assault of Black and brown bodies reached an unprecedented magnitude during the same eight years of the Obama Presidency (Remnick, 2015).

The murder of Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old high school student walking home from purchasing a soda pop and a pack of skittles, at the hands of George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch coordinator who called the local police to report a suspicious individual and who was told repeatedly not to engage the young man physically, sparked a national outrage. Zimmerman was brought under investigation, released, and, after weeks of community protests, was charged with murder. *The New York Times* reported that Zimmerman claimed self-defense and was acquitted of murder based on Florida's stand-your-ground law (Alvarez & Buckley, 2013). Three community organizers and women of color, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Colours, and Opal Tometi started the viral hashtag #blacklivesmatter and subsequent Black Lives Matter movement the summer after Zimmerman's acquittal (Black Lives Matter, 2016). The current movement for racial justice and social equity started in the community and quickly moved into colleges and universities.

College Student Activism

As was the case during the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, college students and young adults of all ages are at the forefront of local, state, and national social movements calling attention to the need for greater equity of outcomes and restorative justice (Cobb, 2016). Higher education and the academy serve as platforms and points of contention for student scholars, academic activists, and scholar practitioners. Jonathan Butler, a 25-year-old graduate student at the University of Missouri (UM) and member of Concerned Student 1950, went on a hunger strike to demand the resignation of university president Tim Wolfe for his lack of attention to climate issues on campus (Izadi, 2015). As reported by the Washington Post, Concerned Student 1950 was a collective of Black students calling attention to a series of racially charged incidents at UM. Butler's hunger strike prompted President Wolfe to apologize for the mishandling of student protests out of concern for Butler's health, but he committed to staying at UM. Following his apology, the players of the football team joined the student protest, and declared a boycott on playing football until Tim Wolfe resigned. The university estimated over \$1 million dollars in losses if the football team did not play. The next day the Missouri legislature called for the resignation of Tim Wolfe. Wolfe initially resisted, but under extreme pressure he complied and stepped down as President of UM (Izadi, 2015). In an unprecedented series of events, Concerned Student 1950 demanded the immediate removal of a campus administrator, and they were successful in meeting their goals within one week.

College student protests and well-formulated student demands combined with direct action became effective change-making strategies across college campuses. TheDemands.Org is a website created by a collective named “WeTheProtesters,” to track the demands of over 80 college student groups across the nation. Student groups are encouraged to submit their list of demands and add to the compiled content of the website. The American Council on Education analyzed the multiple lists of demands in order to thematically categorize student concerns and find common threads. Seven major themes emerged from their analysis: (a) policy changes were desired by 91% of students, (b) leadership changes were desired by 89% of students, (c) increased resources were desired by 88% of students, (d) increased diversity efforts were desired by 86% of students, (e) increased cultural sensitivity training was desired by 71% of students, (f) curriculum changes were desired by 68% of students, and, finally (g) increased support services were desired by 61% of students (Chessman & Wayt, 2016). A nationally comprehensive and thematic list of student demands was groundbreaking.

Meanwhile, during this time, institutions of higher education also contended with an onslaught of conservative student movements who pushed to invite controversial speakers such as Milo Yiannopoulos, Steve Bannon, and Ann Coulter to their college campuses (Svrluga and Wan, 2017; Wong, 2017). UC Berkeley students and community members expressed frustrations with an Ann Coulter event and cited safety concerns based on the protests that prevented Yiannopoulos from speaking (UC Berkeley Public Affairs, 2017; Wong, 2017). The College Republicans at UC Berkeley filed a lawsuit against the university for cancelling Coulter’s event citing violations of the right to

assembly and free speech (Fuller, 2017). Meanwhile, Coulter spoke publicly about personally canceling the event (McCaskill, 2017). When she was invited to campus, debates ensued over complying with proper procedures for events vs. alt right propaganda and divisive hate speech surrounding the event ensued (Elliot, 2017; The Editorial Board, 2017). Milo Yiannopoulos and Steve Bannon were invited once again by the College Republicans and allowed to speak during “Free Speech Week” at UC Berkeley. Conservative student activism is also at its peak during this period in history, and community organizations support and finance this form of right-wing political agitation.

Controversial Responses to Student Unrest

College responses to student unrest and student demands for institutional change have varied across the country. An extreme case involves a decision by the Tennessee legislature to completely defund cultural support services from the state budget for diversity and equity initiatives. The Tennessee state legislatures disinvestment of \$436,000 eliminated the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the state’s flagship university (Jaschik, 2016). The Governor allowed the bill to pass, which diverted the money into engineering scholarships for underrepresented students. Students, staff, and faculty resisted the changes, but an official act by the state legislature was not easily reversible.

Last year at the University of Chicago, students were welcomed with a letter written by the dean of students, John Ellison. His intention was to set a tone for academic freedom and freedom of expression, but he deployed key terms that have highly contested

meanings and uses in the academy. As reported by Inside Higher Ed, an excerpt of the letter with the contested terms in bold is highlighted below:

Our commitment to academic freedom means that we do not support so-called **trigger warnings**, we do not cancel invited speakers because their topics prove controversial and we do not condone the creation of intellectual **safe spaces** where individuals can retreat from ideas and perspectives at odds with their own. (Jaschik, 2016).

The Chicago letter sparked a fury of backlash from students and academics alike. Students felt the letter sent a clear message that the administration would not comply with student demands and student unrest over societal inequities and injustice (Jaschik, 2016). Academics cited violations of academic freedom if they were not allowed to provide trigger warnings when lecturing about controversial or sensitive topics, such as literature containing racial epithets or sexual violence (Jaschik, 2016). Meanwhile, the letter received applause from community members who support freedom of speech, as well as students, academics and administrators across the country including the former President of the University of California (UC), Mark Yudof, and current UC Regents who worked on an educational policy titled the “UC Principles against Intolerance” (Regents of the University of California, 2016).

Cultural Centers at the University of California

Meanwhile, students across the UC are actively demanding cultural support services and more safe spaces. Student protests and demands for cultural centers and cultural support services at the University of California are occurring at UC Merced, UC

Berkeley, and UC Los Angeles. When UC Merced opened in 2005 the campus did not plan to have a designated space for any sort of identity-based cultural centers. As reported by the student newspaper at UC Merced, students of color and LGBTQ students have come together to demand at minimum an intercultural center where they can begin to host programs and services for historically underrepresented populations (Cervantes, 2016). As a result of student pressure and protest, UC Merced had to publicly update its 2020 plan for growth and development to include a multicultural center in the next phase of building construction. The students were temporarily allocated a room which serves as the Intercultural Hub, and a former storage unit which serves as the Graduate Student Cultural Resource Center (GSCRC). During the summer of 2017 the GSCRC was defaced with “white supremacist hate symbols, messages, and iconography” (Graduate Cultural Resource Center, 2017). The center had to be shut down and reopened several times throughout the year.

As reported by the *Daily Californian*, UC Berkeley’s Queer Alliance Resource Center and Bridges Multicultural Center have been sharing an inadequate basement for years and are now demanding equitable space designations in the new student union (Sherief, 2016). The student-run cultural support programs have outgrown their space and demand the ability to increase their capacity and physical visibility on campus, and to hire paid staff members. The student organizers shut down the Martin Luther King Jr. Student Union and demanded more space. The Associated Students of UC Berkeley unanimously passed a resolution to reallocate space in the fourth floor of each the centers (Fix, 2016). Additionally, the Fannie Lou Hammer Black Resource Center opened in

2017 (Messick, 2017). Finally, the Afrikan Student Union at UC Los Angeles is currently facing protests and campus demands for cultural awareness trainings and a fully staffed Black Resource Center on campus (Froliak, 2017).

At the opposite end of the spectrum is UC Riverside which has a total of eight identity-based cultural centers run by paid professional staff and student assistants: LGBT and women's resource centers, undocumented student programs, as well as programs for Native American, Chicana/Latina, African American, Asian Pacific, and Middle Eastern students, which I discuss below. Additionally, UCR students passed a five-year \$14 per quarter referendum to directly support and enhance the services provided by seven of the eight cultural centers. Undocumented Student Programs began as a UC Presidential initiative and receives its funding directly from the UC Office of the President, although the demand for support services and paid staff came from student unrest, protest, and direct action. In the current climate of social unrest and student activism, UCR has a range of cultural support programs and staff available to respond to student needs and concerns. Historically, UCR also went through documented eras of campus activism and student protests demanding cultural support services. Chapter 4 will describe and outline the historical findings and foundations of the racial/ethnic cultural centers at UCR in more detail.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORICAL FINDINGS

*Knowledge about the work of multicultural student services on college campuses requires education in the **schoolhouse of resistance**. Doing so honors those who have resisted in the past, acknowledges their struggles, and helps in an effort to establish spaces that contribute to the development of campus communities and environments that welcome, affirm, and support all students.*

– V. Leilani Kupo (Kupo, 2011, p.25)

As a former cultural center director, I value thoughtful information and context about a community's history of resistance and struggle. As stated in the introductory quote, and in the spirit of honoring those who came before us, this chapter begins with a historical synthesis of student, staff, and faculty advocacy for the cultural centers at UC Riverside. The historical findings include information collected from the Special Collections and University Archives in the Thomas Rivera Library, cultural center websites, student newspapers, documents, photos, conversations with founding members in the community, as well as relevant insights from participant interviews. The momentum toward equitable systemic changes at UCR remains rooted in grassroots organizing and leadership from students, staff, and faculty who pushed the university to provide dedicated support services for students of color.

Twelve of the fourteen participants could articulate and recall foundational oral histories of the cultural centers in which they worked. These oral histories involved stories of significant events or individuals passed down via elders or former staff members. There were only two participants who were unclear about the history and

foundations of the cultural centers. When asked about the historical background of the cultural centers, Katya noted:

You know honestly, I don't know. I don't know a lot of the history of how they came up with all this. I know they've been around for a long time. Probably something I should ask. I never thought about the history and how the centers came into being.

Meanwhile, Rikka vaguely recalled individual stories of staff members and faculty who were heavily involved with the cultural centers.

I don't have a huge understanding right. I do know something about Costo Hall and someone was here and somebody donated it [Rupert Costo]. I know everyone's brief story [individual staff members]. I'm sure there is more great history, rich history, but that's all I know.

In essence, Rikka recalled the employee's individual involvement and work history vs. the foundational history of the center itself.

The participants recognized that staff, faculty, and alumni held parts of each center's story either through oral histories or physical documents. Over time individuals who held historical and founding documents left the institution or continue to hold documents, photos, and newspapers in their private collections. Participants shared recollections of community experiences or personal relationships with individuals who were previously in charge of running the cultural centers.

A thoroughly documented history of each cultural center's presence on the campus would require dedicated resources, time, thoughtful development, and financial

investments from the institution. I outline historical summaries in an attempt to capture a portion of each cultural center's history and foundations. I also introduce contemporary issues described by the participants for each of the racial/ethnic cultural centers at UC Riverside. The following section synthesizes each cultural center's historical foundations. I begin with Native American Student Programs because UCR sits on Cahuilla tribal lands, and members of the Cahuilla tribe were involved in the establishment of the institution in 1954. The sections that follow discuss the establishment of each of the cultural centers according to their historical timelines.

Native American Student Programs

Native American Student Programs (NASP) was founded in the mid 1980s. I was unable to find a precise date for the creation of the center, although the presence of the native Cahuilla tribe predates the establishment of the university in 1954. Native Cahuilla territory and the bordering San Bernardino Mountains are the land on which UC Riverside is situated. The establishment of NASP coincided with an influx of financial resources from two major benefactors. Rupert Costo (Cahuilla) and Jeanette Dulce Costo (Cherokee) were Native American scholars, community leaders, and activists in the local area. The Costos founded the American Indian Historical Society in 1964 and the Indian Historian Press (Opi, 1985). A *Highlander* article about the American Indian focus of the new UCR library (see Appendix A) notes that, twenty-one years later, in 1985, the AIHS donated the Costo's personal collection of 7000 volumes and 9000 documents, recordings, and works of Native American History and art to UC Riverside (Opi, 1985). The AIHS also donated \$400,000 to the university to create a faculty position for an

endowed Rupert Costo Chair in American Indian Affairs (“Ceremonies Launch,” 1986; Hendricks, 1989).

I had an informal conversation with UC Riverside professor and historian Carlos Cortes. He was a faculty member on campus when the Costos were heavily involved at UCR. When I asked Dr. Cortes about the history of the Costos at UCR, he mentioned that Rupert and Jeanette Costo were close friends with former UC Riverside Chancellor Thomas Rivera (1979-84) (personal communication, April 4, 2017). Cortes further expressed, “It is no coincidence that the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian is housed in the Thomas Rivera Library” (personal communication, April 4, 2017). Furthermore, Costo Hall, the building which houses most of the cultural centers today is named after Rupert and Jeanette Costo. The plaque outside the building reflects this (see Appendix B):

Costo Hall, named in honor of Rupert Costo, a Cahuilla man and Jeanette Dulce Costo an Eastern Cherokee; generous benefactors of this campus through the establishment of the Costo Library of the American Indian and the Costo Endowed Chair in American Indian History.

Sagesse, a participant who knew this oral history, discussed the effects of institutional erasure during the university’s staff orientation. Sagesse remarked:

There was no real discussion about the impact of Native people on this university. Tomas Rivera was best friends with Rupert and Jeannette, and Jeannette donated money and advocated for him to have the library here, and that’s why the Costo

library is on top of the Rivera library. That's a beautiful story. Why isn't that talked about?

Sagesse continued:

You know, it's hard always being the one to be the educator . . . it's the process of continuing to educate and assert that this is something that you need to care about too . . . and that you're complacent in the erasure of history if you are not acknowledging this and it's in your interest to. It's a beautiful thing and we all should embrace it, but when people think about their histories here it's compartmentalized, like this is the Native American history of the university, and this is the official history of the university, then you start to get those really funky dynamics. That's what I picked up on. It became at the discretion of all the leaders, which were all white males, except Tomas Rivera.

An article in the *Highlander* reveals that "Costo's ties to UC Riverside extend to the birth of the campus. He was one of the leaders in originating the campaign and developing support for creating the university campus" (Opi, 1985). Costo himself is quoted in the article: "This university is surrounded by the largest enclave of Indian reservations in the West. It is fitting that UC Riverside become the academic and scholarly center of studies about [N]ative people of the region and the country" (Opi, 1985).

Rupert Costo was honored and recognized by the campus when he passed away at 83 (see Appendix C). Rupert Costo contributed directly to the vision of UC Riverside's establishment, and he financially invested in recruiting Native faculty and Native students into UC Riverside. His advocacy and contributions paved the way for Dr. Marigold

Linton (Cahuilla-Cupeno), who was the first Native American women to graduate from UC Riverside in its inaugural class of 1954. She is also the first California reservation Indian to graduate from any university. She went on to receive her doctoral degree from UC Los Angeles and is recognized as the 17th American Indian to receive her Ph.D. in any discipline. She is one of the cofounders of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). She has given back to her home campus and established the Marigold Linton Endowed Scholarship Fund at UC Riverside and was also recognized as a “Remarkable Woman of UC” by the UC Office of the President (Remarkable Women of UC, 2017). Sagesse shares a perspective on Native presence and promise at UC Riverside:

We have such a strong Native program. I don't think people understand how strong our Native program is, it's probably one of the strongest programs in the nation because we have eleven Native faculty members across disciplines. We have an endowed chair in Native American Studies, that doesn't happen. We have vibrant Native communities all around us. There are 23 reservations around the university. The interaction with Native people is exactly what Rupert Costo wanted. He wanted this university to be a resource to Native people, and the California Center for Native Nations, they're doing amazing work. That's the future direction that I'd like to see happen for Native Studies and for our office, to work toward nation building, work toward developing a Native Nations Institute. There is no reason why we cannot have a Native program on nation building here. We have all the components for it, so that's what I'd like to see in the future for

our university, because we have all the tools, it's just the vision to put it together and to get the support.

When UC Riverside was established the 1960s American Indian Movement (AIM) was strong. This coincides with the presence of the Native American Student Association (NASA) at UC Riverside in the 1960s. NASA's weekly club meetings and events were advertised frequently in the *Highlander*. Additionally, the two of the largest Native community events at UC Riverside are in their 36th year: The Medicine Ways Conference and the UCR Pow Wow (Goodwin, 1989; Parkinson, 1986). These events hosted AIM activists such as Russell Charles Means (Oglala Lakota). Asher shares another piece of oral history:

By the 1970s a lot of activism was going on, so a lot of students formed what is called the Native American Student Association here at UCR. By the 1980s they had finally established a recruiter within the admissions office to go out and get students interested in [college] and hopefully getting students to come to UCR. That was when they started providing support to actually go do some recruitment. So they hired a UCR alumni, his name was Bill Madrigal, to go out and do some recruiting. That became the flame for Native American Student Programs.

Eventually, by 1985, I want to say, there was a little center within the Rivera library, there was a little office for this person and that was the start. They moved from the library to a portable, and other offices, and eventually, to Costo Hall.

After I collected documents and listened to oral histories recounting the establishment of NASP, I went back into the participants interviews where Asher also mentioned:

The American Indian Counselors and Recruiters Associations [AICRA] was developed in 1976. It was just within the UC system, so it was basically for the community, Native staff, professional staff, and some faculty to get together and figure out solutions, and create a space for colleagues on how to deal with issues, what's going on our campus, updates, and figuring out ways to make change up at UCOP.

The Native community has actively fought and advocated for the interests and needs of Native students at UC Riverside even before the campus was established. Currently, the eleven Native faculty at UCR mark the largest number of Native faculty at any university in the nation.

Native American outreach, recruitment, retention, and graduation rates are major priorities for Native American Student Programs. Staff and financial resources to provide personalized and culturally relevant high impact practices at NASP received little to no institutional support or investment until the passing of the Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum (HESR). The student-service-based fee increased though a majority vote of the undergraduate study body. The details of HESR funds are discussed further in an upcoming section. Prior financial investments, which came directly from the Native community, established faculty positions, scholarships, and an outreach coordinator. Cultural support services and programs are housed in the division of student affairs and depend on yearly proposals and approvals from the Student Services Fee Advisory Council (SFAC). Permanent SFAC funds are limited and most of the programs are

funded through temporary resources in SFAC. The financial uncertainty was part of the reason for pursuing HESR funds.

Academic units actively pursue financial investments from local tribes. Asher shares some frustrations with the institution's pursuits of tribal funds: "The university sees Native tribes in the area as a funding source, we've been doing a lot of good work to not go to the tribes and ask for money, so we can say this is what we have done for you, before asking for money. The university could get behind our work." The university must prove they are using tribal resources wisely and in the best interests of Native students rather than the interests of the institution. When the School of Business asked for financial resources from the tribes they did not coordinate efforts with NASP. Members of the Native community directly asked NASP about the use of their financial investment. Sagesse commented:

We don't know where that money is or how it was spent and the thing that's so important about being able to be involved with that process, the tribes will then ask what happened to that money and how did it benefit the community, so if we can't answer honestly about where the money went or those types of questions, it makes us look like we're going to ask for money but not really benefit the community, and that's detrimental to the relationships you are trying to build with tribes if they don't trust you.

Cultural respect for Native sovereignty and direct involvement with those who have relationships with the local tribes must come first. Any action in violation of that trust is a betrayal with respect to the work of Native elders who fought and advocated for

the establishment of UC Riverside. The presence and promise of the Native community requires active and culturally respectful relationship building. The institution must nurture community involvement toward the growth and uplifting of an entire nation, as defined by those involved and the ways in which they want to be involved.

Chicano Student Programs

Chicano Student Programs (CSP) was founded in 1972. Student, staff and faculty advocacy led to the establishment of CSP with support from Chicano Studies and the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP). An informal conversation with UC Riverside history professor Carlos Cortes led me to some of the details behind the founding of CSP. Chicano Studies was formerly Mexican American Studies under the leadership of faculty member Alfredo Castañeda. When Castañeda left his position at UC Riverside to go to Stanford, students asked Dr. Cortes take over as the chair of Mexican American Studies. Cortes felt committed to the students and chose to stay and take the offer from the campus. Later, in conversation with students, the department was renamed Chicano Studies (personal communication, April 4, 2017).

When Cortes took over the position as chair of Chicano Studies, he had one condition: the student services unit had to have a dedicated staff member to run its academic support programs. Cortes negotiated his terms with the campus and Chancellor Ivan Hinderaker agreed to his request. Alberto Richard Chavez was moved from another student service department to create what is now known as Chicano Student Programs (personal communication, April 4, 2017). Alberto Chavez served in this role for fifteen years until 1986 (Chicano Student Programs, 2017). Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles was a

microbiologist who was also a strong supporter of CSP (Chicano Student Programs, 2017). Dr. Cota-Robles along with Dr. Marigold Linton, who was mentioned previously, were two of several cofounders of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). The Chicana/Latina community has deep roots and strong ties in Riverside with an extensively rich history of collaborations and advocacy. On this topic, Jolte explained:

Prior to the founding of Chicano Student Programs they supported students in silos, through peer to peer, through each other and alumni, through student organizations, such as MEChA [Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan] de UC Riverside, which was founded in 1969 at UCR, and different organizations. They now wanted to culminate all of that energy into a physical space . . . they founded Chicano Student Programs through struggle and through political turmoil, but they were able to get it.

The Chicana/Latina community's argument for culturally relevant academic support services was in line with student service programs and the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) in particular. With additional faculty support the birth of CSP was ensured. When discussing this history, Fury stated:

From my understanding in speaking to alumni that was the way they are able to successfully secure a space by connecting it with academics. Although, they knew the underlining idea was cultural empowerment and cultural support. It was physically located in the Thomas Rivera Library and programming ensued,

support services ensued, and partnerships with other campus departments and community partnerships ensued.

Fury further revealed the story of CSP as a:

history of struggle, familia, camaraderie, and an extreme amount of pride. You can see those connections and celebrating having a physical location. What it meant to the students at the time that were .5% of the population is huge . . . they needed a safe place to promote a sense of belonging.

Students, faculty, and staff all benefited from having a space designated for the Chicana/Latina community at UCR.

In 1972, the Eastside neighborhood of Riverside was a predominately Chicana/Latina community. Youth in the area did not have academic pathways into the university. CSP in collaboration with Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) hosted community college transfer days to establish a pathway into UC Riverside. CSP also organized the Chicana/Latina graduation ceremony for students on the campus. These programs began in 1972 and are celebrating their 45th year in 2017.

The Chicano Movement was in full swing during this time. UC Riverside hosted Cesar Chavez as a guest speaker in the 1970s (see Appendix D, E). Students groups inspired by the leadership of Cesar Chavez, promoted the grape boycott and fought for workers' rights ("Chavez today!," 1972; Chingon, 1970). Student reflections on the leadership of Che Guevara during the Cuban revolution were also shared in student newspapers (Medina, 1970). Opinion pieces on the role of Chicanas in the movement were published as well as an outline of Chicana demands for educational equity

(Gallardo, 1971). The *Highlander* archives of the 1970s are full of stories of resistance, struggle, and advocacy. The Editorial Board of the *Highlander* was predominately Chicax/Latinx for many years, until the self-published Chicax/Latinx newspaper *Nuestra Cosa* was formed in the early 1970s.

Heightened levels of Chicax/Latinx student activity and agitation on campus were in response to a discriminatory and racist campus climate. The *Highlander* received letters to the editor critiquing racist coverage of news stories (see Appendix F, G, H). One story in particular highlights the challenges of Chicax/Latinx life at UC Riverside in the 1970s. Chris Lara and Glo Rodriguez were members of the Associated Students of UC Riverside; these two Chicanas were respectively in charge of the Special Projects Commission and Fine Arts (Hara, 1972). Critics of their work wrote news articles in the *Highlander* titled “The Case Against Lara” and “The Case Against Rodriguez” publicly labeling them as “lazy, slow, and incompetent” (see Appendix I, J). *Nuestra Cosa* published an article in response titled “The Highlander’s Blatant Display of Racial Prejudice” (1973), demanding accountability for their student fees and asking students not to fund an organization that promotes and permits acts of racism. A wave of letters to the editorial board both condemning and apologizing for the incident ensued (Cortez, 1973; Fox, 1973; Teague, 1973).

As reported in the *Highlander* by Fox (1973), the student stipends of Chris Lara and Glo Rodriguez were frozen because of the incendiary campus racial debate (see Appendix K). This incident in particular caught my attention because a long series of articles over several weeks in two different student newspapers addressed the issue. This

example of a contentious racial climate is evidence for the need of cultural support services and programs that foster a sense of belonging, and a home away from home for marginalized groups. CSP was founded and fought for in the midst of a hostile campus racial climate for Chicana/Latina students at UC Riverside.

African Student Programs

African Student Programs (ASP) was founded in 1972. An estimated 60 Black students led by Charles Jenkins established the Black Student Union (BSU) in 1968 (African Student Programs, 2017). The BSU advocated for the Black Studies Department which then became the original on-campus hang out for Black students. Black student activism was at a peak during this period. The Young Worker's Liberation League was organizing efforts to establish a Free Angela Davis Defense League in Riverside ("Alexander Will," 1970). There was also an off-campus space that provided community support services. Jiani confirmed this story and shared the following:

I know there was some kind of space off campus for Black students to go and hang out, assemble, congregate off campus, it was called the Black House. I think it was on Blaine, if I'm not mistaken, but that was burnt down mysteriously.

There was some arson and it was burnt down.

An article in the *Highlander* reported on the arson incident in March 1972 (see Appendix L). The Black House was an off-campus university-owned structure that functioned as the headquarters of the BSU (Duarte, 1972). The student group ran community programs for tutoring, drug-abuse related issues, and other areas of need. John D'Antignac, BSU chairman, asserts that the location off campus was essential for direct community

involvement. The Riverside Fire Department found signs of forced entry, papers spread throughout the house soaked with gasoline, and an empty ten gallon container of gas. The interior of the house was damaged and completely inhabitable (Duarte, 1972).

As reported by the *Highlander* in 1972 (see Appendix M), the Black Studies Department was under the leadership of Dr. Jesse McDade, who said, “The Black Student Union creates a positive self-regard for [B]lack students we will continue to assist in projects they innovate, such as its tutorial program. Helping the [B]lack community, as I see it, is helping the whole community” (Raeger, 1972). McDade asserted that every student organization ought to be sponsored and supported by an academic department.

In the 1970s, Black Studies provided courses like Black Political Thought; the History of Black Americans; Justice and the Black Experience (“Black Studies Winter,” 1973); the History of African Religions and Philosophy; the History and Development of the Black Novel; and Black Drama (“Black Studies Spring,” 1973). Dr. McDade characterized Black Studies as an interdisciplinary department that was not a duplication of but a complement to the teachings of other departments.

At the time there was an active Black Theater group at UCR (Miner, 1972). The BSU and Black Studies also worked on a series of discussions about the educational needs of Black women (“The Black Woman,” 1973). There was also a Black women’s study group (see Appendix N) focused on bringing in speakers and lectures to share the Black women’s experience (“Black Women’s Study,” 1973). Students also wrote editorials on the role of Black women in the women’s liberation movement.

When Black Studies dissolved into an interdisciplinary unit in 1984, students wanted to maintain a physical space on campus where they could continue to meet as a group. Three participants in the study told me a version of this story. The dissolution of Black Studies was believed to have occurred in the late 1970s as it is listed on the cultural center's website. Meanwhile, UCR history professor Dr. Carlos Cortes remembers it differently. Cortes says the two faculty members in Chicano Studies and the two faculty members in Black Studies agreed to support each other by fighting for their mutual right to maintain separate departments, but in 1984, the departments were finally dissolved into Ethnic Studies (personal communication, April 4, 2017). Cortes said both departments fought for 14 years until the academic senate voted to combine the departments in 1984.

ASP's history is partially documented in an interactive timeline on the cultural center's website (African Student Programs, 2017). Alumni who were involved in campus leadership, student government, sororities and fraternities, athletics, and the Black theatre group are featured on the website (African Student Programs, 2017). There is also mention of five National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations and their establishment in the 1970s: Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc (African Student Programs, 2017).

ASP has a strong desire to document and preserve their history. Some oral histories match while others do not reveal a full understanding of the conditions of the rise and fall of Black Studies. More must be done to document and spend time with founding members and faculty who were present at that time. Samuel asserted:

I am on a quest to find funds to tell the story in a documentary or multimedia presentation of the UCR African American student life experience. Our students are coming to UCR into a space that they have little knowledge about. They know that this space exists but they don't know how it came about or the struggles to keep it. My job before I leave is to ensure that the history is archived and pieces of that history can be accessible to students through technology at the Rivera library. So they know they are coming to campus with a rich history of student activism, student leadership, students involved in government.

Today, UCR has the highest graduation rates for Black students at the University of California and nationwide (Warren, 2017; Watanabe, 2017). As cited by Warren (2017), the Education Trust has determined that UC Riverside graduates Black students at a rate 1.7 percent higher than White students. African Student Programs provides academic preparation programs, college outreach, and mentoring opportunities for students, as well as matching current students with alumni in fields of interests. The department has a full range of cultural support services and programs and alumni that continue to give back. What ASP needs is further resources and partnerships with academic affairs to document their best practices and success with Black students at UC Riverside. I discuss the critical need for partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs in future sections.

Asian Pacific Student Programs

Asian Pacific Student Programs (APSP) was founded in 1989. Leadership, consciousness, and community are the three guiding principles for programming, events,

and social activities at APSP. A previous director who established these guiding principles shares an oral history about how the center got started:

The circumstances around creation of the center were fairly politically charged. There had actually been some anti-Asian violence that occurred on campus. One student got beat up in a lab by a TA and another student was expelled for defending himself after an attack in the residence halls. The local community had been engaged and involved and they were still very present by the time I had arrived (Personal communication, March 21, 2017).

Three other participants from this study also shared a similar version of this story. I was unable to find a news article in the archives to corroborate this story, although I found articles that documented the student activism behind the creation of the cultural center.

The *Highlander* reported that seven student clubs with over 600 members came together to form the Inter Asian Club Council (IACC) (Kendall, 1989; see Appendix O). The clubs who came together were the Asian-Indian Student Association, the Chinese Student Association, the Filipino Student Union, the International Club, the Japanese Student Association, the Korean Student Association, and the Vietnamese Student Association. Students involved in the clubs felt that they were not getting the help they needed from the campus activities office (Kendall, 1989). The IACC was formed to unify the clubs on campus and improve communication about events and programs. In April of 1989, students from the IACC submitted a proposal to the Registration Fee Committee and requested a full-time advisor to coordinate the needs of Asian student programs on campus (Asian Pacific Student Programs, 2017). Another article in the *Highlander*

reports that Grace Jeanmee Yoo was hired as a part-time staff member and was the first advisor for Asian Student Programs on campus (Leung, 1989; See Appendix P).

The part-time position went onto become a full-time position with a new space on campus as a result of a large student protest. I spoke informally with Dr. Grace J. Yoo, who is now a professor of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University. Dr. Yoo said, “UC Riverside used to be known as UC Racism” (personal communication, March 29, 2017). She went on to say “the students protested using a large banner with the words RACISM in bold letters” (personal communication, March 29, 2017). I found a photo of the campus racial climate incident she referenced in the *Highlander* (see Appendix Q). On September 30, 1992 the “Rally Against Racism” brought over 300 students from diverse ethnic backgrounds together to speak out against racism at UCR (Asian Pacific Student Programs, 2017; Selwyn and Bollinger, 1992). Chancellor Orbach was initially prevented from leaving the fourth floor. Xavier a participant in this study recalled the incident:

Orbach was the chancellor at the time and he had been on campus maybe 4 years. 4 or 5 years. He was fairly new to the campus. He was the chancellor who was held captive by his students when they were making these demands of increase support services for students of color on this campus they called it a circle of consciousness. They kept him from leaving his office because they sort of surrounded him with bodies and wouldn't let him leave until the police had to come and escort him out.

When Chancellor Orbach was able to leave his office he ordered the building cleared and forty-three students were arrested for not complying with the officers' orders (Selwyn & Bollinger, 1992). Officers were heavy-handed with students, and an onslaught of letters reprimanded officers for police brutality, anti-Asian sentiments, and outright racism (Meenk, 1992; "the racism protest," 1992). The charges against students were eventually dropped, but the damage had already been done. Students had plenty of leverage and media attention to make demands for change. Direct action and student protest later resulted in the hiring of a full-time program coordinator and a newly designated space for Asian Pacific Student Programs.

I asked Dr. Yoo to recall the campus climate at the time and she said, "It was hard being a woman of color on campus. No one looked like me. There was little to no Asian faculty and staff on campus, even though Asian students were the majority" (personal communication, March 29, 2017). The faculty who were closely involved with APSP in the early 90s includes Dr. Edward Taehan Chang, professor in Ethnic Studies who also runs the Young Oak Kim Center for Korean American Studies at UCR, and Dr. Traise Yamamoto, an associate professor in the Department of English. They have continued their involvement with APSP and were mentioned by multiple participants in this study. Students, staff, and faculty advocated and negotiated for support services and systemic changes during this time.

Critical issues in the Asian Pacific Islander community that are still relevant today include challenging and debunking the model minority myth, discussing the role of the Asian community in the affirmative action debate, and pursuing disaggregated data to

account for educational disparities in Pacific Islander, Hmong, Cambodian, and Vietnamese communities. APSP is also charged with developing relationships with South Asian and South East Asian communities which includes students of Sunni and Sikh faith and spiritual practices. The Asian Diaspora under APSP present immeasurable challenges when working with invisible communities that are not accounted for in aggregated data.

Today, the Asian Pacific Islander population has grown to over 30% of students on campus. APSP now advises over 20 clubs and organizations with ties to the Asian continent. The office continued to grow as this population increased. Franklyn a participant in this study shared the following insights on staffing for the center:

The maximum number of staff people we had, probably early 2000s, was a director, an associate director, two programmers and our own administrative assistant who I'd say was probably 25% programming ... at the time, the administrative assistants were much more active in what we did. They weren't just assistants, they were programmers, they would go on retreats with us so when I first started we were at that level.

Budget cuts in the late 2000s reduced staff levels over time. The Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum has returned APSP to an office with a director and two program coordinators and explicit limitations to the role of the administrative assistant. The administrative assistant is shared with another department and has extremely limited participation in programs and events. APSP currently has the most staff and funding of all the cultural centers.

Middle Eastern Student Center

The Middle Eastern Student Center (MESC) was founded on July 1, 2013. I served as the MESC's founding director and was present on campus during this time. Much of the history described below is from my own recollections and personal conversations and relationships with founding members. The student advocacy behind the establishment of a center began shortly after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. In the aftermath of the incident, the social and political climate for individuals of Arab and Middle Eastern descent was full of hate, harassment, and discrimination. Sikh and Muslim temples were targeted, as well as individuals who wore visible expressions of their religious faith, such as Sikh men wearing turbans and Muslim women in hijab. Middle Eastern students on college campuses actively expressed safety concerns for themselves and their families. In 2003, Nadine Sayegh, an undergraduate student of Egyptian descent, was the President of Associated Students at UCR. She began campus conversations about establishing a safe space for Middle Eastern students. When Nadine graduated the conversations continued.

Six years later in 2009, two undergraduate students submitted a proposal for a Salaam Center. The word "Salaam" means "peace" in Arabic. The students gathered signatures from the presidents of Arab and Middle Eastern clubs and organizations, and organized a petition to demonstrate support from the student body for the creation of a center. The Salaam Center proposal was submitted to the Assistant Dean of Students in April 2010. Summer meetings with students and university administration were organized. The Dean of Students and Assistant Dean of Students conducted student focus

groups in December 2010 and January 2011. From the students' perspective, the administration had misunderstandings about the population and assumed that all the students in the focus groups were Muslims or had direct ties to the Muslim Student Association or Students for Justice in Palestine. Meanwhile students who attended the focus groups represented various religious affiliations and regional areas, such as Egyptians of Coptic faith and Lebanese individuals who were Christians. The mix of students in attendance pushed back on administrative assumptions about the Middle Eastern population and asked for the name of the center to be as comprehensive and inclusive as possible.

Administrative misunderstandings about the Middle Eastern population at UCR led to the development of a student survey to gather more data. The survey was conducted for the Office of Diversity Initiatives and was administered by the Student Affairs Research and Evaluation team. The students and the administration worked together to develop the survey questions. The group advocated for a specific category to disaggregate Middle Eastern and North African students from the general White population. Prior to this survey there was no category on institutional surveys to specifically identify students of Middle Eastern descent, and in practice most students checked off the White/Caucasian/European box. The survey questions asked students about their ethnic and racial identifiers, their campus experiences with harassment, and any negative stereotyping from students and faculty. The survey also asked students if they were in favor of creating a center to support Middle Eastern students.

The survey questions were administered as a special section in the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES). Each UC campus has the opportunity to customize this survey and add questions relevant to the campus. The campus snapshot of the 2012 UC Riverside UCUES survey is available online (<http://ueeval.ucr.edu/ucues.html>). A sub-report was generated and survey results were released to the working group in June, 2012. These results are not available for the public and were only given to the working group. The survey response rate was 17% or 2,980 students out of 17,268 students. Meanwhile, 4% or 132 of those students identified as Middle Eastern. Out of 132 students, 45% stated that campus faculty had expressed negative/stereotypical views about their ethnic/racial group and/or religion. 71% of respondents stated that students on campus had expressed negative/stereotypical views about their racial/ethnic group, and 66% had expressed negative/stereotypical views about their religion. Meanwhile 40% of the respondents experienced direct harassment or discrimination on campus based on their race/ethnicity, while 41% experienced direct harassment or discrimination for their religious or spiritual beliefs. 72% of the total students surveyed were in favor of creating a center supporting Middle Eastern students, while 51% were in favor of using existing funds to establish the center (“Spring Mini-Survey,” 2012).

After the survey results were released, 14 UCR students took the lead in proposing the establishment of the Middle Eastern Student Center and sought start-up funds from the Student Services Committee for the 2013-2014 Academic Year. Seraj Abu-Seraj, Amal Ali, Lames Alkhamis, Tina Maria Aoun, Heba Diab, Nancy

Elsharkawy, Sebouh Kouyoumjian, Daniel Leserman, Farhan Muhammad Majid, Shadi Matar, Tina Matar, Mariam Saleh, Merima Tricic, and Mahfoud Saddi are the founding student members of the MESC. I personally purchased a plaque with all of the names of the founding members and displayed it in the MESC. These undergraduate students, graduate students, and now alumni of UCR created a space to provide support services for all students with ties to the Middle East and North Africa. The vision of the Middle Eastern Student Collaborative was to create a space that could also educate the campus population about the cultural richness and diversity of this geographic region.

UCR faculty members and staff members who assisted in this endeavor included Dr. Feras Abou-Galala and Dr. David Crohn; two temporary program assistants, Lisa Toban and Mehedi Munna; and the program coordinator, myself, Marcela Ramirez. All staff members were under the direction of the Acting Assistant Dean of Students Emilio J. Virata and his predecessor Alfredo Figueroa. This collection of faculty and staff members worked with the Middle Eastern Student Collaborative for nearly four years. Their efforts in advising and organizing the students culminated in the establishment of the Middle Eastern Student Center. The Founding Director, Marcela Ramirez, served from July 2013 to September 2014. The first program coordinator, hired in the summer of 2014, was founding member and UCR alum Tina Aoun. She was then promoted and became the second Director of the MESC.

The presence on campus of students of Arab descent dates back to the 1970s and perhaps before then. During archival research of student newspapers in 1970, I found an article on the appointment of student leaders to the Organization of Arab Students (OAS)

(see Appendix R). Their stated goals were to (a) foster better understanding between Arab students and Americans, and (b) counteract the false image of Arabs presented in movies, books, and the mass media. OAS represented students from several Arab countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Libya (“Arab Students Elect Officers,” 1970). Today, the MESC continues to fight negative images in the media, propaganda, stereotypes, misinformed assumptions, and lack of awareness of the cultures and peoples of the Middle East.

While the MESC received a warm welcome from some members of the campus community, at other times the cultural center’s purpose and function was met with scrutiny and suspicion based on incorrect and negative assumptions about the population of students with ties to the Middle East and North Africa. The *Highlander* published several articles about the center’s launch party in October 2013, which more than 500 people attended. The audience and community members were particularly interested in how the founding members pushed through ideological divides between Muslim and Jewish students. The founding members were able to share their stories of struggle and compromise while working toward a common goal.

Shadi Matar, a founding member and a Christian Palestinian, and former president of Students for Justice in Palestine said, “A lot of people had misunderstandings, everyone has different roles and different hats to put on. But when they come to the MESC, [students are] working and advocating for it [the center]. . . they’re not putting their own agenda on the table” (Van, 2013). When Matar first visited the campus he asked if there was a cultural center where Middle Eastern/Arab students could go, and the

tour guide directed him to the Muslim Student Association. Matar is not Muslim and, in fact, many students of Arab descent are not necessarily Muslim. Breaking this stereotype was one of the MESC's greatest challenges and opportunities. Daniel Leserman, who was also one of the founding members and former president of Hillel, is quoted saying that the MESC was initiated to "provide a home for Middle Eastern students, a place to make them feel welcomed and connected to other students" (Van, 2013). Kalia shared the following perspective when discussing the current challenges facing the MESC:

There is a lack of knowledge, understanding, and awareness about the Middle Eastern community. Upper administration has no idea what the Muslim community looks like – and this is with staff and faculty too – they don't know what the Muslim community is or how to serve them. What are their challenges and what are their needs? To me, people not being aware of that, that's a barrier. Lack of training in cultural competency, that's a barrier. That makes the student's life more difficult in terms of educating because I think this community is an invisible minority.

Shay insisted:

Admin doesn't know that there is problems in the Middle East outside the Israel Palestine conflict . . . not knowing that there's a Lebanon-Palestine conflict, a Syria-Lebanon conflict etc. . . . If we took a side on those conflicts that would be equally as dangerous, but they don't know. They're not informed about the different conflicts. They are so scared in that capacity. But I do think that they are

impressed with the work that we do and they know it's necessary and they know it's difficult and they know that the Center is an incredible addition to UCR.

Finally, the Editorial Board of the *Highlander* newspaper described the MESC's mission as follows:

Providing students of Middle Eastern descent and organization resources while also being a source for non-Middle Eastern students to clarify generalizations and underlying stigmas held toward Middle Eastern cultures. . . . The MESC should not only be looked upon as a platform for discussion of these hostilities, although it very well could be, but rather as a resource to educate all students on campus (The Editorial Board, 2013).

The challenge and potential promise of the MESC is navigating a space open to students, staff, and faculty with a wide range of religious and spiritual beliefs and racial/ethnic backgrounds including individuals from various geographic regions and territories in conflict; those fleeing religious persecution and systemic oppression; as well as refugees and war-displaced individuals who have done all they can to create a pathway into higher education.

Outreach, recruitment, and retention efforts are complicated when the staff cannot identify students in need. One participant said, "If they do not have a registered club or organization how do I find them?" Until recently, student demographics collected by the institution did not include categories that were relevant to this population and students were often told to check off the White category. As of May 2017, UCOP has posted disaggregated data for undergraduate and graduate students (Disaggregated Enrollment

and Degrees, 2017). The availability of this information could shift outreach, recruitment, and retention priorities for the cultural center.

In summary, Chapter 4 provided a synthesis of historical narratives with respect to the foundations of the cultural centers at UCR: Native American Student Programs, Chicano Student Programs, African Student Programs, Asian Pacific Student Programs, and the Middle Eastern Student Center. In order to fully understand the contemporary experiences of cultural center professionals at UCR, this case study required a historical synthesis to establish a baseline of inquiry and grounded perspective on campus life for cultural center professionals at UCR. I used selected stories from the archival research to illuminate the campus racial climate and provided historical context for the roots of resistance and acts of racial interruption and community disruption to status quo norms and policies. These collective counterstories of resistance and struggle with respect to the experiences of communities of color at UCR were documented and honored as the foundational context for this case study. Finally, in an upcoming section, Chapter 6 provides a thorough critical and theoretical analysis of the historical findings.

CHAPTER 5

PARTICIPANT FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings for participant narratives with respect to the lived experiences of cultural center professionals at UCR. The participants lived experiences and campus perspectives are explored within three spheres of influence: relationship with self, relationship with others, and relationship with the institution. As described previously, CRP-Ed posits that individuals negotiate and leverage opportunities to foster interest convergence and enact systemic change within their sphere of influence (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). The process of negotiation and change is characterized by internalized tensions and challenging moments of racial collision, at times collusion, and other times dissent or compliance with status quo norms and procedures. Each of these spheres contains sub-themes that are discussed in detail in the sections that follow. I then include their perspectives on the larger campus climate and on their perceived role in the campus diversity discourse. I end this chapter with the participants' recommendations for improvement and their vision for the future of the cultural centers at UC Riverside.

First Sphere of Influence: Relationship with Self

The findings relevant to the participants' first sphere of influence are categorized in four sub-themes: multiple roles, mental health, the importance of actively seeking mentorship, and overall various ways of knowing. Multiple roles involve their service as an advocate, case manager, mediator, and advisor for students of color. Mental health is a concern in terms of increasing demands, burnout, and low morale for cultural center professionals of color. Mentorship was mentioned by those trained in traditional student

affairs programs who desired avenues for personal growth and development. Various ways of knowing is closely tied to the participants' professional and education background. Each of these sub-themes is described below.

Multiple Roles

The majority of participants discussed increased time demands with respect to case management and advocacy for students of color. They talked about serving in multiple roles on behalf of students of color. Fury's statement below captures the experience of having multiple roles when assisting students with case management and serving as an advocate:

For example, the counseling center who is supposed to be meeting the needs of students, has to give us someone that is culturally competent, that students feel comfortable to have these discussions with, because if not they come see us. *We are the counselor, we are the mediator, we are the financial aid representative, and we are the housing coordinator, all those things, all in one.* We have to share that knowledge, but with our limited capacity, the time to make that happen is not there.

Staff members in the cultural centers also assist students of color in navigating housing, academic advisors, financial aid issues, and reporting racial bias incidents in the classroom or on campus.

Serving target populations requires cultural sensitivity and expertise. Cultural center professionals are first responders when students of color are having issues and

need critical support services. Not having enough time and capacity to meet the needs of students of color can be stressful for the participants. Marti expressed:

It's overwhelming to know that I'm not going to do that [meet all critical needs of students of color] and it's very personal, because you are in this position to try to respond to the needs, and try to meet students where they are at, to support them in every way.

The referral and transition process for case management can take hours out of a professional's day, and if students of color have a bad experience in another department, they often return to the cultural center and the trusted staff member.

Mental Health

Multiple participants of color in this study expressed a series of stress-related and mental health issues. They discussed feeling burned out and overextended in what they called a high-demand and fast-paced environment. Asher discussed the flow of the year:

It's really hard because I feel like fall is where everyone is energetic, revived, more enthusiastic and more passionate. By the end of fall people start getting burnt out already. We're not pushing as many programs in winter. Then we go hard in the spring.

Others shared their need to seek out physical and talk therapy. Franklyn said, "I've noticed within our departments there's been a huge sentiment of exhaustion, feeling overworked, underappreciated, feeling like they have to justify the work they are doing."

The lack of appreciation for doing good work was in reference to the institution and senior level administration. Those who had families found that late hours and time

demands impacted their family life. Personal and professional boundaries become blurred when participants cannot access childcare and must bring their children to evening programs, although they did not say this was unwelcome by the institution or their department. Overall, the added stress of childcare impacts their ability to be present for late night programs, which impacts their mental health and capacity to be fully present.

Mentorship

Three participants discussed their personal experiences of the value of mentorship, although many discussed serving as mentors to students of color. Franklyn reflected on the impact of previous mentors during their undergraduate years and entry into the student affairs profession:

I look back when I was a college student and seeing who my mentors were, and who I worked for, and saying “okay if I’m doing even a fraction of what they did for me,” for students who are walking through our office then I’m doing something good.

Marti emphasized that a good supervisory relationship can also serve as mentorship. This participant recounted quality interactions with the supervisor, “I value the 1-1 conversations, she has seen me grow tremendously . . . I appreciate her opinion . . . and she recognizes the importance of appreciation . . . taking time to say “hey you did a really good job” hearing this from someone you admire can make all the difference.” Other participants who discussed the supervisory relationship did not explicitly associate it with mentorship. Those who actively advocated for professional development opportunities

also talked about the importance of mentorship. Meanwhile, the institution does not provide any mentorship programs or affinity groups for staff on campus.

Various Ways of Knowing

Nine participants discussed the philosophical underpinnings of community building and helping students of color succeed in any way possible. Participants often cited concepts like “it takes a village” and “sustaining the struggle” in their narratives. Those who studied higher education administration and those who came directly from community-based spaces and non-profits have somewhat distinct ways of knowing. Although the educational and professional training may have differed, the cultural center professionals have a sense of shared values and are dedicated to serving students of color. I asked participants about their philosophy for doing the work. Marti said, “We are there to make sure we give the students a safe space, a *home away from home*. A *village* when they are away from their original village.”

Five participants discussed their professional and educational exposure to traditional student development theories in higher education. Fury shared some thoughts on applicable theoretical frameworks:

Going to grad school and having opportunities to develop professionally allowed me to see that there are amazing theories out there, and some that have issues, but through that I found theories that inform my work such as [Rendon’s] validation theory. I use that a lot in my mentor program and critical race theory, Latino critical race theory specifically.

Additionally, other theoretical frameworks were mentioned: sense of belonging, theory of self-authorship (Baxter Magolda), other racial/ethnic development theories, and social justice frameworks. Some mentioned the specific needs of first year and first-generation college students of color. Meanwhile, those, like Shay, who had no exposure, simply learned by doing: “I don’t really know textbook theories. Everything I have done and do for students is what I’ve created, what I’ve seen and what I’ve molded. Realizing what helped me develop into a student leader and a leader in general.” Meanwhile, Nero, who did have exposure to theory, stated:

Going through grad school and learning the theories . . . a lot of theories just seemed so common sense to me . . . such as students who are more active on campus have a higher chance at graduation. [Astin’s theory of involvement] what that says to me is “come into the office and interact”, I feel like if you’re connected to the campus, hopefully that will give you the extra motivation to not give up.

The difference in exposure can be ascertained by those who did or did not acquire a graduate degree in higher education. The following excerpt from Jolte speaks to this finding:

Prior to grad school there were not any theories, well that I could articulate because I was not aware of them. Going to grad school and having those opportunities to develop professionally allowed me to see that there are amazing theories out there, and some that have issues, but through that I found theories that inform my work.

In fact, the peer mentor programs in the cultural centers are designed and centered in the spirit of student development theories for racial/ethnic identity development. Jolte said the peer mentor programs have a “goal and mission of validating student’s experiences in and out of the classroom and creating a sense of belonging”. Furthermore, cultural center programs “hone in on their [students’] identity, their cultural identity, as a way to build relationships, and as way to share experiences [and show] that we are like-minded.” Those who had exposure to student development theories could articulate an influence of theory in their programmatic designs.

One participant was influenced directly while working closely with higher education faculty members during their undergraduate experience. Zion responded:

Arthur Cohen happened to be good friends with Alexander Astin, and they had a habit of keeping the door open in Dr. Cohen’s office when Dr. Astin was visiting. They would often talk about the social change model as it was in development, before it was even published yet. I didn’t know for the longest time that I was adhering or making a lot of my decisions aligned with Astin’s social change model. As I became familiar with it, I began to realize that right there was what I’ve been doing to balance the need of the individual with the needs of the communities, the institution, and with society around us, in trying to find the appropriate or best response to an issue that serves the most needs as we can.

The participant further commented:

Hearing some of their conversations, it struck me that the combination of the community organizing and campus activism I was doing as well as the exposure I

was getting to all this academic research studies that were being done, and overhearing these conversations just began to make sense. Like yeah we can't just focus on the individual, we have to see how the individual fits into an organization, and how that organization fits into society. That there's this dynamic balance that needs to occur when it comes to how we support unity and change, that it's not only about individual attainment, but transformation within various communities. His social change model has stuck with me over the years as I didn't know at the time that I was going to work within higher education. Again, participants' ways of knowing often involved their professional and educational training and prior work experience with communities of color.

In this first sphere of influence we begin to see how cultural center professionals take on additional labor with respect to case management and advocacy for students of color. The additional labor is an internal struggle and has an impact on individual perceptions of sustained energy and morale for doing the work of racial advocacy throughout the year. The impact on mental health due to racial battle fatigue will be examined further in the discussion section. Finally, the findings show a need and desire for mentorship and nourishment to sustain a healthy relationship with the self.

Second Sphere of Influence: Relationships with Others

The findings relevant to the participants' second sphere of influence are categorized as a series of tools and strategies for change that required leveraging relationships, identifying points of common interest, and fostering interest convergence expansion. The section includes information about participants' roles and relationships to

student activism, the establishment of the Highlander Empowerment Referendum, their interactions with relevant stakeholders, and examples of strategic collaborations.

Student Activism

Many of the participants had prior experience as student activists during their college years. They came from activist families or networks that were engaged and involved in the community issues of their time, such as protests against Prop 209 and Prop 187. Racial tensions and police brutality in the 1990s had also been a cause for concern and community involvement. Many participants recalled the Rodney King beating and subsequent LA riots, when the police officers who committed anti-Black violence were acquitted. Other participants were active student leaders and participated in on-campus activities through student organizations.

One participant, Samuel, discussed “keeping the struggle alive” and the role of cultural center professionals in today’s era: “We provide opportunities for students to serve in the community. . . . We make room and understand that those in public education have an obligation to bring communities with us and connect to those communities.” Students of color in the cultural centers are involved in many ways. They serve as community volunteers, student organizers and planners, and student programmers. Students of color have roles as paid student assistants or student interns; alternatively, they can complete internships for course credit or work as one time volunteers. Participants also stated that students of color involved with the cultural centers are more likely than their peers to initiate changes on campus.

While I conducted participant interviews, student activists were organizing protests on campus for a range of issues including Black Lives Matter, Standing Rock and #NODAPL (no Dakota access pipeline), #NoMuslimBan, #NoBanNoWall, #NotOneMore (anti-deportation campaign), the 2016 Presidential Election, and protests on Inauguration Day. The 2016 Presidential Election and outright discriminatory political discourse had students of color protesting often on campus. Xavier remarked:

The presidential campaign and the election has definitely created an environment where not only can we, but we must be able to speak more directly to the inequities and the oppression emerging on a daily basis: the outright racism, the outright sexism and nationalism, the conservative white nationalism that is surrounding us, and finding voice. We have to be able to be in a place where we can address that directly.

Many of the participants shared experiences with student marches, protests, and conversations in the center where students of color expressed concern and anger.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the spectrum, as Samuel noted, “There was a lot of fire after the election and it started to wear off. Students went back to business as usual.”

Zion provided another perspective: “The emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement was a big contributor to our ability today to be able to operate more openly in responding to issues on campus.” Xavier discussed protections for undocumented students:

The support that communities have for being able to recognize a pathway to citizenship, there is not just a practical benefit for providing inclusive services to

our undocumented community but a moral one. This is what our job is. This is what we ought to be doing. Making sure that all of our students and communities have an opportunity to succeed.

Anti-immigrant sentiment was evident on the campus. Rangol said, “Just this week, I’ve been pulling posters down from some group of people, unidentified of as yet, critical of Napolitano and her support for undocumented students.” When discussing Standing Rock and protests against the Dakota access pipeline, Sagesse noted that “this level of activism is not new for the Native community. The fight for sovereignty and protecting indigenous lands is ongoing.”

UCR is located no more than 20 minutes away from the San Bernardino domestic terrorist attacks of 2015. Students of color and the local Arab and Middle Eastern community and their allies have been outspoken about protecting refugees and challenging Islamophobia, anti-immigrant, and anti-Arab sentiments. Students have participated in community advocacy, as well as conversation groups, and shared their personal experiences with negative campus climates on student panels. Shay expressed: “It’s like a double edged sword. Whenever there’s an international or national attack that happens here, terrorist space, right, again they’re [the media] reserving the word terrorist for Muslims or Middle Eastern people or Arabs.” Discussing the MESC, Kalia explained:

I’m trying to push us away from having to say something every time something happens. Just because we’re Middle Eastern doesn’t mean we have to apologize for the community, it’s not our place. Every single day people are killed in the Middle East. Every single day, whether it’s some government or an army or a

terrorist attack, every single day. We can't stop there and count every single day and respond to those things, but when they affect our community directly, of course we can. And we do.

Kalia described departmental responses to critical racial incidents and said:

Yes we host candlelight vigils, yes we hold talking circles afterwards to make sure that these students feel okay, because we do know that there's increased hate speech or discrimination that comes after these attacks toward this community in particular. As was the case with the San Bernardino attacks. At other times, when it's something personal, when it's necessary, we respond as a proactive force.

Participants were internally conflicted about their role during student protests and incidents of student activism, although they listed a range of actions they could do to support students. Within the confines of their roles, they were permitted to provide verbal support, stand in solidarity, offer logistical or organizational support, translate institutional policies, and provide resources and administrative support for meetings or convenings. Franklyn articulated inner conflicts about staff participation in student protests:

Personally, I can't do anything other than make sure the protest is safe for students. I can stand in solidarity, but it's really hard because there is a professional boundary. As much as I want to walk in with the students, it gets really political if you want to take a position and if you want to be in Costo or not. I tend to be with the other administrators in the background making sure nobody's getting hurt. Making sure there are no physical altercations and students are safe.

First issue at hand, they have freedom of speech, right. I think by pro-staff standing out there with them, whether staff is for the issue or against the issues or have no interest, it goes to show the students that we're here for you no matter what, and that speaks for itself.

Meanwhile, some staff noted that student activists have power that staff do not. Marti said, "I notice how much more power students have than staff. Its mind blowing seeing that staff has nowhere near as much power as students have. To me that's of course a benefit to the students." On this topic Samuel pointed out:

I've been taught the fastest way to get something done is to make sure it's important to the students. If it's seemingly important to a staff member, I may not be answered in a timely manner as opposed to when it's important to students. It's easier when students agree with you.

Jolte shared a similar perspective:

If I want to create an action around something, I bring students together. They are the best advocates. They are our fiercest representatives. We'll have a dialogue about how things are going, issues that affect our community, targeted sexual assaults, reactionary things, but also trying to be proactive on certain things, the upcoming election and campus climate.

Institutional responses to student activism and protests are seemingly positive although varied depending on the issues brought forward. According to the participants, the university administration was supportive of students voicing their opinions, holding rallies, demonstrations, and campus actions. Rangol emphasized that there had not been

incidents where the administration asked students to stop a protest or “shut it down.” The UC police department (UCPD) is notified and asked to remain on standby during student actions. At times there are plainclothes officers present while those in uniform are asked to stay back.

Rangol noted, “I think their main concern is safety for staff, faculty and students so as long as it’s on campus, they’re okay with it, and the administration is fine.” The participants mentioned heightened levels of student and administrative anxiety when it comes to UCPD’s presence. Prior critical incidents at UC Davis and UC Berkeley involved physical harm to students at the hands of UCPD. It seems that UCR decided to limit uniformed police presence as much as possible.

At times the university and administration responded slowly to the concerns of students of color. The Black Student Task Force wanted university administration to respond to anti-Black violence, killings, and police shootings. There was also a Black alum of UCR that was shot and killed, and the university was slow in their response to the incident. Vigils were held on campus and an altar was placed outside of African Student Programs. According to Xavier:

The university administration is still trying to figure out how to position itself as sensitive to the issues and concerns of various identity communities on campus. So when the Black Student Task Force raises an issue, the university responds very quickly to set up meetings, throw some resources behind some things, and try to get some projects started.

The Middle Eastern Student Alliance also advocated for a similar student advisory board. They worked with administration to establish a residential Middle Eastern theme hall and hired a resident assistant from the community. Marti acknowledged:

There are some things that we're able to push forward on an agenda, some things that student communities are able to take action on because of the climate and the desire of the university to show how sensitive it is to the issues of their community.

Meanwhile, the social and political climate for students of color during this time was a cause for concern. Participant comments reflected that a new wave of student activism was tied to a rise of discriminatory rhetoric and white nationalist voices. Asher said:

Given the climate and things that are going on now, it's getting worse and there's a lot of opposition from the Republicans, and you just don't know. You don't know who or if there's going to be a counter within the protests and actions that students are putting together within our communities, an opposition opens the door and conflict is there, so I think security is going to be a big thing, making sure people are not getting out of hand.

Zion confirmed this:

We are in a transitional moment. On the one hand, there are harder lines being drawn around and between different populations and different communities depending on who's looking at the population. We are entering an era where the voices that have been around the edges are now feeling empowered. A couple of

times this year we've had moments where the Young Americans for Liberty or College Republicans have become more confident and assertive in their voice and their claim. So we're starting to see at least beginnings of right-wing voices stepping up to participate in campus activity.

Xavier also mentioned:

We had that moment at the beginning of the year where Milo Yannapoulos was making the rounds but he dropped off because of the other controversial comments that he was making. Suddenly he was out of favor, nobody wanted to bring him anymore. The dust hasn't settled, I think we're still seeing where the pieces fall.

Finally, these cultural center professionals of color expressed concern about students of color who were overworked, overburdened, stressed, and burned out on student protests and campus actions. The impact of social and political aggravation was wearing down the mental health of some students of color. While other students of color displayed signs of apathy, a desire to blend in, or little concern for social issues, the participants acknowledged that mental health issues can impact students' energy and investment in community concerns. At this moment, cultural center professionals bear witness to the impact of social and political instability on college students. Their role is to support, educate and advocate for students of color while also being impacted themselves.

Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum

When I was a staff member with the cultural centers in 2014, we worked closely with the students to increase awareness of the services and resources the centers

provided, and the critical need for increased funding through the Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum (HESR). We lost by an estimated 160 votes (Zahn, 2015). The next year the students tried again and the referendum passed in 2015. The student service fee increased by \$14 per undergraduate student each quarter; 25% of the fee went toward financial aid, and the rest was divided evenly between seven student centers: African Student Programs, Asian Pacific Student Programs, Chicano Student Programs, the LGBT Resource Center, the Middle Eastern Student Center, Native American Student Programs, and the Women's Resource Center (Zahn, 2015). As reported in the *Highlander* one staff member said, "without the referendum we are running on bare bones". Another staff member said, "this amount actually will only generate enough money to get us a baseline operating budget, we'd probably want to ask for double that amount, but we're very conscious that this is a fee students will have to pay" (Zahn, 2015). The referendum passed but must be voted on every five years.

The proposed uses of the HESR funds were (a) increased co-programming with student organizations and support for student-led initiatives, (b) staff to assist with funding, advising and support services, (c) support for conference hosting and conference travel, (d) support for partnerships with the ASUCR Diversity Council and Common Ground Collective, (e) peer mentoring and education programs, (f) more resources, technology, and educational materials, and (g) coverage of increased operation expenses on campus. HESR funds are managed in a committee with voting student members and staff advisors as non-voting members. RSAC submits their recommendations for the use of funds to the Chancellor's office and campus counsel for final approval. When

discussing the HESR funds, Marti, a participant in this study stated, “they’re very specific with things they can and cannot do with that funding because it is student funding. For example, we can’t do any outreach programs because it’s UCR student fees.”

Prior to acquiring HESR funds, the cultural centers were heavily dependent on student service fees and were the first on the table when institutional budget cuts were needed. Each year the cultural centers project their budgetary needs and write proposals to the Student Service Fee Advisory Committee (SSFAC). The process allocates limited permanent funding for staff positions or programs and the rest is temporary funding that can change every year. At the moment the cultural centers are funded by a combination of SSFAC funds and HESR funds. Participants in this study acknowledged that HESR funds, while distributed evenly, continue to produce inequities in staff, student workers, and programming funds within the cultural centers. While some cultural centers had a “skeleton budget” or “shoestring budget” others had “plenty to go around.” For example, NASP used HESR funds to finally hire an additional full-time staff member. This left NASP with a limited amount for programming or hiring student staff. Meanwhile, APSP already had three full-time staff members and plenty of HESR funds for programming.

The HESR funds have given each cultural center an opportunity to reallocate their time and restructure their priorities. According to Asher:

Right now, we are heavily invested in direct service, which we need to do, but the directors don’t necessarily need to be the ones running a peer mentor program or organizing a film series. We’ve got an opportunity over the last year with the HESR funds. We’ve seen additional staff hired as program coordinators. Now the

directors can shift and focus on resource development, and meaningful assessment and evaluation.

While I collected data, the staff was in the midst of making financial decision and proposals that could best serve the needs of students of color and the cultural centers.

Relationships with Stakeholders

Cultural center professionals in this study must build relationships with campus stakeholders on multiple levels. This section describes the participant's collective sentiments on their relationships and interactions with campus staff, faculty, and alumni. I previously discussed their relationships with students and student activists.

Staff Interactions. Overall the participants expressed that they have good working relationships and personal connections with their colleagues in the cultural centers. The participants for the most part work in an environment of collegiality, camaraderie, programmatic collaborations, as well as shared resources, ideas, and expertise. Staff in the cultural centers experienced a good microclimate of mutual appreciation and affirmation. Participants often used phrases like “you know these people have your back” and “we are on the same page,” particularly when they were discussing their peers and counterparts within the cultural centers.

Jiani stated, “everyone is so supportive, they’ll send their materials, agendas, programs, whatever you need. I feel comfortable asking them to send me stuff, and it’s never a problem, and vice versa.” Furthermore, Jiani noted:

Within the cultural centers everyone is supportive. If we have a program everyone will be there. If our students have a rally they’ll be in the background showing

their face. Not participating in the rally or protest, but in solidarity with our students. It kind of validates what you do.

The staff in the cultural centers show up for each other in a myriad of ways, they also gather quickly when critical issues arise. Jolte confirmed this dynamic and said:

We bring together our colleagues to have conversations about campus climate issues that are affecting our students. We walk a fine line with action oriented things, but that doesn't mean we can't bring them up. I'm not afraid to bring up conversations like that because I think they are important.

Meanwhile, Franklyn enjoyed "working with like-minded people. . . . We push the envelope to the extent possible." Furthermore, "we build coalitions through programming, shared efforts, and intersectional identities." The collegiality, partnerships, and strategic relationships are evident. Although, Franklyn said, "In terms of other departments and administration, it's really easy for us to reach out to other ethnic and gender programs, but outside of that there is very little interaction."

Some participants expressed frustrations with staff members who were resistant to changes and apathetic individuals in other departments. Overall, the participants' perceived a positive microclimate within the cultural centers. Partnerships with staff in other departments occur on the basis of critical needs, problem solving, and case management. In an upcoming section, I discuss the ways in which staff are able to collaborate productively with other campus departments.

Faculty interactions. Participants expressed a wide range of individual relationships and partnerships with faculty; the nature of these relationships ranged from

strong advocacy and receiving thank you notes, messages, and emails, to no engagement or understanding of what working with the cultural center could mean for their curriculum, to faculty criticism from those who expected the staff to do more for students and the campus. Rikka admitted:

I think we are struggling with the role of faculty on campus. When they need something from us they are always coming to us, but when we need something from them it's really hard for us to get that support or just any response. They don't know how our office can help. There is a breakdown in communication with faculty.

Participants value working with faculty members, and reciprocity is required to make the partnership successful. Faculty may find that working with cultural center staff can complement or enhance the educational curriculum. Franklyn expressed:

Some faculty view our office as if they just put on programs . . . there's no educational benefit to working with our center . . . how is this going to help my students with what they need to accomplish according to my syllabus? We reach out every year when we're beginning our planning process. If there are speakers you'd like to bring that complement what you're doing in your courses, let us know and we can work together.

The latest increase in resources through student referendum fees has allowed staff in the cultural centers to reach out to the faculty proactively.

Participants also recognize the value of research partnerships between students and the cultural centers. Marti pointed out:

I honestly want to see our students more involved with research and faculty, we don't do enough with our faculty. I'm kind of slowly working to bridge the gap and bring faculty on board to do more collaborative programming and just have them come to our center.

On the topic of research collaborations, Jolte suggested:

We have to get better across the board about getting plugged into what the university is doing in academics, over the next 3 to 5 years, our priority needs to be connecting with the academic side. To be aware of who our partners are and who is doing related work, which means that we have to reevaluate the amount of effort, energy and resources we put into cultural and educational programming.

Being mindful of trade-offs with individual time, energy, and shifts in priorities could lead to potential gains for the students, staff, and faculty.

Challenges with faculty have involved a lack of consultation and a disregard for the academic programs that are hosted by the cultural centers. For example, a faculty member in the sciences recently applied for recognition from the White House Hispanic Initiative for Higher Education. As a result, UCR was the recipient of an honorable mention for best practices for Chicana/Latina students in STEM fields. While an article covering the honor mentioned that students were supported on campus it made no mention of Chicano Student Programs or its academic support services. CSP coordinates support programs for students in STEM careers and those seeking jobs in education.

According to Fury, "there was no mention of the work we have done to create outreach

programs to stimulate STEM majors, or that we have first year programs that support students going into their second year, nothing, nothing about CSP. Nothing. Nothing.”

Furthermore, faculty applying for Hispanic Serving Institution grants and extramural funding opportunities do not communicate with Chicano Student Programs. Jolte agreed that faculty should, “touch base with CSP and see how we can be a part of that or how you can utilize our services to strengthen your proposal.” Thoughtful, purposeful, and mutually beneficial partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs can create environments to boost student success, but only if there are greater degrees of communication and knowledge about each other’s work.

Alumni interactions. The participants warmly recalled past and present interactions with alumni. They described a “culture of giving back” wherein alumni serve as speakers on various panels, trainings, and workshops. Alumni often share their experiences with current students and offered shadowing opportunities or internships. Samuel said “they’ve been served and want to give back, perhaps not financially, but with their support, advice, guidance and mentorship.” One idea that was shared was developing an alumni directory or online roster of alumni who are available and willing to give back in various ways.

The participants enjoyed hearing from alumni who shared updates on their life and how much they appreciated their time at the cultural centers. Rikka commented:

Hearing back from them, having random emails and messages ... having affirmation from past students that what we do even matters just a little bit in their

adult life, and thinking about how much influence I have makes me think I'm doing something good.

In order to foster longstanding relationships with alumni the participants wanted training on how to how to create an alumni and donor base for the cultural centers, as well as an alumni association connected directly to the cultural center. Asher said the focus is on finding ways to “continue to wrap them up and keep them in the family.”

Strategic Collaborations

The participants discussed a series of strategic collaborations. The sections that follow illustrate key partnerships with undergraduate and graduate students, staff, faculty, department collaborations, and systemwide and intersegmental convenings. I discuss examples for each of the areas, and participants offer possibilities and suggestions for future collaborations.

Undergraduate students. The cultural centers were able to enhance and improve strategic collaborations with additional support from the increased student services fee via HESR funds. A partnership with the Associated Students of UCR Diversity Council was established as a way to finance student-run programs. Each of the cultural centers has a representative on the diversity council in student government, which collectively decides what programs are funded in partnership throughout the year. One example of a program that received funding was the “Beyond R’Margins” conference, intended to dispel myths and stereotypes about communities of color, foster solidarity, and advocate for social justice.

The HESR funds also established the Referendum Student Advisory Council (RSAC) as a way to increase financial transparency with undergraduate students. The students are involved at every step and provide their feedback and input on the desired use of funds, as Kalia described:

The director is involved but has no voting rights, and each center has a representative that does have voting rights and they're a student so we assume they're familiar with the work of each department. The Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs is on that board. They're there for our guidance, but have no voting rights, no jurisdiction over anything. They support with the policy and procedures, and answer questions for us in terms of benefits, does this fall within the guidelines, etc.

Both of these collaborations were possible because of the additional funds from the Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum.

Graduate students. Participants mentioned limitations to the HESR funds because only undergraduate students pay the additional service fee. Any funds for graduate support services must come from other resources or collaborations with the colleges and the graduate division. When asked about working with graduate students, Kalia remarked:

When we connect with graduate students, historically it has been how can you help us? Be a mentor to others, etc. . . . Then when they connect with us it's, "How can you help us find research participants?" and we want to move beyond those partnerships to be service oriented and meet the needs of graduate students.

A few participants shared successful programming efforts to get more students of color involved in research and networking opportunities. I was a participant and panelist in many of these events throughout the year. The cultural centers serve as a clearinghouse and host graduate socials throughout the year that connect graduate students of color with faculty of color in various disciplines. They also host roundtables and research symposiums where graduate students can share their work on campus. Graduate students of color also serve as mentors to undergraduate students of color and share their experiences and pathways into graduate school.

Faculty and staff coalitions or advisory committees. Currently there is no formal faculty or staff racial/ethnic affinity group at UCR. I started working at UCR in 2010 and have not seen any formal groups established, although based on my experience and observations individuals seem to find each other through in-person interactions and networks. Furthermore, in my personal and professional experience, the cultural centers often serve as a clearinghouse for new faculty and staff of color to make connections and facilitate introductions with other faculty and staff of color. The cultural center professionals have the network and capacity to convene an informal faculty and staff advisory committee or coalition. Allies and individuals seem to come together on an as-needed basis to problem solve specific issues or incidents.

Throughout the year, I was present for various faculty and staff panels with respect to diversity and campus climate. When issues arise on campus, faculty and staff collaborate to host teach-ins and educational panels on campus. While the HESR funds cannot support events or programs for staff and faculty, there is a strong desire to do

more with the limited infrastructure available to each of these groups. Outreach, retention, and recruitment could be enhanced with further financial support from the colleges or university.

Departmental collaborations. This year the cultural centers established “unity hour” and hosted rotating socials throughout the quarter for newcomers and guests to visit their spaces. Franklyn said that the “best way to build coalitions is through programming and shared efforts and intersectional identities.” According to Sagesse, this allows the departments to “build alliances with other community members . . . and a strong network of community and campus departments.” For example, Chicano Student Programs and African Student Programs are celebrating 45 years of history and presence at UC Riverside. Jolte shared an example of an intersectional collaboration:

One program that I am especially excited to do is on issues that are affecting our community, so it’s gonna reflect the #BlackLivesMatter and #NotOneMore movement which talks about deportation and raids. We are gonna combine those two to have a talk with all of our communities to discuss healing and having common ground amongst our communities. The 45 years and how it was birthed out of struggle and how we managed to be successful and be strong and in unity with each other. Not only about the history of our centers but we supported the opening of each other’s spaces and have supported each other along the way. This is just putting that into light in a physical program, the work that we do all the time with our colleagues.

Participants also discussed strategic collaborations with the Academic Resource Center and Career Center. The staff is concerned with graduate preparation programs offered by those departments that do not take into account knowledge gaps for first-generation college students and students of color. GRE prep courses are offered at additional fees and students were unable to pay for the course. Chicano Student Programs got involved and offered fee waivers for students interested in taking the courses. Fury asserted:

We are working with students that do not have the capacity to pay for these courses and have no type of common language for these programs. . . . We are slowly trying to say this is what we [the students] need from you, and they're not getting it through the services that you provide so partner with us so we can bridge that gap.

These departmental collaborations build bridges and close system gaps that create barriers to success for marginalized students of color.

Systemwide convening. During participant interviews, Rangol shared that the American Indian Counselors and Recruiters Association (AICRA) started at the University of California in 1976 and continues to coordinate conference calls and in-person meetings with some financial support from the UC Office of the President. I am also aware of systemwide convening of directors and staff of Women's centers and LGBT resource centers, as well as the UC President's advisory group on LGBT students. While I served as the UC Student Regent, UCOP convened meetings for outreach recruiters and counselors, mental health and basic needs providers, chief diversity

officers, and others. I was personally invited to a systemwide convening about campus protest and campus climate. The UC Vice Chancellor's for student affairs, chief diversity officers, the UC police department, and representatives from student conduct and student life were invited to attend. Meanwhile, no cultural center representatives were included at this UC systemwide convening. In personal conversations, the cultural center professionals made reference to these types of meetings and wondered why they were not convened or supported by the systemwide office. At anytime UCOP could actively choose to foster and build relationships with cultural center professionals who work with marginalized student of color.

Intersegmental convening. Rangol also discussed the InterTribal Educational Collaborative which meets in the Southern California region and is part of AICRA. This group started with the ten UC campuses and expanded to 33 campuses including the California State University System and some community colleges. Members of the group must be able to finance their own travel arrangements and receive minimal funding or support from their individual campuses. The practitioners use this convening as way to network, crowd source ideas, and discuss outreach, recruitment, and retention strategies across various educational systems. Native American Student Programs hosted one of these meetings and would like to see it expand into a fully funded conference on best practices in the field.

In summary, the second sphere of influence for cultural center professionals involves a range of relationships with others as key stakeholders, partners in social change on campus, and joint advocacy efforts. Relationships with student activists, staff,

faculty, and alumni are often a result of established points of interest convergence and mutual benefit. When points of convergence were not effectively articulated or established, as was the case with some faculty members, the opportunities for joint advocacy and resulting campus changes were limited. At the same time, strategic collaborations with students have allowed cultural center professionals to leverage student momentum and access more resources, as is the case with the HESR funds. Additionally, staff collaborations across horizontal spheres of influence have allowed for some access to systemwide and intersegmental convenings. Cultural center professionals can then access points of information and discourse that is vital to their change making efforts. A thorough analysis of each sphere of influence is discussed in Chapter 6.

Third Sphere of Influence: Relationship with Institution

In the participants' third sphere of influence, which emphasizes their relationships with the institution, I uncovered institutional challenges and disinvestment in five key areas: institutional bureaucracy; lack of growth opportunities; limited time and resources; professional development and training; and a critical need for research, assessment, and evaluation skills. Cultural center professionals expressed their frustrations in this third sphere of relationships with the institution. The institutional hierarchy and their lack of positional authority restricted their ability to influence major changes in policy and restricted their ability to advocate for professional development and training. Despite these challenges, the cultural center professionals in this study were acutely aware of their needs and what was necessary to bolster their ability to enhance equitable services for students of color.

Institutional Bureaucracy

Participants expressed that there were challenges to their ability to navigate a constantly changing bureaucracy. Interpreting policy changes and staying within compliance led to procedural delays, which added extensively to their workload. They expressed going through multiple versions of policies and logistics for events and dealing with lots of red tape for each event. Asher described their day-to-day experience and sense of how administration views the work:

I don't think administration knows the volume of the workload that we have. They see the end result, and they realize "oh that came out pretty okay, the event was successful", but I don't think they see what goes into that event being so successful. I don't think they understand how many purchase orders the administrative staff had to process to make this event successful or how many orders or how many people they had to talk to, or how much paperwork they had to push out. Just for one event. I don't think they understand that, but I think they are happy with the results.

When policies and procedures change, staff is reprimanded for mistakes that come out of not knowing the correct procedures. The push-and-pull creates a tense environment and results in low staff morale. Marti said, "Everyone works extremely hard. Many are spread thin and procedures are constantly changing. If you screwed up and didn't follow this policy . . . then you're in trouble." Rikka described the push back and questioning as "intimidating" and said, "It almost makes you want to do the bare minimum . . . just stick with the cut and dry normal programming. You can't think outside the box because it will

get pushed back or questioned.” In one case, the practitioner’s creativity was stifled and a sense of punishment kept them from pushing further. Finally, participants described excessive formality and high standards of professionalism with administrative communications. Procedures for contacting high-level administrators were in constant flux, and staff felt disempowered when unintentional mistakes were made.

Lack of Growth Opportunities

Participants perceived a lack of lateral growth opportunities and limited upward mobility within the institution. Jolte stated that “there are very limited opportunities to grow professionally or even positions available. There are no lateral growth opportunities”. For program coordinators, becoming a director or assistant director did not seem possible. Program coordinators felt as if they often served as assistant directors, but did not have the title or the pay, while their counterparts at other UC campuses did. Directors also expressed a limited ability to see themselves working elsewhere or moving up in administration. Fury explained:

I find myself questioning the intentions of the university in keeping us where we are at. Stuck, basically, and having us trying to fend for the pennies they throw at cultural center staff, as again another reminder of the value that we have in their eyes.

Participants felt they managed a heavy workload and got paid very little. An investigation into systemwide opportunities and pay scales is warranted in order to determine whether these equity concerns warrant corrective action.

Limited Time and Resources

Across participant narratives there is a growth mentality and a recognizable sense of what good work looks like. What participants collectively lack is an investment from the institution in providing resources and time to document best practices. Participants in this study wanted to share best practices with their student affairs colleagues, and showcase what they have learned and what works on the campus. Fury shared:

I see us branching out. The work that we do is so valuable. We should be presenting in national spaces. Where colleagues that may just be starting out in what we have done for forty years will need the support.

Participants also recognized that they already engaged in sharing best practices. Kalia stated, "I am presenting at regional and national conferences, being asked to speak at different colleges about the work that we are doing, being asked to consult with different universities." The cultural centers at UCR are recognized as a site for best practices by their peers in student affairs and student services. Samuel expressed this point clearly:

We have a lot of people coming to UCR and visiting the various cultural centers, trying to get some kind of blueprint or understanding of what we do and why we are successful. Why don't we have a conference to bring others to campus and showcase what we do and give them the best practices that we are aware of and work for us? How we work with our police department, how we engage administration, how we engage our students and build leadership programs. It's flattering to know that people come here to see what we do and take it back, but

we never get any credit for it or if credit is being given it doesn't trickle down our way.

The cultural centers already serve as an organizational role model and site for best practices. The staff wants to present nationally and partake in conversations to provide best practices to other institutions. Jolte commented, "We've been called on to give support and show how our work can be replicated in other spaces. We have a great thing and we want to share it, but we want to have the capacity to share it." The centers and professionals need release time and resources for data-driven exploration and documentation into what works and what can be systematically shared with other colleagues. An institutional investment can result in well documented best practice models for the educational system and the profession.

Professional Development and Training

The findings suggest that a cultural shift is necessary when it comes to professional development and training for staff in the cultural centers. Staff members need dedicated time to receive training and contribute to an exchange of ideas and best practices. The findings suggest varying levels of professional support, training, and development. Agreements with the unions may account for differences between the availability of administrative staff training and what is available for program coordinators and directors. Further exploration is needed to account for policy differences with respect to represented (administrative assistants) vs. non-represented staff (program coordinators and directors).

On the one hand, administrative assistants receive practical systems training provided by the institution including purchasing, epay, ebuy, travel, payroll, and training on the use of financial accounting units and budget systems. These trainings are further supported by user group meetings to discuss trends and troubleshoot issues with the online systems. Many participants also mentioned the required institutional or systemwide trainings such as sexual harassment and cyber security. Participants shared that some developmental trainings were provided by the institution such as supervisory training, working with minors, and the multicultural competence certificate program.

On the other hand, program coordinators and directors said they received little to no training when they started their positions. Comments from participants included “I hit the ground running,” and “no training whatsoever, just full immersion,” and, finally, “I was given a folder for a program and told you’re in charge: the program is next week.” Participants expressed having to write proposals in order to justify their attendance and overnight travel to other local or national professional development opportunities. Jolte shared their perspective:

I did not receive any professional training unless it was mandatory by our division. I did not request professional development opportunities until I started grad school and became aware of professional development opportunities and professional organizations. I became my own advocate for professional development.

Zion also expressed some thoughts on professional development:

I was reviewing some of the things I think we do better now ... you couldn't travel before. We didn't have any belief that professional development conferences, overnight stays, were things that we could pursue. For me, as director, it was left over because when we went through the budget cuts the first things to go were staff, professional development, and staff travel. I've come to recognize that in order for our staff to do the job, they have to be connected to their colleagues in order to access trainings and workshops that aren't always here locally.

Many participants also discussed a desire to have institutional memberships or partnerships with organizations such as the National Association of Student Personal Administrators (NASPA), the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE), the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE), the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE), the Arab American Institute, the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE), and the California Council of Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE). Marti remarked:

I would like to be a part of professional organizations and have the institution pay for those memberships. I would like the university to give us the support we need to present. We need access to like-minded colleagues so we can share best practices.

Furthermore, Jolte emphasized the importance of having “an opportunity to leverage networks, both local and national networks, and strengthen our ability to be a resource on campus.”

Participants had clear ideas about what sort of trainings they needed and wanted to acquire. They wanted assistance in determining how to improve and measure progress and with research methods, data analysis, statistical analysis, assessment and evaluation of programs, and strategic planning. They also wanted exposure to mechanisms that follow trends in higher education as well as enrollment trends and best practices.

Participants also expressed a need for presentations on critical issues for target populations such as trends in mental health and mental illness, how to legally support students, knowing one’s civil rights, and challenges to free speech on campus. The need for fundraising and grant writing skills was also mentioned. A handful of participants wanted training on culturally relevant pedagogical tools and teaching methods. In many ways staff are educators, not only workshop presenters or information brokers. They are specialists who need customized training and access to information provided either by the institution or through financially established avenues of staff development.

Research, Assessment, and Evaluation

All of the participants overwhelmingly named research, assessment, and evaluation as a desperately needed institutional investment in professional training and development. Conversations were centered on a desire to go beyond satisfaction surveys and likert scales. Simple evaluations are no longer enough, and staff wanted to know if they are asking the right questions. Furthermore, the participants clearly stated an

awareness of the importance of data-driven efforts. The following excerpt from Zion articulates all of the participants' concerns:

Our students are doing exactly what they need to do, sharing the impact that the world has on them, and expressing the challenges they experience on a daily level. What we are doing inconsistently is, understanding and evaluating, and assessing that, and then developing responses to it that are guided by that assessment. . . . We need to find the time to build in the evaluation, the assessment and do some strategic planning that will guide how they [the cultural centers] grow into the future. Where I think that we fall short is providing the direction on doing that. How do we assess that need? None of us are researchers. None of us are actively involved with doing that sort of thing. We got faculty and researchers on campus but we don't really take advantage of them in consistent ways. So the opportunity is there, but we don't always know how to take advantage of that opportunity.

Xavier also commented:

I think that we are starting at the very local level and the very immediate level . . . we believe we are doing good work but we can't quantify it. We have a lot of anecdotal support but we can't draw the direct link between the articles that say UCR has the highest graduation rate of African Americans, where can we show that we attributed that to through African Student Programs or as a collective of ethnic and gender programs? Can we demonstrate that was because of us? Right now we can't because we're not set up that way. We don't do regular evaluation

and assessment. We don't keep the data and the information that we need, and then we don't study the things we do collect to understand what direction we're in.

Participants shared their frustrations with attempts to acquire and designate responsibility for training on research, assessment, and evaluation. Marti said, "We are not given the tools to do that [program assessment] successfully then we are chastised for it later."

Franklyn also shared:

Trying to figure out how to do that [program assessment], I feel I don't know if that's the role of the department head. . . . We've always talked about getting a graduate student to come in and do assessments for us, so I question myself and whether that is something that I'm supposed to be able to do [as director], or is that something I'm supposed to find someone to do for us? How do we show administration that what we do influences students and show why we are important on this campus?

Only Xavier recognized data-driven efforts as part of their portfolio:

It was made clear; the expectation was to create a vision, a common sense of mission and strategic plan for the cultural center. As far as training available, in my experience, this university doesn't make training and guidance particularly easy to find or easily available. But for those that know what they are looking for, there are avenues to get it.

Comprehensive and thoughtful institutional investments in professional development can provide cultural center staff with the skills in research, assessment, and

program evaluation that are desperately needed. Cultural center staff could acquire a new level of knowledge and skills if given clearly articulated responsibilities as well as dedicated resources and time. Participants are already conscious of the need for a way to quantify and track successful impacts on student development and student services.

Perspectives on Campus Racial Climate

This section discusses the participants' perceptions of the campus racial climate and their perceptions of their role within the campus diversity discourse. The next sections outline three salient themes in the participants' perspectives of the campus climate: critical incidents, deligitimization of cultural centers, and exclusion from the campus diversity discourse. I conducted interviews and collected data in the midst of major institutional changes. Undergraduate student enrollment increased. Many new faculty and administrators were hired. Several unions were renegotiating their bargaining agreements. These changes could account for comments about "administrative bloat" and "anti-union sentiment." Some staff welcomed the university's growth while others perceived their colleagues as resistant to institutional changes.

In general, participants believed that administrative leadership was less accessible to staff than in prior years, and they were highly concerned about staff retention and attrition. They believed the administration intentionally kept cultural center staff out of critical conversations affecting students, staff, and faculty of color on the campus. Marti commented: "At times they pretend to listen but that is different from actual results." The participants also expressed sentiments of "push back," "questioning," and "intimidation" at the hands of administration.

Others perceived good intentions but a lack of understanding and selective inclusion on critical issues. Even in the midst of institutional change and uncertainty, Katya noted:

I do recognize that all across campus, most people do take pride in the work that they do ... from the groundskeepers, to the student affairs professionals, to the admin and staff allies across the campus, everybody is really proud to be a part of the UC system, and to be a part of you know helping students grow and develop.

Cultural center professionals identified microclimates of acceptance and inclusion. When they talk to colleagues in other departments, they hear that some environments are not as accepting of people of color and have been characterized as microaggressive. Marti described what they heard about other departments:

People in other places are dying cause it's not diverse. It's not accepting. It's in the sciences, it's very structured. There's no opportunity for growth. No opportunity for inclusiveness. If there's one person of color, that's it and they are not treated very well.

In a similar fashion, Zion shares his perspective about arriving on campus:

I had come into the work not to be an administrator, not to be an academic, but to find a new arena for being an activist and advocate for the communities that I had come from. One of the first questions asked of me was whether or not I understood who I was working for. I thought I did, because I said I'm serving our students. I was corrected. I was told I was working for the university. It was in that moment that I had a better understanding this is a part of the institution and

that my function within it is to uphold and pursue the priorities of the division and of the university. There was a shock, maybe not a shock, but a change in terms of my understanding of the work I was doing.

Critical Incidents

Participants on several occasions had to advocate and intervene on behalf of students when incidents of racial profiling, harassment, bias, faculty mistreatment, and outright hate occurred. Participants filed complaints, arranged meetings, and attempted resolutions between affected parties. Microaggressions and bias incidents occurred at the hands of students, staff, and faculty. Cultural insensitivities toward students of color or faulty assumptions and stereotypes were revealed in classroom and institutional settings.

Participants gave detailed accounts of several incidents that happened during the year. Student volunteers at UCR must be registered with the campus; a background check or LiveScan is conducted before they can volunteer for events. A student of Arab descent was questioned about their residency status and place of origin when they went to UCPD for the required LiveScan. When asked about the campus racial climate and any critical racial incidents on campus Kalia stated, “UCPD, one of my students went there for a LiveScan and she was harassed by an officer who didn’t know you could be a U.S. citizen without being born in this country.”

In another campus incident, a security guard racially profiled a Black man in the library. The student was asked for an identification card and asked whether he belonged on campus. Marti shared that “a student got the librarian, the librarian called security, security approaches him like ‘what’s the problem? Are we going to need to call the

police’ and it just spiraled out of control.” Additional critical racial incidents include a classroom experience in which a faculty member presumed Native students had money from Indian gaming and local tribes. In other instances, students who were perceived as part of the Arab community were called “ISIS” on campus after the San Bernardino attacks.

Finally, two women graduate students of color and a woman faculty member of color had their offices looted and private property destroyed in an anti-Muslim hate crime in the Ethnic Studies department (Molina, 2016). Staff members also intervened in cases involving UCPD or Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers on campus. At times, these officers were present for career fairs and students feared for their undocumented friends and family members.

Kalia shared a perspective about working with campus officials:

A lot of times it’s about identifying the problem first or the identifying the incident. I like to tackle things straight on, I’ll reach out the department director or chair of whoever is in charge to see what’s going on with the situation or whatever needs to be done. Initiate a meeting, get coffee, have a conversation in person, so they get to know the challenges of the community on campus and what they’re facing.

At other times, the participants expressed frustration when campus departments called on them to “fix” students of color and “control” a situation. The cultural center professionals perceived that the institution and their colleagues held them responsible for the actions of

all students of color. They believed that everyone was responsible for students of color, and every staff member must have critical competencies to intervene in racial incidents.

Delegitimization of Cultural Centers

Delegitimization of the cultural centers and cultural center professionals' knowledge and expertise often appeared as an individual or institutional discursive rationale for exclusion that was social constructed, seemingly common sense, and justified the act of exclusion. For example, participants reported responses from University officials like: "we just don't have enough space for everyone, and, besides, the institution can't afford to send representatives from every single group" or "we are only inviting the chief diversity officers. They are responsible for taking this information back to their campuses." As a UC Regent, I personally heard these comments from UCOP staff who organized a systemwide convening for diversity initiatives and a systemwide convening for student protests and campus climate. Each time I asked if cultural center professionals were invited to the meetings, I was referred to the chief diversity officer or told the campuses were responsible for choosing their own teams.

Additionally, participants expressed a lack of positive reinforcement or affirmation from the administration. They wanted recognition for their work and their contributions to campus diversity efforts beyond programming and event coordination. Rangol asserted, "Our offices are not a priority, we have to constantly justify why we exist. We are always trying to share why we are so important to the larger campus culture." Katya affirmed, "They show us the importance or the value of our office. Again going back to something as simple as when they updated the UCR webpage, and there

was no way to get to our offices.” Furthermore, Asher shared some troublesome remarks given by other staff members:

Why are they [the institution] spending money to promote programs like Chicano Student Programs, African Student Programs, Native Student Programs etc... why are they separating these groups out, and why are my tax dollars going to that, when this is a teaching/research institution? But, working in that environment I know it is very different. We are an integral part and the centers are an integral part in building better students and building better citizens.

Franklyn added:

When we hear about “diversity” on campus and all the publications, “oh look how diverse our students are,” but there’s no mention of the resources these diverse students can access aside from “hey, we’re very diverse” and here’s our financial aid office and here’s you know just basics’ and not focusing on maybe there’s a reason why we’re one of the most diverse campuses in the country. It’s because of us and our services.

Jolte further shared their perspective:

We are celebrating 45 years and we practically have to beg UCR Today to do a story on us. We have to hit them up because they have no idea we are turning 45! That’s what I’m talking about, inserting ourselves into things that we should celebrate. These are things the university should know. We are one of the oldest cultural centers in the UC system and in student affairs. We have to do the

reminder. We have to do our own celebratory party. I think that just shows how unappreciated we are.

Samuel also mentioned:

We are not getting recognition from administrators. It would help every now and then for them to say that the success of our African American students' graduation rates, you know maybe ASP has something to do with that, versus just taking credit for it and not saying "hey, there's this office that a lot of students are involved with and they may be a big part of why there's a high graduation rate on this campus."

Fury said the cultural centers received their affirmation from the community:

The community has a tremendous amount of leverage when it comes to UC Riverside. They don't just hold the university accountable, but they inspire us and remind us of the work that we do and they validate our work in many ways when we are not receiving that from the institution. When we see the deficit-oriented conversations, meetings, frameworks and they just keep us afloat in many ways.

Collectively, these narratives express persistent delegitimization efforts that push cultural center professionals to operate in silos. To counter these forces of marginalization, participants in this study foster bottom-up strategies for change and work across horizontal spheres of support (Kezar & Lester, 2011), as is the case with getting validation from community members as opposed to the university administration. Despite these challenges the participants continue to push for recognition from the campus and refuse to have their stories and successes go unrecognized.

Exclusion from Campus Diversity Discourse

Participants saw a lack of mindfulness with regard to changes in technology and communications as well as web presence, as a way for the influence of cultural centers on campus diversity efforts to go unrecognized, excluded, and removed. The cultural centers are not easily accessible from the university home page unless you type in the full name of the center. Furthermore, the cultural centers are labeled as “Ethnic and Gender Programs,” which is an outdated student services framework.

One participant talked about the impact of using students of color on brochures and web pages without mentioning the cultural centers. Shay commented, “That tells me that we are not valued, but yet we are on a diversity brochure, and not weaved into the larger story of this campus.” Meanwhile Kalia expressed thoughts on changing the image of students at UCR:

The MESC has definitely made huge strides in defining diversity at UCR. Since when would you see a girl with a hijab on the website? Or the Middle Eastern category on the UC application? Or Halal options on campus? A lot of that is because of the work that we’ve done. Yet the cultural centers have to say “hey, you talk about diversity but don’t forget about students with disabilities.” I think these centers have helped build institutional capacity for diversity.

Overall, the participants expressed frustration over their exclusion in campus-based conversations on diversity. Fury remarked:

I feel we should be a part of those conversations about diversity on our campus, yet we are not included. I’m talking about the administrative level. The word

champion for diversity on our campus, but it's limited to the voices who are not doing that work.

Jolte added, "The administration perceives my work as a diversity marker and marketing tool. But beyond that it has served its purpose is what I see." Shay also stated:

A lot of time our offices are being talked about and we are not there. Things happen in our community and we are not brought to the table. "They're the expert in this let's bring them up, rather than we decided this, check it out." Being involved in decision making would be huge. I think that would make staff feel appreciated. You're doing more than just the cultural center, you're the voice for the community. That would help.

Finally, Samuel shared some insight on his perspective of campus administration:

Whether we are valued depends on who is at the helm as Chancellor. I've been here long enough to see that my work has been valued by one particular Chancellor, sort of neutral by others, from we just don't know what they do over there, to wow those folks are doing a fantastic job. Knowing that it's going to ebb and flow, I can't take it personally, I just need to keep pushing through to get to what needs to get done in the trenches.

Cultural center professionals in this study are actively shaping and framing how the concept of diversity is talked about and perceived on campus. Intentional efforts could be made to have a full conversation about how to direct the diversity discourse and foster community agreement over principles of equity and inclusion on the campus. The next section covers participants' recommendations for improving the campus climate.

Participant Recommendations

Participants in this study offered suggestions for improving campus climate, support programs and culturally relevant support services. Cultural competency training, faculty diversity, and potential partnerships with the Office of Diversity and Equity were discussed. Participants emphasized the need for more intersectional programs that can account for sexual and gender diversity, as well as variances based on race/ethnicity, religion and spiritual practice. A few participants also mentioned programmatic needs to support graduate readiness and post-graduation preparation. Many of the students of color on campus are first-generation college students and need transitional support services as they advance on their educational trajectories.

The participants also wanted to see more parent and guardian involvement with the university like the existing Spanish language orientation, Black family day, Native community reunions, and programs where students of Arab descent brought their family members to share stories from home. Fury shared an example from working on a parent program:

It is very enraging to see how put down our community is especially with political times right now, and because we live in a cultural that believes that those that have more power, or were made to believe that those that have more agency than you are right. If the institution says I can only contribute this much, and that is the end of my contribution, then I am in fact a hindrance because I did not go to college. You [parent] believe that. We have to decolonize in many ways that message.

The notion of involving elders, ancestral storytelling, and community members was strong. Examples of parent programs were limited due to financial restrictions and time limitations.

Staff and faculty diversity was also a concern for the participants. Staff retention and attrition was often discussed as a critical need or concern. They were concerned about quality staff members leaving for other jobs. Finally, the following section summarizes participant recommendations for culturally relevant student services, cultural competency trainings, and desired partnerships with the campus Chief Diversity Officer.

Culturally Relevant Student Services

Cultural center professionals are engaged in outreach and retention programs. They emphasized the need to have background knowledge and information about where students come from; for example, they need information about relevant school districts, any under-resourced schools, or schools with limited academic advising and college preparation services. The relevant background information would allow them to plan their academic support services and retention programs. They also recommended hiring specialized counselors with culturally relevant recruitment strategies for Black and Native students.

Participants identified a critical need for culturally sensitive case management with respect to mental health, sexual and gender diversity, and sexual assault in a racialized context. Students of color who were mistreated or misunderstood in other departments refused to get critical support services unless they spoke with someone who understood their cultural needs. Thus, the case management and referral workload of

cultural center professionals increased. Xavier shared the following perspective on working with case managers:

For example, does this approach really represent a racialized trauma-informed point of view? When I'm sitting on some of the work that we do on sexual violence and sexual harassment and the conversation starts to shift around "well the respondent, he's a student too, and so let's do what we can give him the benefit of the doubt, and we just have to inform the victim and he has his rights as well." Does that reflect a trauma-informed point of view? Are we, as an institution, being respectful of survivor's rights? And that's more than just having received a bad grade; it is an assault on your soul.

Zion said,

I do some case management. In the doing of that, I get to ask those questions to the folks that are resolving those issues and I know the policy says this or the position says that but how does that play into the risk we're running of losing this student. How does that reflect on our commitment to supporting a diverse campus? Sometimes we lose the student. Sometimes we find the flexibility and find a creative way to keep people.

Cultural sensitivity and competency is everyone's responsibility. The participants in this study emphasized that accountability for a positive campus racial climate belonged to everyone. The following section emphasizes the need for cultural competency training for students, staff, faculty, and administration.

Cultural Competency Training

The participants made a series of clear statements about the importance of cultural competency training based on the range of racialized critical incidents and case management issues described in the sections above. Zion pointed out,

Right now you would think that as a campus for a long time that has been bragging about its cultural diversity, that we would be a lot farther along in terms of how we take advantage of that into the staff training and faculty training, into leadership development, but we are still barely scratching the surface.

Xavier also shared,

I translate a lot of what the value and impact of our work is to student affairs. Why it's important to account for the diversity of our campus to include cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity as part of staff training, and student leadership development, so the work doesn't remain isolated within the ethnic and gender programs but integrated within all of the work that departments are doing.

Fury commented:

The campus has a resistance to making things mandatory . . . at this point the decision has been no, we can't make it mandatory, but we can make it available. I think where a lot of hostility on our campus is from is within the classroom experience, and with faculty that do not have the cultural competency to work with our diverse population. Our students are triggered, triggered, triggered in class, whether it's the content or whether its microaggressions from faculty to students.

Kalia also shared their perspective:

The current political climate where students are continuing to raise the issue that we're being mistreated or misunderstood, that we are made to be fearful on our campus, continues to be a challenge that we haven't quite figured out. I've sat in conversations and meetings with administrators and students where the plea is make our faculty understand us better, make them stop calling us names or stereotyping us. But the answer is always academic freedom. We can't make the faculty do what we want them to do. So there's a struggle. A disconnect between the values that we claim, and our ability to hold each other accountable to these values.

Finally, Zion shared their perspective on the cultural competency of administrators:

In today's world, I think there's a receptive ear to that [cultural sensitivity training]. I'm finding that what I thought about things at one point in my life, which was a bunch of insensitive and racist administrators that created an institution that is potentially being harmful to communities of color. I'm actually learning that there is a good amount of that, but there are also just uninformed and unaware administrators who weren't asked the question of what impact that language would have if applied in this particular direction or given consideration to that particular factor. Most of us are trained in the 20th century we came up under a different set of circumstances.

The sentiment that times were changing was evident. Professional development and training are needed to make faculty, staff, and students sensitive to the particular

circumstances of our era. These narratives contextualize the experiences of students of color on our campuses and what is necessary to ensure supportive campus racial climates.

Partnerships with Diversity and Equity Officer

The cultural center professionals in this study report to the Division of Student Affairs. They wanted to work more closely with the Office of Diversity and Equity on campus-wide initiatives. The campus is designated a Hispanic Serving Institution, and Chicano Student Programs wants to work directly with faculty and administrators to access federal funds and provide direct support services to Chicanx/Latinx students on campus. UCR's Chief Diversity Officer has a direct connection to systemwide support structures and information from the UC Office of the President. If there are systemwide working groups for HSI initiatives the cultural centers want to be involved. Jolte explained:

The cultural center has served its purpose in a lot of ways allowing us to be designated as an HSI and it has great programs. Beyond the programs in terms of making policy changes around Chicano/Latino students, or having a voice at the table when we are talking about grad support for being an HSI, or any benefits that come from being associated with an HIS, we are not a part of those conversations. Anything that has to do beyond the limited scope that the institution puts on us, the administration does not include us in those conversations, but holds us accountable if those things are not met.

The value of inclusion in working groups was also stated by Xavier,

For me, I'm not a very astute rule maker. I guess when it comes to the shifting or rewriting of policy, but I've been fortunate enough to be involved in part of some working groups, some working committees, where I can raise some critical questions.

The campus chief diversity officer is seen as potential partner and gateway to campus-wide conversations about diversity efforts.

Vision for the Future of Cultural Centers at UC Riverside

I spent some time asking the participants what they thought about the future for themselves and the cultural centers at UC Riverside. The cultural centers are rooted in a spirit of “sustaining the struggle” and “lifting as we climb.” Participants shared a dedication to building and sustaining a community where “consciousness is power” and “the personal is political.” These sentiments came up frequently in participant narratives. The following perspective from Xavier names the tension and responsibility of maintaining one's purpose and sense of community guardianship:

We are in a different environment today. We are recognizing and finding that conditions are so sharp that we have to be able to say these programs are targeted to this community because of these reasons ... I think that we have become bolder within the past few years at trying to get back to that root where we came from. If you look at our collective mission you know we always start off with the phrase “born out of the struggle of the communities of color”. Trying to get back to that connection to a recognition that this is not being done and our existence is not because of somebody's benevolence rather than the demand put in place by the

pain of our communities and the struggles that are our families are still enduring, so in getting back to a place where we could have those kind of conversations, where we could do that kind of programming.

The cultural centers provide more than just programs and services. The participants described the cultural centers as “building better citizens,” providing a “sense of place,” a “home away from home,” and historical rootedness. Aside from providing programs the centers raise community consciousness, break stereotypes, and challenge assumptions about minoritized populations.

Zion said, “we help students survive and succeed,” and further expressed

We create support structures for students to earn their degree, first level direct support to students who come to the university. Second level, transformational support through the university so we can truly become an institution that celebrates not only the trappings of diversity, but includes it in the way we develop and provide our services, so true, genuine, inclusiveness to the identities that our students bring.

In the cultural centers students of color come first. When asked about the purpose of the cultural centers, Jolte responded,

We remind the campus that we are here because of the students. This is their university and education is a right for all. We should answer to the needs of the community and the needs of the students and always ensure that the campus does not forget to recognize the humanity in the student experience.

Overall, education, support, and advocacy are at the core of UCR cultural center support services and programs. Cultural center professionals clarify institutional policies, provide capacity-building for student organizations, and intervene or assist when critical issues occur on campus. They consciously serve the needs of the student of color and the needs of the scholar. When the student population grew and resources did not, cultural center staff worked closely with students of color to expand their resources and capacity with a student services fee referendum.

The current social and political environment challenges cultural center professionals to respond holistically to the needs of student of color and to do so in culturally relevant ways. For the participants, the future seemed uncertain and full of unknowns. For example, Fury stated,

We're still saying that this person is the first person in their family to graduate, even after 40-50 years! We're still in the era of firsts. In our larger society, we have a job to do to recognize that we want to get more from the educational system, we want to grant more degrees to people from our various communities, and that's when that whole future thing becomes aligned for me. Because my work, even though it's on campus, it's really about affecting the world around us, the world beyond the campus.

Samuel responded to my question about the future of the cultural centers in this way:

You ask about what the future holds for us and it's really *what the future demands of us*. That we marry our work to the research that's being done. Because I think the research that's being done will validate our understanding and provide us the

hard data to be able to prove that yes, this is needed and yes, this is an ideal way of responding to that need, and then we'll be able to show the outcome. See we are graduating at the rates we wanted them to. And they're not just graduating, they're graduating with a sense of who they are and how they fit into the world.

Zion believed

That on one level we need to find ways to stay plugged in, that we are consistent not only within the ethnic and gender programs but student affairs overall; that we're consistent about how we stay connected with current issues of the day. I think there's a lot of opinion that's expressed when politics are happening, the way politicians are behaving, but there is not enough built in within our practice as a division, that we're able to get together and assess and evaluate what impact the presidential election has on us as educators in the division of student affairs? We have informal conversations and smaller discussions within smaller areas of the division, but it's not always translated into a direction that we need to go as a division. And so on the immediate level I think there's a whole lot more structure that we need to implement about how we understand our work and what we draw from to guide the work.

The nature of the work as well as the demands and preparation of cultural center professionals has shifted. Xavier explained:

As we shifted into a new time frame folks who were working that did not have the same community organizing background, and were hired straight out of undergrad programs, where they had been exposed to identity politics as their level of

activism . . . that's where folks felt comfortable doing programming around that, which is a place to start. I wouldn't want to stay there. Somehow we got to the point where we got used to doing those identity-based programs and we're having a hard time breaking out of it.

Zion reflected on the past:

I think that during the 20th century we had a less sophisticated understanding of race relations, we were trapped in the Black and White dynamic. Class analysis was simple; we got the rich, the middle class, and the poor. The complexity of identity, the multi-faceted nature of identity that you can be a person of color who is from a privileged community whose outlook is conservative was very difficult to imagine in a lot of the 20th century.

Additionally, Kalia expressed the need for allies and co-conspirators:

I have not found a community around me of like-minded folks in similar positions that can create a support structure for one another at least not on this campus.

There are allies in universities across the nation, but on our campuses we don't have a mass of people to stand up and say this right here is the position to take.

Rangol also expressed the need to connect directly with the community in order to challenge academic and institutional isolation:

Systemic racism and institutional oppression, while there is truth in it, is distant from a lot of people who are living their daily lives in the community. If I want to be present, I have to be in this space [the community], and not force them into an academic space. I have to be in their world in their space.

Finally, Xavier shared that their efforts to sustain the struggle are curbed by uncertainty:

I am still trying to figure out where my agency is in this world? There had been moments where I have been successful at retaining my identity as an activist and an advocate, but a lot of moments where I have found myself choosing to sit back and not raise the question or an issue or a challenge because it would not be appropriate in that moment.

The nature of the work of cultural center professionals is evolving as the social and political climate redefines itself. The vision of the future is unclear but the spirit, values, and rootedness in social justice remains.

In summary, Chapter 5 framed and discussed the participants' lived experiences within three spheres of influence: Relationship with self, relationship with others, and relationship with the institution. I synthesized their lived experiences into a series of descriptive and thematic categorizations. I also gave examples of specific tools and strategies for change that required leveraging relationships and fostering interest convergence within their spheres of influence. Finally, I included participants' perceptions of the campus climate, their collective recommendations, and their visions for the future of the cultural centers at UCR. Conceptual frames of understanding have shifted and emerging conceptual frameworks demand for practice to evolve and be done differently. Critical race praxis can potentially fill in this gap as a new way of dealing with the present moment. At this juncture cultural center professionals in higher education must reimagine and repackage problems in order to arrive at new solutions.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

A point I need to make is what happens to us as people of color who end up attaining these kind of positions? I will very openly and honestly say, I have learned to be an administrator partly as an intentional survival mechanism, but partly as an unconscious adaption to the world I am currently living in, and the expectation of me to act on behalf of the university, rather than on behalf of my communities. That's the moment in which voices are silenced and power is surrendered.

– Xavier

Xavier has identified and articulated a point of vertical psychological oppression and systemic violence (Freire, 1970) on racialized communities and professionals of color, a point in which the surrender of one's voice entails betrayal to one's racialized community. Meanwhile, the institutional power, preservation, and systemic dominance of the status quo remain unchallenged and intact (Freire, 1970). Furthermore, the opportunity to move up the administrative ranks is conditional and comes with an unconscious agreement to silence and erase the voices of communities of color, starting with one's own voice. When professionals of color are asked to become ambassadors for the best interests of the university, the compromises and personal sacrifices they must make to keep their jobs can thwart direct advocacy efforts and have a negative impact on racialized communities.

One recent incident in particular exemplifies this racial dilemma and outlines consequences for speaking out as a professional of color. As reported by *Inside Higher Ed*, Dr. Jonathan Higgins, a queer Black man, was hired to run an identity-based resource center and then fired three days later for posting tweets critiquing police brutality, whiteness, and white supremacy (Bauer-Wolf, 2017). Xavier's trepidation and justified

fear of retaliation for cultural center professionals of color who exercise their free speech against injustice is connected to just this kind of incident. The consequences of speaking out against racism and specifically white supremacy and whiteness can result in the loss of employment and income needed to raise a family. What remains unsaid in Xavier's opening quote is how and in what ways cultural center professionals of color can engage in subversive forms of resistance in order to pierce through institutional and systemic domains of dominance that aim to subordinate, disempower, and disenfranchise racialized communities.

As a former cultural center director, using CRP-Ed and CRT as a methodological tool and theoretical approach allows me to use my experience, knowledge, and understanding of cultural centers as a way to reimagine, and redefine points of consciousness and critique that can lead to a greater understanding of the experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education. The aforementioned theoretical frameworks allow this study to name invisible power structures, systems of oppression, and race-neutral decision-making discourse (Delgado & Stefanic, 2012; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Institutional systems of domination lead to an inequitable distribution of campus resources and professional experiences based on race (Lynn & Dixson, 2013). As suggested in CRT, the racialized critical consciousness and verbal critique of cultural center professionals of color is often tempered, subdued, and silenced by institutional and systemic domains of dominance. Furthermore, naming hegemonic and counterhegemonic systems is a call to action embedded in CRP-Ed (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015).

Additionally, the use of grassroots leaders and change agent theory and tempered radicalism illuminates the ways in which cultural center professionals actively engaged in forms of resistance via subversive strategies and tools for change (Kezar, 2011; Meyerson, 2003). The participants' personal and professional experiences and meaning making were captured via counterstories (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) that identified their collective forms of resistance with respect to systemic barriers and roadblocks. These forms of resistance within cultural center professionals' multiple spheres of influence served as way to foster interest convergence in order to challenge race-neutral policies and race-neutral diversity discourse (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Each of these spheres of influence and resistance efforts is discussed further in upcoming sections.

Inspired by Freire's notion of vertical violence (Freire, 1970), these critical theoretical frameworks are utilized to contextualize this study's findings and to expose and explicitly name institutional oppression and power dynamics that shape and impact the experiences of cultural center professionals of color. Using CRP-Ed as a critical framework, this study also recognizes individual and peer-to-peer interactions that perpetuate systems of dominance, which can negatively impact one's relationship with self, between self and others, and with the institution at large (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Overall, based on a critical examination and analysis of this study's findings using CRP-Ed and CRT as theoretical frameworks, I operationalize and define institutional domains of dominance as practices, policies, and discourse that aim to silence, subdue, and control any form of critical consciousness and critique. As the findings suggests, these policies might be invisible, visible, individual, institutional, and/or systemic.

In participant narratives, concrete evidence of institutional and systemic domains of dominance includes systemic erasure, delegitimization of knowledge and expertise, institutional disinvestment, and co-optation of diversity labor. Cultural center professionals in this study experienced these forces of vertical violence and oppression in interrelated ways (Freire, 1970). In the paragraphs that follow, I include a comprehensive discussion of the findings using the aforementioned theoretical frameworks, newly suggested conceptual frameworks, and related literature to expose systems of oppression and domains of dominance, resistance efforts, and tools and strategies for change with respect to the experiences of cultural center professionals of color.

CRP-Ed was used as a method to design, contextualize, and historically root this case study in order to make explicit connections to the present social and political climate of student unrest and racial realism. Moreover, CRP-Ed and CRT charges researchers to name the power dynamics behind institutional and systemic erasure as part of a hegemonic pattern that reserves the power and privilege of storytelling for those at the top (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). I conducted archival work and collected historical evidence to present counternarratives of community resistance, advocacy, and involvement as a way to challenge status quo stories and master narratives of diversity and racial inclusion at UCR.

The archival research explicitly reveals systemic momentum towards institutional erasure, and master narratives that conveniently take credit for the benefits of a diverse community, without acknowledging the ways in which marginalized community members demanded social change and challenged institutional barriers to their success.

Solorzano and Yosso (2002) suggest the use of counternarratives “as a tool to dismantle majoritarian stories which distort and silence the experiences of people of color” (p. 29). As explored in the findings, the student newspapers in the special archives at UCR are filled with stories of resistance from communities of color. Students, staff, and faculty of color contributed greatly to the establishment of the university and the racial/ethnic cultural centers at UCR.

Presenting historical counter-narratives is a way to center and uplift the history of struggle for underserved and minoritized communities at UCR (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Carlos Cortes, Professor Emeritus of History at UCR, recounted the contributions and advocacy of the Costos’ to establish UCR as an institution of higher education. The Native American couple invested their personal financial means into making sure that UCR created a place for Native American students, staff, and faculty. As evidenced in Sagesse’s comments about the “erasure of history,” staff orientation at UCR does not include this story and systemically removes the historical presence and contributions of Native American donors and influential community members. These highly respected elders are the reason that an infrastructure for Native American student enrollment and outreach exists, an infrastructure that led directly to the creation of Native American Student Programs (NASP).

The historical findings were purposely presented as community counternarratives. The archival research explicitly reveals alliances and moments where community members demanded social change and challenged institutional barriers to their success. Other racial counter-stories include those from Chicano Student Programs (CSP) and

African Student Programs (ASP), which were heavily supported by students, staff, and faculty of color during the 1970s. The Chicano/Latino community at UCR asserted that CSP support programs and services were instrumental to many students' academic success. The Chair of Black Studies also supported co-curricular programming and services for Black students (Raeger, 1972). When academic affairs and student affairs engage in mutually supportive partnerships the academic environment for students of color improves (Kezar, Hirsch & Burack, 2002). These partnerships are discussed further in upcoming sections.

Racialized community struggles for validation, recognition and resistance efforts against historical erasure continue to exist. Recently, an article in *UCR Today*, an online news source, reported that CSP and ASP celebrated their 45th anniversary (Sherkat, 2017). However, cultural center professionals had to advocate for UCR Media and Communications to write a story about their celebrations. For example, Jolte, a participant in the study, reported that the campus itself did not offer to write a story and the campus communications team claimed they did not know the cultural centers had a 45th anniversary. When institutional majoritarian stories and master narratives prevail, the experiences of people of color are silenced and distorted (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The institutional ignorance of the cultural centers' historical presence at UCR and within the UC system perpetuates their delegitimization and results in cultural center professionals who also feel invisible and invalidated. Despite these challenges cultural center professionals continue to push their stories forward and demand recognition.

Critical consciousness and critical engagement with technology are counterhegemonic tools for preventing and navigating institutional erasure of community struggles and the origins of the cultural centers (Carty, 2002). The Middle Eastern Student Center was created at a time when digital records were widely accessible. The MESC has digital news articles, photos, videos, blogs, and a wide social media presence, yet UCR maintains a poorly run website that leads to misinformation and inactive links.

CRT posits that an institutions unacknowledged power and privilege can lead to colorblind masternarratives that uphold systemic forms of racism and erasure (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Counterstories and counterhegemonic tools at the individual and institutional level are ways to resist systemic erasure and enact corrective measures for historical preservation. In my personal collection I have the foundational documents of historical involvement of students, staff, and faculty, as well as the results from the mini-survey on campus climate for Middle Eastern students. I assumed responsibility for passing these items down to the second director of the MESC. These items are no longer online and were removed by the institution when the MESC's new website was created.

Another way to fight invisibility and to protect and preserve the cultural centers' history and contributions to equitable campus environments is to maintain accurate historical records as a counterhegemonic tool. For example, Asian Pacific Student Programs has an online record of critical incidents, events, and staff and faculty who have been involved with the center. When I spoke to Dr. Grace Yoo, professor of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University, she recalled the major "UC Racism" campus protest that demanded more resources for students of color and a full-time staff

member for APSP. The student newspaper articles were in the archives, yet the current APSP staff did not know the full story. I shared each piece of newfound historical evidence with the cultural center professionals.

This case study was purposefully rooted in the historical foundations of the cultural centers as a way to disrupt systemic erasure, co-optation of diversity labor, and institutional master narratives claiming the benefits of diversity without giving credit to those who labored to make the environment diverse in the first place. Overall, participants could sense and point to institutional erasure and co-optation of their diversity labor. The institutional process of erasure or co-optation may not be malicious, but it is certainly not mindful of communities of color who worked for inclusion; this is another contradiction, a tension, which, when named, offers a point of potential resolution and reconciliation.

For this reason, I collected data from the university archives that reveal the ways in which the erasure of history upholds power dynamics, maintains systemic racism, enables the co-optation of diversity efforts, and poses a threat to the legitimacy of cultural centers and the work of cultural center professionals across their spheres of influence (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Lynn & Dixson, 2013). As discussed in the findings, positive interactions with stakeholders, such as faculty alliances and partnerships with student activists for HESR funds, fostered transformative change on multiple fronts and expanded financial resources, staffing, and cultural programs and services.

Advocacy efforts brought desired changes and also caused physical consequences and race related stressors for cultural center professionals. A healthy relationship with

self is compromised when cultural center professionals of color are expected to push through moments of physical and emotional discomfort and dis-ease. Participants in this study shared difficult experiences with mental health issues and reported low employee morale and burn out. As stated by Smith, Yosso, and Solorzano (2011), “The stress of unavoidable front-line racial battles in historically white spaces leads to people of color feeling mentally, emotionally, and physically drained” (p. 301). Participants described their experiences with burnout and low morale in ways that align with descriptions of racial battle fatigue as described above (Smith, Yosso & Solorzano, 2011).

They were mentally and emotionally drained in ways that also affected their bodies. The weight of the day to day work in a racialized context was physically painful. Recall for example, when Rikka and Marti challenged event requirements on behalf of students of color or made procedural mistakes, they described it as feeling reprimanded, intimidated, and punished. Participants at times reflected on their personal struggles through a deficit lens rather than, putting the onus of responsibility on the institution for equipping them to maintain procedural integrity including measures of equity that might foster transformative change. As such, there is evidence of the personal, mental, and physical impacts of institutional disinvestment and systemic racism as a tool of oppression and control on cultural center professionals of color (Smith, Yosso & Solorzano, 2011).

CRT explicitly acknowledges racial realism and the impact of oppressive climates of racial marginalization on individuals and communities (Delgado & Stefanie, 2012). A hostile work environment filled with racial battles takes a toll on communities and

individual minds and bodies (Delgado & Stefanic, 2012). This study revealed that participants' racialized experiences with multiple roles and responsibilities affect their mental health and capacity to function in transformative ways as professionals of color.

The participants in this study discussed their struggles to navigate multiple roles, such as advocate, negotiator, and ally (Gaston-Gayles et al., 2005). These multiple roles were centered in value-based racial advocacy and rooted in notions like "the personal is political," fighting to "sustain the struggle" and "lifting as we climb." These findings are in line with previous studies on what values drive the foundations of cultural centers (Kupo, 2011). The notion of multiple and sometimes conflicting roles is also at the core of student affairs positions designed to manage student crisis and community unrest (Gaston Gayles et al, 2005). These personal challenges and barriers take place within a racialized context even when the participants do not explicitly make that connection. Participants' also expressed a desire to function at their fullest capacity, but felt they could not because of institutional barriers.

In this study participants' professional backgrounds and ways of knowing came from grassroots organizing and community involvement or via traditional student affairs programs. A third community of academics and scholar practitioners was mentioned, although no participants situated themselves in that group. Some participant's limited understanding compared to other participant's explicit use of student development theory exposed this finding. For example, Shay, a participant in this study, had no exposure to student development theory. Franklyn, another participant in this study, could recall specific authors and theoretical concepts, such as Astin's theory of involvement. CRP-Ed

suggests that working with individuals who have multiple understandings enables groups to redefine problems accurately and is required to arrive at transformative breakthrough solutions (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Cultural center professionals can sustain personal networks, points of contact, and community building across ways of knowing. All of this creates personal access points of understanding that enable them to advocate in the best interests of students of color.

Relationships with others are an integral component for fostering transformative change on college campuses. CRP-Ed suggests that horizontal leadership and collegial leverage allows those who operate in different spheres of influence, with different positionalities, to simultaneously share a commitment towards racial justice (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). In order to agitate color-blind policies and transform racist practices on numerous fronts, multiple actors, various understandings, and different sorts of relationships with stakeholders are necessary (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). The findings revealed strategic collaborations in which relationships with stakeholders take place on a horizontal plane of mutual respect and interest convergence expansion. An example of a mutual collaboration, are the additional student service fees established through the Highlander Empowerment Student Referendum (HESR).

The HESR funds provided a stream of revenue via student advocacy and partnerships, and also allowed the institution to continue benefiting from the students and cultural center professionals diversity work without a permanent financial investment. They responded with “bottom-up leadership strategies” (Kezar & Lester, 2011) on a horizontal plane in order to access more funds and resources via HESR. The bottom-up

sphere of influence in this case was the cultural center professionals' relationships with students. Interest convergence was fostered in order to receive more student service fees for cultural support services and programs (Bell, 1980). As a result of the HESR, layers of bureaucracy were added to structures of shared governance embedded in the student referendum and student advisory committee by-laws. The HESR funds are temporary and must be renewed every five years. The negotiation and expansion of interest convergence allowed the cultural centers to hire staff and provide more financial resource to clubs and organizations. The consequence is higher student fees for students at UCR: students are paying for their own services instead of the institution assuming financial responsibility for the critical needs of students of color.

CRT posits that institutional race and racism is the foundation for institutional disinvestment and structural minoritization (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lynn and Dixon, 2013). The onus of responsibility for financing cultural support services and programs should remain with the institution. In the case above, cultural center professionals collaborated with students and alumni to invest in their own success. This is a critical race issue because those who are the most marginalized are double taxed while the institution continues to benefit without investment and co-opts the diversity outcomes as their own.

The institution purports to value diversity while rendering race invisible even in the midst of providing cultural support services and programs (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012). The level of cultural support services and programs is an attractive outreach and retention tool. While the undergraduate student population is racially and ethnically

diverse, the graduate student population, staff, and faculty are much less so. Students at UCR are actively demanding change on all these fronts.

As CRP-Ed predicts, mutual relationships were established because of vertical cut-off points and institutional disinvestment. As stated in grassroots leaders and change agent theory as well as tempered radicalism, participants used strategic and subversive resolutions, in this case the student service fee, to work around institutional roadblocks and constraints. As described by CRP-Ed and CRT, for professionals of color there are a series of trade-offs and tensions associated with each of these strategies and tools for change (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Lynn & Dixon, 2013).

Cultural center professionals often stated that when they want something done it was easier if the students agreed. Samuel, a participant in this study, remarked that administration is more amenable to requests from the cultural centers when students support their initiatives. Additionally, Marti, another participant in this study, felt conflicted about not having the same amount of power or influence as the students. Cultural center professionals who work closely with students to foster campus change acquire additional organizational labor for those meetings and initiatives (Patton, 2010, Stewart, 2011). As discussed previously, the HESR funds came with additional governance structures and limitations.

Institutional barriers and roadblocks pose challenges and opportunities for collaboration, as well as tensions and contradictions for maintaining relationships with others. Adamian (2016) states, “When naming systems of oppression, a multilayered approach that acknowledges moments of discomfort, while simultaneously recognizing

moments of negotiation, contradiction, struggle, and resistance challenges the dominant narrative across different spheres of influence” (p. 63). Cultural center professionals in this study leveraged their relationships with multiple stakeholders, identified points of interest, and fostered interest convergence expansion to enhance programmatic efforts and create change on campus for students of color.

As CRP-Ed suggests, students, staff, and faculty must come together as university stakeholders to engage in forms of resistance and strategize the ways they might shift consciousness on college campuses (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). As suggested by Gaston-Gayles et al, (2005), student affairs grew out of a need to manage critical incidents, student unrest, and student protest during the Civil Rights movement. Today, we see redemand for and redefinition of those multiple roles of mediator, advocate, and campus change agent. The role of cultural center professionals during this time is an experience full of contradictions; they must serve as advocates for students of color and racial justice and policy enforcers for the university.

The American Council on Education has succinctly mapped the present-day landscape of student protests and student demands across the country (Chessman & Wayt, 2016). Student activism and student protests are happening throughout the UC system. Cultural center professionals are at the forefront of these events and they reflected on their experiences during the interview process. Cultural center professionals can identify and are bearing witness to the shifts in student concerns, student needs, and institutional gaps in culturally relevant support services within a racialized context. They

cannot do this work alone and the burden of consciousness and collaboration must be shared (Conerly, 2017; Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016).

Cultural center professionals expressed a range of limitations and conflicts with respect to supporting student activists in visible and invisible ways. Participants in this study committed many microactions and microaffirmations that were at times tempered and did not raise suspicion (Kezar & Lester, 2011). For example, Franklyn, a participant in this study, discussed cultural center professionals' ability to provide meeting spaces, logistical support, and policy translation along with their physical presence at student demonstrations, actions, and protests. These examples are silent forms of resistance and support in line with grassroots leadership and tempered radicalism (Kezar & Lester, 2011; Meyerson, 2013). As described by Franklyn, other colleagues and the administration tend to misinterpret and miscategorize their resistance behaviors and actions. On the one hand, there is a risk of getting labeled as a troublemaker for participating in a student protest or of being asked to "monitor" the student protest. On the other hand, there is a risk of getting labeled as a sellout for not participating.

This racialized experience of contradiction and tension around acting in ways that align with one's value system and express community solidarity is specific to cultural center professionals of color. Xavier's quote at the opening of this chapter expresses this conflict and tension. This study affirms that praxis as defined by Friere (1970) is a constant process of action, reflection, retheorizing, and reflecting on one's place in the world and the consequences of actions that do or do not line up with one's values. A CRP-Ed-informed critique recognizes this dynamic as evidence of vertical points of

pressure and minoritization at the hands of the institution, which prevents cultural center professionals from exercising influence and restricts their ability to foster interest convergence on a vertical platform.

Cultural center professionals' varying relationships with stakeholders displayed a full range of interest convergence expansion and restriction across horizontal and vertical platforms (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). At times, participants in this study fostered strategic collaborations with various entities on campus. For example, the benefits of partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs are essential in the creation of successful learning environments (Kezar, Hirsch & Burack, 2002). Cultural center professionals who were able to establish clear incentives for faculty and staff participation had strong advisory boards and coalitions to advocate for them in times of crisis. Quality partnerships must have mutual value, respect, and genuine understanding (Magolda, 2005). The need for strategic stakeholder relationships and collaborations aligns with the findings in Conerly (2017).

As suggested in Conerly (2017), partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs, as well as alliances with faculty members, can raise the level of administrative attention given to student concerns. The support from the Chair of Black Studies in the 1970s is an example of the benefits of academic and student affairs partnerships (Raeger, 1972). Each of the cultural centers could not have been successfully established without the support of faculty liaisons and advocates who spoke directly with the administration about the academic benefits of co-curricular programs and culturally relevant support services.

Participants discussed relationships with the institution as a series of challenges and opportunities. Institutional disinvestment in professional development and training prevents the institution from maximizing the creative potential and talent of cultural center professionals; furthermore, this disinvestment constrains cultural center professionals' contributions and pushes them to operate in silos. Previous studies on cultural centers have discussed this silo effect and emphasized that movements towards equity and inclusion, as well as culturally relevant student affairs practice, are everyone's responsibility and must not lie solely with the cultural centers or cultural center professionals (Conerly, 2017; Welch, 2009).

Cultural center professionals are expected to meet exceptional standards of cultural competency, which are often not expected or assumed of their peers within the institution. The student affairs profession has outlined professional standards and expectations of cultural competency for all student services professionals (ACPA & NASPA, 2010, 2015; Pope, Reynolds & Mueller, 2004). Colleagues across the division of student affairs are not held accountable to the same standard of multicultural competence, despite the ACPA and NASPA standards applying to everyone.

Cultural center professionals who are not provided with support mechanisms to meet these professional standards are often unable to move into higher level positions (Abdullah, 2012; Shek, 2013). Recall when participant Fury mentioned that the institution limits upward mobility and keeps salaries low in order to keep cultural center professionals stagnant and keep critical scholar practitioners out. Furthermore, research on career typecasting by Sutton and McCluskey-Titus (2010) shows that institutional

overdependence on cultural center professionals' specialized skills negatively impacts access to future job opportunities and professional growth. Limited access to promotional opportunities leads to a plateau or glass ceiling in an individual's career prospects and stifles future gains in salary and promotion (Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). The racial inequities on salary and promotion are perpetuated throughout the system.

CRP-Ed posits that the institution, while perhaps unintentional yet impactful, withholds professional development and training to prevent further critiques and maintain its dominance (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Based on the findings in this study, cultural center professionals' challenges are related to institutional factors and barriers to their success; for example, participants described institutional pressure to provide evidence of their impact on student success outcomes even though the institution does not provide training on research assessment and evaluation metrics. The findings in this study suggest that a lack of investment in professional development and training means that the institution maintains its power, impairs cultural center professionals' ability to question the institution with data and evidence, and limits their ability to be transformative on a large scale.

A sister study conducted by Conerly (2017) explores the experiences of scholar practitioners at a private university. In that study, cultural center professionals held doctorate degrees and made research inquiry and publication a part of their practice. In the present study cultural center professionals did not hold doctorate degrees and emphasized the need for the institution to provide assistance with research, assessment, and evaluation methods. The institution could easily invest in community research

forums with grassroots organizers, student affairs professionals, and academics. CRP-Ed suggests that purposeful relationship building and engagement with these three ways of understanding and knowing is required in order to challenge how institutions reinvent structures of dominance to maintain power (Stoval, 2004, 2006). Active and intentional conversations between these three groups of community members—i.e. grassroots organizers, student affairs professionals, and academics— could open new forms of understanding and allow a reframing of institutional constraints to provide new solutions.

The findings in this study reveal that when institutional disinvestment in professional networks prevails, the environmental conditions for the co-optation of diversity labor are also created. When they do not have access to a network of practitioners, cultural center professionals' are limited even more in their ability to take ownership of their labor, and are even more likely to find their work at UCR and in the field of higher education co-opted.

An example of institutional disinvestment includes the minimally funded systemwide and intersegmental convening of the American Indian Counselor and Recruiters Association. The systemwide office and the university push additional organizational labor onto cultural center professionals of color by asking them to self-organize with minimal financial support. Meanwhile other departmental convenings are financially supported, organized, and staffed by UCOP. For example, mental health initiatives, basic needs security, and sexual assault prevention programs are given access and exposure to systemwide training and systemwide policy discourse. These conversations are necessary and critical for maintaining an environment that ensures

student success. A spirit of self-preservation and legal protection could also account for differing levels of financial involvement in these issues.

Participants in this study also shared their perspectives of the campus racial climate at UCR. They expressed inner conflict with respect to moments of exclusion and collision with institutional momentum and progressive diversity metrics. An example of exclusion and co-optation of diversity labor occurred when UC Riverside was celebrated by the Association for Public Land Grant Universities for its undifferentiated graduation rates for students of color (Warren, 2017). These rates should be celebrated, but not without also celebrating the strategic contributions in outreach, recruitment, and retention programs of the cultural centers, which were not even mentioned in this case.

As evidenced in participant narratives, the campus racial climate at UC Riverside is diversity-oriented versus equity-oriented (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012). In diversity-oriented climates the institution has progressively agreed to allow the cultural support services and programs to grow without providing changes to the status quo or racial power structure (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012). Diversity in this case means cultural celebrations, dances, foods and festivities occur on campus, but the seats at decision making tables belong to the status quo (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012).

The findings in this study suggest that cultural center professionals' contributions are not valued with respect to the campus racial climate or equity initiatives. Individuals or institutions can reference structural limitations, such as limited space or limited resource allocations, in order to prevent an individual's or a community's full inclusion and access to decision-making spaces and decision-making discourse. Participants could

name how they were left out of conversations regarding diversity metrics or objectives and pushed to the margins because they lacked a title or positional authority.

Recall how cultural center professionals were not invited to systemwide meetings on campus climate and student protest. In this case, the Chief Diversity Officer served as the campus representative. Delegitimization of knowledge and expertise can appear as rationalized arguments and socially acceptable reasons for exclusion that can harm or hinder an individual or communities access to participatory discourse in decision-making. Shek's (2013) study documented that not all cultural center professionals report to or even have a relationship with the campus chief diversity officer. The cultural centers at UCR are housed in student affairs not in the division of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The hierarchical bureaucracy and vertical pressure points at UC prevent cultural center professionals from sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Delegitimization of knowledge and expertise is a way to silence and neutralize racial critique and racial considerations in policy-making, which perpetuates race-neutral or color blind institutional policies (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). When cultural center professionals with racialized critiques and critical consciousness are not in the room to speak from their professional expertise, then there is no disruption, no agitation, and no change to status quo norms and status quo stories (Smith, Yosso & Solorzano, 2011). The participants in this study recognized the centrality of race and racism and served as critical advocates for students during incidents of systemic racism, hate and bias on campus (Lynn & Dixson, 2013; Patton, 2010). For example, recall two racial incidents when participants intervened on behalf of students. In the first incident a Black student

was harassed in the library by a security guard and in the second incident a student of Arab descent had their citizenship status questioned by UCPD during a Live Scan.

When able to access on-campus meetings and decision-making spaces, participants in this study raised questions about processes and procedures, as was the case with Xavier during critical incident meetings. Xavier expressed strategies aligned with tempered radicalism because his presence in the room could shift conversations towards culturally relevant and culturally sensitive solutions (Meyerson, 2003). At other times, participants in this study such as Marti and Rikka recounted that they stayed under the radar, were mindful of mistakes, and avoided the administration. The findings in this study reveal a need for culturally sensitive discussions within a racialized context that could transform campus climate in ways that honor the complexities of identity for students of color, specifically with respect to critical incidents, mental health, sexual assault, and expressions of hate and bias. The social and political context of the present moment was also addressed in order to bring forth and identify emerging dominant narratives which take the form of challenges to freedom of assembly and free speech.

Several critical incidents rooted in racism were reported in the findings and highlighted in previous sections. The historical presence of violence and racist acts was evidenced in the burning of the Black House in the 1970s (Duarte, 1972). Present day acts of racism included a hate crime against women of color who support Palestinian Liberation in Ethnic Studies (Molina, 2016). Critical racial incidents and racists acts of violence and oppression are integral to the historical and contemporary experiences of students, staff, and faculty of color at UCR. Despite the historical toxic racial climate or

in spite of the toxic racial climate at UCR, communities of color used their alliances and built coalitions and acquire more resources for students of color.

Cultural center professionals are frontline staff when it comes to mitigating racial incidents and addressing student needs and concerns. Recall when participants like Kalia described their intervention process with campus officials and overextended support to resolve critical racial incidents for students of color. The cultural center professional's case management, campus social work, and interpretation of institutional policies are centered in racial advocacy and critique. At the same time, there is an institutional overreliance on cultural center professionals' racial expertise to curb and smooth out critical racial incidents on campus (Sutton & McCluskey-Titus, 2010). They are not brought to the table to make policy changes or contribute in creative ways, yet they are asked to staff student protests and monitor student activists. Franklyn, as mentioned earlier, shared a nuanced perspective on student activism and staff presence at student protests, as well as the perceptions of other staff members with respect to staff involvement with student protests.

The campus racial climate is a shared responsibility (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). The institution must create conditions to maintain a campus environment in which students can receive culturally relevant critical interventions and case management from departments designed to provide these services (Museus & Jayakumar, 2012). The lack of mandated cultural sensitivity training results in environments where students of color do not feel comfortable raising their concerns. Student of color then turn to their "safe space" and "home away from home" to find critical support services and case

management (Patton, 2010). The cultural centers and cultural center staff continue to perform at a level of excellence and expertise that is depended on and leaned on by their colleagues in other departments. This allows the university to benefit from the labor of cultural center professionals and co-opt their success in creating microclimates of inclusion and comfort for communities of color.

Campus climates, which are a function of institutional history, norms, values, beliefs and assumptions, can exude this level of contradiction or window dressing (Kuh & Hall, 1993). In the case of UC Riverside as evidenced by the historical counternarratives, the cultural centers' support services and programs are a result of community agitation and advocacy efforts from students, staff, and faculty. Meanwhile, the university has consciously or unconsciously co-opted diversity efforts and systematically erased the story of people of color who struggled, advocated, and labored to attain the cultural centers from the campus story of diversity. Participants repeatedly expressed their frustrations with UCR's racial climate. For example, participants Jolte and Samuel both mentioned the contributions of CSP and ASP to UCR's reputation for student diversity and equitable graduation rates. They did not feel included in the institutional narrative and their communities were not given credit for their historical struggle and resistance efforts. Meanwhile, they continued to push for community recognition and validation of their efforts.

Solorzano and Bernal (2001) discuss the ways in which individual and community resistance is complex and can involve a range of reactionary, self-defeating, conformist, and ideally transformative behaviors that foster social change. Despite all of

the aforementioned challenges and in spite of all the systemic barriers and roadblocks, the cultural centers at UCR were the perfect site for an investigation into strategies and tools of resistance that could result in equitable retention and graduation rates for students of color. CRP-Ed suggests that the cultural center professionals' relationship with self, relationships with the community, and relationships with the institution are contested, negotiated, and at times contradictory (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015).

Each of these spheres of influence requires a range of resistance behaviors and actions to foster transformative change (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Kezar & Lester, 2011). A positive relationship with self in the first sphere of influence requires individuals to manage their time, energy, and construct pipelines of nourishment to sustain the struggle long-term and counter racial battle fatigue. In the second sphere of influence cultural center professionals leveraged bottom-up strategies and horizontal relationships with others (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015; Kezar & Lester, 2011). Horizontal relationships with student activists, staff, alumni, and supportive faculty enhanced advocacy efforts and resulted in quality programs and more resources for students of color at UCR. Finally, in the third sphere of influence, the university must assume responsibility for creating oppressive conditions for people of color. The practice and process of critical race praxis is individualized and in constant flux as the quality of relationships impacts the actions, behaviors, and decision making process of cultural center professionals. In this study, I offer a window of interest convergence expansion for grassroots organizers, student affairs, and academic affairs at UCR to work together and map the landscape of success for students of color at the institution.

CONCLUSION

As stated by Adamian (2016), “Troubling the ways in which educational scholars approach research, means engaging with methods rooted in critical consciousness, theory, and practice, while honoring the knowledge and voices of local communities and simultaneously naming the spaces of distress that we work in and through together” (Adamian, 2016, p. 63; Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). This critical research study fulfills its purpose and expands an understanding of the experiences of cultural center professionals at UCR. This case study was designed to illuminate and name how participants’ personal and professional experiences, tensions, and contradictions about their role as cultural center professionals at the institution inform and shape the strategies and tools they use to resist, and challenge institutional barriers and roadblocks.

This study analyzed and documented these tools and strategies for change, which cultural center professionals use within their capacity and spheres of influence, by applying a number of theoretical frameworks including CRP-Ed, CRT, and grassroots organizing and tempered radicalism. I also offered a critique of those subversive strategies and tools within a racialized context using CRP-Ed and CRT, so that I could name and identify institutional roadblocks in four domains of dominance: systemic erasure, institutional disinvestment, delegitimization of knowledge and expertise, and co-optation of diversity labor.

A CRP-Ed methodological and theoretical approach allowed me to explore participants lived experiences and sense making within three spheres of influence: relationship with self, relationship with others, and relationship with the institution

(Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). I used CRP-Ed to name the participants' spheres of influence with respect to various stakeholders and strategic collaborations. I showed how cultural center professionals leveraged relationships within those spheres, and the ways they either fostered interest convergence expansion or responded to interest convergence restrictions when institutional barriers attempted to prevent them from fostering systemic change and utilizing their racial literacies and expertise.

I used CRP-Ed as a methodological framework when collecting and compiling relevant data for this case study. I searched for archival materials to show how the university climate historically enacted physical and psychological violence on communities of color at UCR. I used those archival materials to challenge the university's co-opted diversity discourse and systemic erasure effects and to recall the voices, perspectives, and memories of communities of color at UCR. In some ways, UCR has co-opted the benefits of diversity and removed them from their roots in community struggle and pain. This study shaped the historical context and factual information to put the truth on display. Participant narratives revealed frustration with the lack of attention given to community elders, donors of color, and university founders from marginalized communities.

The process of unveiling and redefining dominant and hegemonic systems is in line with CRP-Ed and requires researchers to demonstrate how to disrupt master narratives while centering counternarratives (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). The struggles communities of color fought and the challenges they overcame in order to create environments that are seemingly diverse and equitable are purposely not named or

addressed by the institution. This allows the institution to take credit for “diversity progress” rooted in the labor of communities of color and is used as form of institutional and systemic dominance and control.

I used CRT to analyze the institution’s systemic barriers and roadblocks, which are rooted in racism and race-neutral discourse (Delgado & Stefanic, 2012). The value of experiential knowledge and counterstories is a central tenet of CRT. The cultural center professionals in this study were given an opportunity to communicate their struggles, experiences, successes, and challenges. As stated in the literature review, offices of diversity and equity are privileged while communities of practice (in this case the cultural centers) are often left out of the conversation and diversity discourse (Shek, 2013). This study revealed that institutional barriers, which prevent cultural center professionals from accessing and engaging decision-making discourse at the highest levels of administrative influence, delegitimize their knowledge and expertise and are rooted in systemic racism (Lynn & Dixon, 2013).

The participants’ personal and professional experiences were influenced by their educational background and previous work experiences. These differing experiences account for their sense making and various ways of knowing. Professional challenges and opportunities were often in response to the way they made sense of their relationships with others and relationship with the institution. I showed that their tools and strategies for change required leveraging relationships with stakeholders, often in response to institutional barriers and roadblocks. I also discussed how they navigated points of tension, restriction, challenge, and opportunity within their roles as cultural center

professionals. Looking at participant experiences, educational background, and lack of professional training and development reveals the competence-based assumptions in higher education research with respect to cultural center professionals' knowledge base and use of theory. Furthermore, even within an institution that claims to fully invest in cultural programs and services for students of color, experiential knowledge and expertise of cultural center professionals was delegitimized.

This study also discussed the ways in which the participants, in keeping with principles of grassroots leadership and tempered radicalism, deployed tools and strategies that shift institutional power structures on behalf of students (Kezar & Lester, 2011; Meyerson, 2003). I used grassroots leaders and change agent theory as a practical tool to cluster the cultural center professionals and study them as a group or phenomenon within a case study (Kezar, 2011). From a tempered radicalism framework, I also examined how they did or did not utilize their personal agency to exercise subversive change strategies (Kezar, 2011; Meyerson, 2003). Cultural center professionals come across opportunities to actively engage in silent resistance, turn threats into opportunities, broaden impact through negotiation, leverage small wins, and organize collective action to subversively effect institutional change (Carducci, 2011; Meyerson, 2003). What the study's findings suggest is that the tools and strategies cultural center professionals used were directly in response to institutional challenges and barriers.

In summary, this case study reveals historical and present-day forms of institutional disinvestment, delegitimization of knowledge and expertise, co-optation of diversity labor, and systemic erasure of the struggles for equity and visibility fought for

by communities of color at UCR. This case study shows what can happen or what can get lost when an institution seems to make progress toward equity and inclusion. Cultural center professionals must stay vigilant or institutional co-optation of their labor can occur. Preserving historical context and community-informed counternarratives is as a powerful tool for disrupting status quo stories and dominant narratives. Even when institutional progress is made, hegemony is redefined in order to maintain its power and status.

My personal research notes were used to document the iterative process as I struggled with how to present this case study and make meaning of the findings. I am embedded and invested in struggling alongside my beloved community, as well as being actively engaged in a reflexive analysis as a way to enact social justice praxis. As the researcher, I had to recognize, name, and grapple with contradictions in order to present a critical and fair analysis of the findings. I provide an extended reflection of my process at the end of this study. Finally, the next section concludes the study and provides a pathway forward for future research. In light of this study's findings, I offer recommendations for individuals, departments, institutions, and university systems. I conclude with a personal reflection on the research process.

Implications for Future Research

A series of implications for future research arose from this study. An organizational research approach could be conducted in order to analyze the synchronicity of job descriptions to professional standards and desired transformational goals. Further document analysis could streamline professional training requirements,

hiring expectations, strategic planning, and institutional goals. Research on successful partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs could identify joint solutions to institutional challenges and barriers to student success. As well, further research could be done on how grassroots organizers and community members can partner with academic affairs and student affairs to service community needs. We must understand how these various ways of knowing are complementary or in conflict and how we can identify breakthrough points of interest convergence to enhance our cultural programs and support services for students of color.

I utilized CRP-Ed as a methodological framework for this study. During the process of discovery and data collection, I identified ways in which the principles and tenets of CRP-Ed and CRT could aid cultural center practitioners who are engaged in on-the-ground microactions and decision-making that could have cumulative impacts on climates of equity for students of color. The historical impact of the cultural centers and the reputation of their programs and services have shifted the demographics of UCR. What I collected is only a fraction of the evidence available to support this claim. A series of independent projects for each of the cultural centers utilizing CRP-Ed and CRT could provide the evidence necessary to situate their impact on UC Riverside's climate and best practices for students of color. In line with prior theoretical research CRT is recommend as a tool to analyze systemic racism and institutional structures that create hostile environments and the need for counter-spaces and counter-stories in historically White institutions (Smith, Yosso & Solorzano, 2011; Yosso & Lopez, 2010). A research

course on archival methods with a topical focus on the history of the cultural centers is highly recommended as a way to continue this project.

Recommendations

First and foremost, this study takes participants' recommendations seriously, affirms their need for attention to those areas, and encourages the institution to respond accordingly. The following recommendations are in light of these study's findings and in addition to what was already presented by the participants. I have set forth recommendations for individual practitioners, departments, institutions, systemwide initiatives, policy, and higher education researchers.

Individual Recommendations

Cultural center practitioners must press on the institution's stated values to advocate for themselves and proactively seek out professional development and training opportunities. A grassroots organizer and change agent engages the discourse, asks critical questions, and shares best practices whenever possible (Kezar & Lester, 2011). A network of supportive colleagues and like-minded professionals is essential to self-care, recovery, recharge, and nourishment. Networks and communities of practice are essential for breaking through institutionalized silo effects and bridging gaps between individual needs and community needs.

Departmental Recommendations

Supervisors can provide time adjustments and use work time for professional development and training (Conerly, 2017). The department must prioritize and preserve their community's history in documents, photos, multi-media presentations, videos, and

manuscripts. Cultural centers can crowdsource oral histories and stories from former students, staff, faculty partners, and alumni. Retreats and time for strategic planning as well as creative endeavors would help department staff members define what success means for them and their programs. Time to reflect on the challenges and opportunities of the social and political context can facilitate breakthrough conversations and strategies, which ultimately benefits and serves students of color.

Institutional Recommendations

The university can provide start-up funds for research partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs (Kezar, Hirsch & Burack, 2002; Magolda, 2005). The College of Education, Ethnic Studies, Media and Cultural Studies, and the Public Policy program are a few examples of potential academic partners. Furthermore, the College of Education can support research initiatives through fieldwork placement of graduate researchers studying higher education and student affairs. The institution should invest in campus research funds and grants to document best practices and the labor of equity and inclusion work from the bottom up vs. top down in order to support and retain in-house talent (Kezar & Lester, 2011). The campus Chief Diversity Office is an essential partner in these efforts and cultural centers can benefit from these research efforts (Shek, 2013).

The university can facilitate these partnerships to document the history, current practices, and future directions or solutions to critical issues on campus. The institution can also facilitate partnerships or training with philanthropic organizations and the Office of Development to establish external funding sources and donors that will support the work of the cultural centers. While diversity and equity work is everyone's responsibility,

the on-campus cultural experts must have a seat at the table. Diversity metrics as well as accountability measures must be embedded and outlined when strategic plans are developed. Additionally, the university's diversity story must align with the actual history and its context of community struggle and resistance. Finally, the university can invest in professional development opportunities, training, and institutional memberships to relevant professional organizations as discussed by the participants.

Systemwide Recommendations

The University of California Office of the President can facilitate systemwide convenings and host conferences where communities of practice could ask questions, brainstorm solutions to critical issues on the campuses, and share best practices. All of the cultural center professionals can come together and break out into sessions for specific communities or target groups. The systemwide convening can serve as a way to facilitate introductions for those doing similar work. The system can initiate conference calls to crowdsource ideas and address major concerns. The system can also create mechanisms to maximize talent and to share what they already know works. There is already a Black Task Force at UCOP. There should also be an Asian, a Chicana/Latina, a Native, and a Middle Eastern Task Force. I served on the UC President's LGBT task force. I know this is possible and policy changes can be made at UCOP.

Policy Recommendations

Cultural center professionals need legal advice for working within the limitations of Prop 209 (Gurin, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002). They also need to develop strategies and consciousness-raising around the legal definitions of free speech, hate speech, bias

incidents, and protections of the first amendment. The system must educate employees in navigating the limitations and protections of the law. Meanwhile, employees must know enough about their own rights to engage in free speech and freedom of assembly so that they can communicate those rights to student groups and individual advisees. The system must teach its employees how to navigate and remove barriers to the work of equity building instead of upholding the status quo and privileged power structures. Furthermore, training and institutional protections for undocumented students must be communicated to staff members providing direct services.

Higher Education Recommendations

Critical Race Praxis for Education Research (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015), as a methodology, method, and critical theoretical framework must be applied to analyze the experiences of student activists, staff, faculty, administration, university governance boards, alumni, and community members or grassroots leaders in higher education. Critical race praxis provides a way of understanding how to press upon points of tension and offers avenues of release and movement towards racial equity and justice for people of color. Furthermore, CRP-Ed names spheres of influence and can be expanded further to outline spheres of resistance and counter-hegemonic tools to disrupt status-quo stories, norms and policies (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2015). Applied research is necessary to further evidence concrete tools and strategies for change. Finally, as presented in this study, expanding the use of institutional and systemic domains of dominance as an analytical framework in higher education can lead us to greater clarity with respect to the

points of tension that must be navigated and worked through. Mapping the landscape of resistance is a worthy endeavor.

Reflections on the Research Process

My critical race praxis as defined by Freire (1970) involves a critical consciousness, and action and reflection in three experiential domains: graduate researcher, former cultural center director, and Regent Emeritus of the University of California. As the President of the California Council of Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE), I am a member of and trusted figure in this community of professionals. The notion of mutual engagement and doing the work on behalf of a beloved community is part of the first tenet of critical race praxis. I deeply believe in this community's desire to do good work and fight for equity and inclusion at every level.

In this research study, I presented a fair and centered critique of institutional disinvestment and systemic erasure that leads to challenges and difficulties that are not the individual's responsibility to fix. I endeavored to place the responsibility of corrective ease on the institution rather than on the individual who is already oppressed, marginalized, overburdened with communal responsibility, and, at times, demoralized. I believe in being soft on people and hard on institutions.

I presented these findings with responsible and dutiful care to honor the trust bestowed on me by my colleagues. I also struggled and wrestled with how best to present this information and to convey the contradictions and tensions of individuals who are committed to working within a system that, when left to its own devices, will preserve the status quo rather than fight for racial equity and justice. I collected data and wrote this

study amidst political, social, and policy turmoil at the University of California; the evidence of mechanisms and pathways for institutional disinvestment, systemic erasure, and systemic self-preservation is overwhelming.

As a former UC Regent, I have had extensive practice in successfully and unsuccessfully recognizing and acting on points of interest convergence in policy spaces. I participated in two UC audits that required streamlined procedures, objectives, metrics, reviews, and assessments of success in programmatic efforts and financial accountability. I witnessed a push from the state to find other streams of revenue to finance the UC and minimize dependence on state revenues. Naturally, this impacted the way I viewed micro-discourses at the departmental level about limited resources and the need for institutional investments in research and assessment.

The audits also demanded clarity of information distribution, transparency, and processes and procedures for public accountability. The public's audit discourse about the UC was influenced by media and propaganda that fostered a climate of suspicion and mistrust. I witnessed the UC unsuccessfully attempt to provide a counter-story of public service and public good in order to curb legislative questioning and investigation. This level of public scrutiny and societal mistrust is precisely what cultural centers in higher education and cultural center professionals contend with every day.

My roles as doctoral researcher, former cultural center director, and Regent Emeritus of the University of California have given me the largest possible scope with which to learn, listen, analyze, critique, and consider multiple stakeholders. I am conflicted about the bureaucracy of work in higher education where institutionally

cultural centers are run like businesses instead of community service centers. The critique of the UC is often its disassociation from and lack of transparency with the people, but cultural centers must move with the people.

Grassroots organizers need their followers, allies, and accomplices in order to be successful. Cultural centers can be spaces of mutual advocacy, real partnerships, and true climates of shared governance. An investment in cultural centers is an investment in equitable campus racial climates that produce results. I have often said that UC Riverside did not arrive at this level of non-differentiated graduate rates by accident, but by design. Students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members at UCR labored to build legacies of communal guardianship. It was an honor and a privilege to conduct this study on behalf of my community.

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APPENDIX A

AMERICAN INDIAN FOCUS OF NEW LIBRARY

American Indian focus of new UCR library

(UPI)—UC Riverside will be the site of a major library on the American Indian as a result of the gift of a massive collection of books, documents and artifacts by the American Indian Historical Society, a national all-Indian honor society based in San Francisco.

The donation announced October 29 was made by Jeannette Henry Costo and Rupert Costo, founders of the society. Housed in the society's San Francisco headquarters until now, the library includes 7,000 books, 9,000 documents, original tape recordings, correspondence and art works.

The library will be known as "The Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian" in honor of Rupert Costo, president of the society and well-known Cahuilla Indian of Anza. The first shipment of the library's collection

has been received at UCR and a second will be sent in March.

A special section of the university's Tomas Rivera library will house the collection and provide working areas for scholars.

"This university is surrounded by the largest enclave of Indian reservations in the West. It is fitting that UC Riverside become the academic and scholarly center of studies about the native people of the region and the country," Costo said.

"The establishment of this library is another step in creating a major emphasis on American Indian affairs at UC Riverside," Costo and Theodore L. Hullar, UC Riverside chancellor, said in a joint statement announcing the gift.

see LIBRARY, page 11

American Indian focus

continued from page 6

Additionally, it is anticipated that by 1986, an academic chair to be called "The Rupert Costo Chair in American Indian Affairs" will be established at the university through the efforts of the society and the Costos.

John Tanno, Acting University Librarian said, "The collection will greatly enhance our ability to support research about American Indians. We are honored that UC Riverside has been selected as the repository of the library these Indian people have so carefully and carefully collected and maintained."

The library includes books and documents on treaties, water rights, litigation briefs, pleadings, and modern Indian issues such as the events at Alcatraz Island and Wounded Knee at Pine Ridge, South Dakota; and

educational materials concerning curriculum and Indian studies.

Costo's ties to UC Riverside extend to the birth of the campus. He was one of the leaders in originating the campaign and developing support for creating the university campus.

An engineer and surveyor by profession, Costo spent many of his adult years as a farmer and cattleman. He was active on his tribe's governing body for more than 20 years and served as tribal spokesman for eight years.

An author of many books and articles on the American Indian, Costo is widely known throughout the country as a lecturer and authority on native American history and culture. His newest book, *Natives of the Golden State: The California Indians*, is scheduled for publication early in 1986.

APPENDIX B
COSTO PLAQUE



APPENDIX C

NATIVE AMERICAN LEADER COSTO DEAD AT 83

A-4 HIGHLANDER 31 OCTOBER, 1989

Native American leader Costo dead at 83

Funeral services were held last Tuesday for Rupert Costo, national leader in the struggle for economic and social rights of Native Americans.

"I am deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Rupert Costo," said Chancellor Rosemary Schraer.

He has been a very great friend, to me personally, to the University and to our greater society as we struggle to see the truth of the history of the American Indian. Rupert was a determined leader in that struggle, and we are all the better for his efforts and those of his wife, Jeannette."

'He has been a very great friend.'

-Chancellor
Rosemary Schraer

Together, Costo and his wife founded the American Indian Historical Society in the mid 1950s to correct historical records regarding Native Americans.

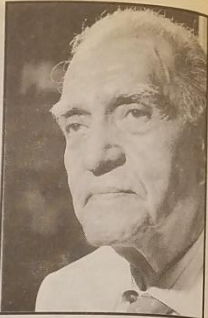
The couple appeared before state textbook committees to fight for the scholarly representation of Native American history, rather than the stereotypes of Indians and Indian life which were once prevalent.

The Native American Student Association issued this statement:

"Rupert Costo's name will always be a part of UCR. He will be physically present in the library of American Indian Culture which bears his name.

His name will be integrated into campus curriculum through the Costo Chair and it will be indelible in the collective mind of the Native American Student Association, for whom his life stands as a model of lifelong commitment toward the preservation and fostering of Native American culture."

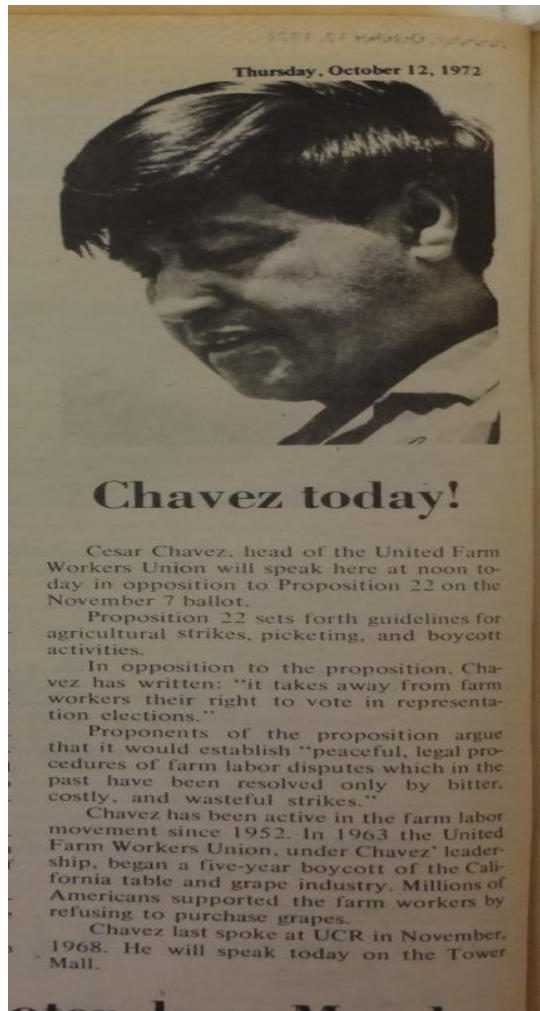
Costo died of an illness at age 83, at his home in San Francisco on October 20.



Rupert Costo died at his home in San Francisco at 83

APPENDIX D

CHAVEZ TODAY!



Thursday, October 12, 1972

Chavez today!

Cesar Chavez, head of the United Farm Workers Union will speak here at noon today in opposition to Proposition 22 on the November 7 ballot.

Proposition 22 sets forth guidelines for agricultural strikes, picketing, and boycott activities.

In opposition to the proposition, Chavez has written: "it takes away from farm workers their right to vote in representation elections."

Proponents of the proposition argue that it would establish "peaceful, legal procedures of farm labor disputes which in the past have been resolved only by bitter, costly, and wasteful strikes."

Chavez has been active in the farm labor movement since 1952. In 1963 the United Farm Workers Union, under Chavez' leadership, began a five-year boycott of the California table and grape industry. Millions of Americans supported the farm workers by refusing to purchase grapes.

Chavez last spoke at UCR in November, 1968. He will speak today on the Tower Mall.

APPENDIX E

CHAVEZ URGES DEFEAT OF PROP 22

The Highlander Thursday, October 19, 1972

Chavez urges defeat of Prop. 22

Cesar Chavez, leader of the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) called Proposition 22 a fraud perpetrated by the corporate and grower's interests to destroy the UFW, at a rally here last Thursday.

The MECHA-sponsored rally drew about 1,000 people.

Proposition 22 on the November 7 ballot sets forth guidelines for agricultural strikes, picketing, and boycott activities.

Chavez said the initiative qualified for the ballot only by resorting to massive techniques of forgery and fraud.

He claimed that Blanchard and Associates, the firm employed to petition for the initiative, had only one reason for being: to exploit the farmworkers. "Until now, no group of workers in this country has had their rights taken away from them," he said.

The initiative is basically anti-union because it imposes an arbitrary 60-day cooling-off period on strikes, and outlaws secondary boycotts according to Chavez.

"The reason for the 60-day limit is because 90 per cent of crops are taken in 45 days."

The initiative also stipulates that workers may vote in union elections only if they have worked in the area for 100 days. To petition an employer for an election, a worker must have worked 14 days in the last 30 with the same employer.

"That's just not the pattern in farm labor," said Chavez, explaining that farm labor is extremely migrant and works in different locales and crops from day to day.

Proposition 22 would also make it illegal to vote more than once per year in union elections.

"In other words, the same group of workers but with a different employer and working in a different crop, could not vote, charged Chavez.

Chavez advised students to suspect special interests. "You should not let the right-to-work people and assorted right-wingers convince you it [Proposition 22] is good for workers. If it comes from the growers, you can be sure it's for their own pockets."

Four union bodyguards and about 15 MECHA escorts surrounded Chavez as he spoke at noon in the Tower Mall. High security precaution marked every phase of his visit.

The union head opened his remarks with a cheerful "It's all right to eat grapes now," reminding his audience of a recent grape boycott for the UFW.

However, he warned that if Proposition 22 passed, all secondary boycotts, and the advocacy of such boycotts would be prohibited. "If you on this campus stood up and said 'Boycott Lettuce!' you would be thrown in jail."

"So right now," he added, "before the law is passed, I want you to boycott non-union lettuce." He said UFW union lettuce can be recognized by the black eagle emblem on the wrappers or packing cases.

Proponents of Proposition 22 contend that its passage would lower certain food prices. Chavez attacked the claim asking: "What has [our estimated] 1.6 cents for labor have to do with the 29 to 30 cents you pay for a head of lettuce?"

But he told the students that as consumers they were not far from the situation. "You share the farmworker's plight every time you reach for one of those delicious fruits or vegetables."


He said the farm workers feel "a tremendous sense of mission". "With all their exploitation, they feel their responsibility to get the food to you." But in face of America's abundance, Chavez stated, "they in fact, are getting no food."

He concluded with an appeal on behalf of the farmworkers. "Through me, they are asking you to vote NO on 22 so we can have our union."

Volunteers for NO on 22 distributed bumper stickers and literature, and solicited donations and help. A representative of the campaign said over 20 names were gathered to contribute time to the campaign.

After speaking, Chavez was made an honorary member of the Mary O'Keefe Democratic Club, a local organization to promote the interests of Chicanos in elections. "He joins the ranks of Herbert Humphrey, George McGovern, Alan Cranston and the likes for his great humanitarian work," said Ventura Hernandez, who presented Chavez with his membership card.

Chavez then talked with MECHA leaders at a closed meeting in the Commons conference room for about 20 minutes.



Cesar Chavez

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: PAPER RACIST

paper racist

Editors:

I would like to comment on the editorials in last week's *Highlander*. There are two points I would like to make.

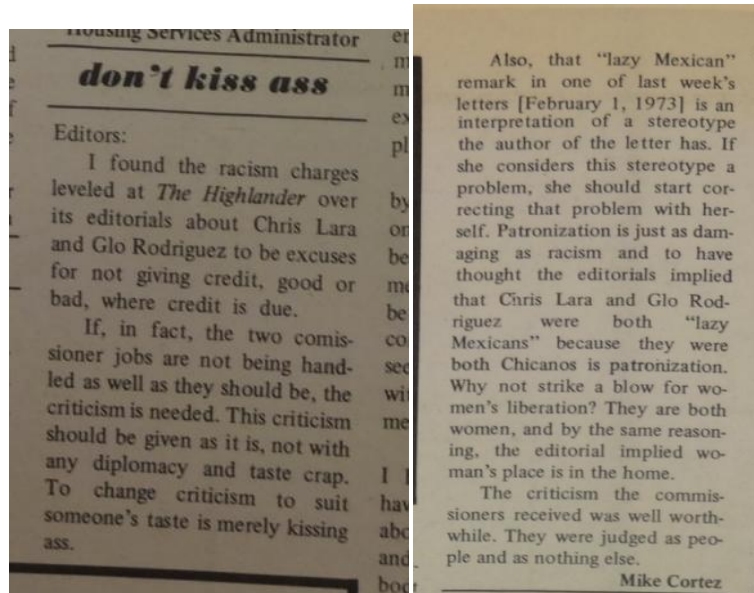
First, that you chose to attack simultaneously Chris Lara and Glo Rodriguez, who are both Chicanas, and that the nature of your attack implies that they are "lazy Mexicans" I found to be most offensive. The tones of racism which filtered through obscure the issues of right and wrong in their actions so far as I am concerned. Would this situation have been handled as it was if Chris and Glo were Anglo?

Second, with all that seems urgent and worthy of our attention going on in this community and beyond it, I honestly feel that thus far this year, *The Highlander* is not fulfilling its responsibility to keep students informed by publishing with such fanfare an awful lot of petty local immature shit.

Respectfully,
Gail C. Teague

APPENDIX G

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: DON'T KISS ASS



APPENDIX H

MECHA PAPER CHARGES RACISM

MECHA paper charges editorial racism

John Fox
News Editor

An editorial in the UCR MECHA quarterly newspaper *Nuestra Cosa* has accused *The Highlander* of the "perpetration of racial biases" and called upon the Communications Board to investigate.

The *Nuestra Cosa* (Our Thing) charges come in response to *The Highlander*'s editorials in last week's issue (January 25, 1973) calling for the resignations of ASUCR Commissioner of Special Projects Chris Lara, and Glo Rodriguez, Commissioner of Entertainment, both Chicanas. The newsletter also criticized *The Highlander* cartoon printed on page five, charging that it made Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Carlo Golino "an object of ridicule because he is of Italian descent".

Michele McLellan, Co-editor of *The Highlander*, called the accusations of racial bias "ridiculous".

Describing the *Highlander* editorial as in "poor taste", the *Nuestra Cosa* editorial called upon the ASUCR Legislative Council to "stop using general student funds for the perpetration of racial biases".

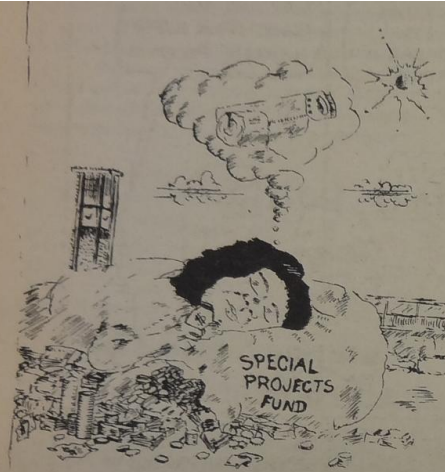
MECHA newsletter editor Orlando Ortega said in an interview yesterday, "the overall tone of both *Highlander* editorials cast racial slurs. I take it as an insult because I am Chicano."

Ortega added that "I consider the page five cartoon more blatant than references to Rodriguez and Lara because I think in our case, *The Highlander* was able to disguise their prejudices probably as a result of slow conditioning, but in the case of Golino, I guess in their enthusiasm to hit the administration they let it 'all hang out' to use a very trite phrase." Ortega stressed that his reaction was not caused by personal ties with Lara or Rodriguez. "Even if the editorial had not appeared, I would have raised a lot of stink because I know I would be next." Lara has no direct tie with MECHA, according to Ortega, although Rodriguez has previously written for *Nuestra Cosa*.

Augustine Rios, MECHA President, commented on the *Highlander* editorial saying, "If you're going to criticize people, okay, but there ought to be a little more diplomacy and taste."

APPENDIX I

CASE AGAINST LARA



the case against Lara

Chris Lara, the Commissioner of Special Projects, is the laziest, most indefensible ASUCR officer in our memory. So far she has spent \$375 of her year's allocation of \$2,000 for student-initiated projects.

It is her specific constitutional obligation to hand out that money to students who come to her with ideas and projects they want to realize. In our opinion, she should spend a major part of her time searching out creative and adventurous students and making them aware that she has money to finance them, expertise to offer them, and energy and enthusiasm to put behind them.

Perhaps that sounds as if we expect the Commissioner of Special Projects to be a major in administration, and a double minor in psychology/track and field. But let us examine Lara's record to date.

From what we have been able to learn, most of what she has spent has gone to finance the programs of existing organizations, projects that are *already funded*, and the results of which have been almost completely out of the view of most students. Again, it is our view that Special Projects should be seeking out new people who don't already know about what ASUCR is offering through that office, and starting new programs. Lara is doing next to nothing towards that end.

Please turn to page 24.

APPENDIX J

CASE AGAINST RODRIGUEZ

the case against Rodriguez

Gloria Rodriguez, as Commissioner of Fine Arts, is performing what has traditionally been the fundamental service of establishing a continuous ASUCR program of major entertainment. In the past, Commissioners of Fine Arts (the job has been retitled) have funded small dances, theater groups, radical and avant-garde entertainment, concerts with expensive well-known groups, and a yearly film program.

Rodriguez' events have been few and frequently unsuccessful. She has a narrow conception of her job, and her programs have been consequently limited in scope and variety.

She has been unpar- donably slow in program- ming events—perhaps it is caution, a reluctance to commit funds without thorough investigation. It looks a lot more like a lack of imagination, enthusiasm, and time spent on the job.

An entertainment program- mer brings a certain "something" to his job. We'll be blunt and call it "taste", for it mightily ap- pears as if Rodriguez has none. There is not a great deal to choose from in the range of her accomplishments, but the AS- UCR film program is a case in point. The films are chosen with a standard commercial (though at times it seems more a mystical



attention to what will sell. Her programs have no theme, no di- rection, and no purpose. They are there to be consumed. And for a university audience, that is just not good enough.

Rodriguez' concern over her dropping revenue has led her to cancel the Wednesday film sched- ule and book more commercial films on Fridays. Although we cannot argue the importance of dollars and cents, we can point out that the Wednesday film pro- gram offers an ideal forum for showing classical American art.

Please turn to page 24.

APPENDIX K

STIPENDS FROZEN INDEFINITELY

Highlander
Thursday, February 7, 1973
By unanimous vote

The Highlander Page 3

ASUCR commissioners' stipends frozen indefinitely

John Fox

In a surprise move, the ASUCR Legislative Council, meeting in executive session late Thursday night, froze the stipends of ASUCR's Commissioners of Entertainment and Special Projects. The vote was unanimous—13-0.

In a news conference after the session, Council Chairman Steve McDougal (Rep-Soc & Behav) explained, "We hope that as a result of this action the two commissioners will become more responsive to the council in terms of what they are doing. We have not heard one word from them."



Commissioner of Entertainment Glo Rodriguez

"Everyone was reluctant and considered the action a drastic one, but inescapable," External Coordinator Dave Wilmon (Rep-Hum) explained. "The objective of the resolution is to make the commissioners appear before the council," he added.

The council's action came in the wake of controversy stirred up two weeks ago when a *Highlander* editorial called for the resignations of both commissioners charging that they were "bereft of competence, imagination, and interest in their jobs".

Chris Lara, Commissioner of Special Projects, spoke



Chris Lara, Commissioner of Special Projects

main commissioner all year, no matter what! No way am I going to resign." She receives \$900 a year, the largest ASUCR stipend.

Amid the claims and counter-claims on both sides, central to the argument is the number of times the commissioners were asked to attend meetings of the council and what ways were open to council members to exert control over the activities of commissioners.

According to McDougal, the council "first requested them to appear, then asked them to appear, and then directed them to appear" or report to the council—freezing the budget "was the next natural step".

Lara and Rodriguez contend that they were asked only once to attend the meetings.

Rodriguez complains that Patti Allison (Rep-Bio-Ag) and Andy Ach (Rep-Soc & Behav) are the only council members to come to her with entertainment suggestions and is resentful of the council asking her to report to them "when they are out of touch" with their constituency.

She is distressed that the Leg Con is not communicating with its undergraduate committees. Rodriguez says she has formed her own committee to gather entertainment suggestions and feels that she is in touch with the campus. Reflecting upon her reasons for becoming Commissioner of Entertainment (a popularly-elected position), she said, "I ran because I wanted to hear from the general student body."

Rodriguez also plans to report to the council at their next regular meeting, two weeks from today. At that time, the council will hear Rodriguez' report and "determine whether she deserves her stipend", according to McDougal. The same applies to Lara.

Rodriguez analyzed the forces at play by saying that she felt "pressured by a few individuals on Leg Con to be their puppet. The more I think about it, the more I think certain individuals are trying to scare me into resigning."

Internal Coordinator Jeff Shelton felt that because of the ASUCR constitution, "the only options the Leg Con has in dealing with commissioners under this constitution is budgetary. We took the most moderate action we could at this time only after repeated attempts to get the commissioners to report."

Although records of student government actions in past years are incomplete and generally unreliable as sources of information, no council member can recall stipends ever being frozen.

Last year, however, MECHA and NASA leveled charges of "racism" against then Commissioner of Fine Arts (the post was renamed "Entertainment" this year) Jon Slutsky.

The council eventually cleared Slutsky of any wrongdoing in the hassle.

Photo by break

Jocks now... weeks ago.

APPENDIX L

BLACK HOUSE ARSON INCIDENT

'BLACK HOUSE' DESTROYED BY ARSON-SET EXPLOSION

Black House, the headquarters of the UCR Black Students' Union, was destroyed by an arson-set explosion and fire during the spring break.

The house was unoccupied at the time of the explosion and there were no injuries, one fire official said.

All of the BSU literature, office supplies, and furniture were burned, according to John D'Antignac, BSU chairman. The BSU had received no threats previous to the incident, he added.

The BSU had occupied the building since January, D'Antignac said. The off-campus location had been an important factor in the success of community-oriented programs related to drug abuse, tutoring, and other problem areas, he said.

"It's just going to squash our whole program if we're forc-

ed to take a place on campus," he said. "We've only recently been able to get our programs off the ground because people come to us much more readily if we're off-campus. The black community still feels largely alienated from the university."

D'Antignac said the BSU might ask the university for financial aid in finding another location off-campus and as near to the black community as possible.

Evidence indicated that the arsonist spread papers throughout the house and then doused them with gasoline, said Ward Ensley, Riverside Fire Department battalion chief. There were indications of forced entry into the house, he said, and an empty 10-gallon gas container was found nearby.

Because of gasoline vapor in the air, an explosion occurred when ignition was attempted,

said Ensley, and this explosion did most of the damage. It blew out windows in the front and back and cracked the walls and ceiling.

The entire interior was damaged, he said.

"Whoever did this might also have been hurt," Ensley noted, "but we didn't find anything to definitely establish that."

The explosion was followed by a small fire that had burned itself out by the time fire units responded to the report. An unidentified passer-by had helped extinguish the flames with a garden hose through the windows, witnesses said.

Ensley estimated damage to the University-owned structure at \$3,000, in addition to \$500 in contents. The Riverside Fire Department is currently investigating the arson in cooperation with the UCR police.



Photo by susano durate

Interior of Black House, following explosion.

THE HIGHLANDER

VOLUME XIX NUMBER TWENTY-ONE special beginner's issue

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 1972

APPENDIX M

CHAIR OF BLACK STUDIES

Thursday, November 9, 1972

The Highla

New chairman assessing, evaluating black studies

Kathleen Raeger

The UCR department of black studies has a new chairman in the person of Jesse McDade. McDade, a native of Knoxville Tennessee, is one of the few blacks in the nation holding doctorates in philosophy.

Since he is new at the job, McDade is still assessing and evaluating the UCR black studies program. But he does have some plans. Funding permitting, the new chairman would add an economist and a psychologist to the teaching staff.

"I would also like to see the program expanded in the field of fine arts. I would like to see plays produced by black playwrights . . . We have a great many people in black studies who are interested in drama, and I would like to see some black plays produced," McDade said.

McDade feels that one of the purposes of black studies is to teach such courses as philosophy, history, and economics from a black perspective. He observed that while most students are familiar with the thinking of Hegel and Kant, fewer know what black philosophers have written.

McDade plans to teach a course on justice next quarter, using the classical philosophers, but also emphasizing such black thinkers as Eldridge Cleaver, Bobby Seale, and George Jackson.

Black men, McDade observes, have a pretty sophisticated idea of justice.

McDade feels that white students, as well as black students, will profit from taking courses in his department. He maintained that a student's education is deficient if s/he doesn't know something about Afro-American history. He observed that it is the purpose of a university to produce a well-rounded individual.

When asked about a recent article in *The Los Angeles Times* purporting to show a decline in interest in ethnic studies, McDade said that there has been no such decline manifested at UCR, and that he

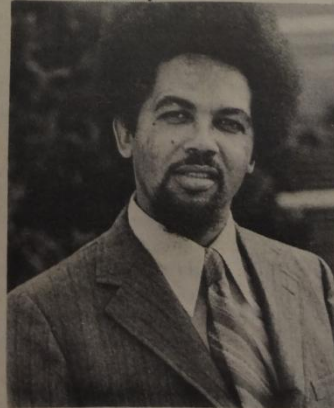
doesn't feel there will be as long as the program is viable and ever-growing.

It must not be allowed to stagnate, but, like all other academic departments, there must be constant care to introduce programs that fill the needs of the students, he said. He went on to say that, where programs die out, they do so from lack of support and commitment from supporting institutions.

He noted that the black studies department is interdisciplinary, that its teachers come from all departments. Black studies, McDade said, does not compete with other departments, but rather complements them. He also observed that other departments on campus do not recruit blacks as actively as black studies.

When asked about the role of black studies in the Black Student Union (BSU), McDade said that every student organization has to be sponsored and supported by an academic department. In this way, he went on, black studies sponsors the BSU and will continue to do so.

"The Black Student Union creates a positive self-regard for black students," McDade said: "we will continue to assist in projects they innovate, such as its tutorial program. Helping in the black community, as I see it, is helping the whole community."



Jesse McDade

APPENDIX N

BLACK WOMEN'S STUDY GROUP

Black women's study group

The recently formed Black Women's Study Group has consistently drawn standing room only crowds at their twice weekly meetings in the International Lounge.

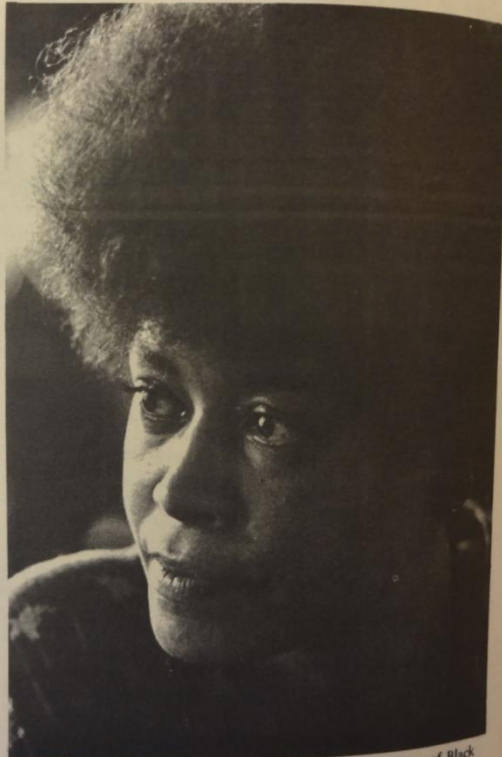
The lecture series, sponsored in part by the black studies department and the Black Students' Union (BSU), and organized by UCR students Josie Taylor and Regina Darby, began May 22 and ends June 8 with a panel discussion of the educational needs of the black woman.

Speakers so far have included Toni Cade, author of *The Black Woman* and *Tales for Black Folks*, Dr. Evelyn Thomas of the Martin Luther King Hospital in Los Angeles, and Abby Lincoln, singer, actress, and essayist.

The UCR Black Women's Study Group is modeled after the UCLA group of the same name.

According to Taylor, UCR, UCLA, and other campuses with similar programs are cooperating to bring interesting speakers for the lecture series.

The next scheduled lecture will be by Haili Gremi, producer and director of *Child of*.
Please turn to page 29.



Actress, poet Abby Lincoln speaking at May 23 meeting of Black Women's Study Group.

APPENDIX O

INTER-ASIAN CLUB COUNCIL

Asian clubs unite to form the Inter Asian Club Council

by Mark Kendall
staff writer

The over 600 members of UCR's seven Asian clubs have united to form the Inter Asian Club Council (IACC).

The Council held its first meeting last week to discuss ways to foster Asian unity.

Members of the Asian-Indian Student Association, Chinese Student Association, Filipino Student Union, International Club, Japanese Student Association, Korean Student Association, and Vietnamese

Student Association will now have access to each other's functions and events.

According to Maricel Villanveva, IACC president, the purpose of the Council is to "unify members of the Asian and Pacific Islander organizations here at UCR through cultural interaction and social events."

Villanveva denies that there has been friction between the Asian organizations in the past but, "We have to improve our communication with one another," she said.

IACC member Lynn Chow believes the IACC is necessary because, "we basically

have nothing to join clubs together. There's IFC and Panhellenic for the Greek organizations, but the clubs need something, too."

IACC member Gary Lo believes the past success of the separate Asian clubs has paradoxically made some things more difficult for them now.

"At first, the Asian clubs were really small and we received a lot of help from Campus Activities. Now that we're growing, they don't feel they need to help us as much. So, we have to work together."

As a start, the IACC plans to participate

in the upcoming Scots' Week activities and is also planning to hold the first ever IACC Olympics. The IACC Olympics are scheduled for Saturday, April 29, from 8 AM to 5 PM.

Looking to the future, Villanveva said, "We want to invite others to explore our culture. We know more about non-Asians than they know about us."

Chow put it more simply, "We want to show people that all Asians are not the same," she said.

APPENDIX P

APSP ADVISOR GRACE YOO

17 OCTOBER, 1989

HIGHLANDER

A-8

Asian advisor seeks to raise awareness

by Patricia Leung
features writer

"I look Korean, but my heart feels American," said Grace Yoo, the new Asian advisor/activities programmer, about being an Asian-American.

As an Asian advisor, what does she do? Yoo is the first Asian advisor/activities programmer on campus. She oversees the Asian-Indian Student Association, Chinese Student Association, Ichiban (Japanese Student Association), Katipunan (Filipino Student Union), Korean Student Association, and the Vietnamese Student Association. "I can totally relate with what they (the students) are going through, because I was a student myself," said Yoo.

"I'm in charge of setting up all Asian student programs on campus, and I'm also the advisor to Inter-Asian Club Council," explained Yoo about her position.

Asian Heritage week is scheduled to be held during the Winter Quarter.

"I plan to bring some Asian-American speakers like Tritia Toyota and Michael Chang to campus," said Yoo.

"Asian-Americans lack the freedom to discover other academic disciplines. If you can mix the sciences and the liberal arts, you can have a better understanding of what's going on in the world," said Yoo.

Positive role model

Yoo is a warm, friendly, older-sister type that you can always look up to. She is willing to reach out, listen, and talk to anyone who cares to drop by her office for a little chat.

"I'm recruiting volunteers to start an Asian Student Academic Peer Counseling Organization," said Yoo. "There's also a

need for Asian student psychological counseling. I think there's a lot of pressure for the bio-medical and business students."

Yoo, a recent graduate of UC Irvine, is continuing her education at the Loma Linda University graduate school. During her undergraduate years, Yoo was a reporter and an advertising director for the *East-West Rise* at UCI. *East-West Rise* is a newspaper focusing on Asian-American issues. Yoo anticipates publishing a similar newspaper at UCR during the Asian Heritage week.

Was "ashamed to be Asian"

Despite Yoo's cultural awareness, she used to be "ashamed to be Asian."

"I grew up in Caucasian areas. People made fun of my flat nose. In junior high, people thought I was a foreign exchange student," said Yoo.

Of course, all of this changed. The Korean Christian Fellowship at UCI created a "turning point."

"Through the Korean Christian Fellowship, I began to understand my culture. God gave me the culture. I should appreciate what God gave me, and not resent it," said Yoo. "By understanding Christianity and God at a deeper level, I was able to appreciate my ethnic background."

Appreciating a culture is one thing, and accepting it is another. Yoo hates the "male chauvinism" she sees in the Korean culture.

"I like groupism. I think the American culture is too individualized. It's important for people to be involved with their ethnic background, but yet have a balance. There's a need to interact with different races," Yoo said.



Ong Chhua/Highlander

New Asian student advisor Grace Yoo

BETA THETA PI
UCR's newest fraternity

COLONIZATION
January 22nd - January 27th

B

APPENDIX Q

RALLY AGAINST RACISM

HIGHLANDER MAGAZINE
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, INTERESTS
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SECTION B

IMAGES OF UNREST

Last week's protest began this well-orchestrated choreography for a group of mostly minority students. They were representing various campus ethnic organizations, moved at one point to a nearby food hall, but later with the word "racist" scrawled on their shirts. They were then dispersed into an assembly of the crowd into an assembly of the crowd. They, too, had their shirts got to get scattered throughout the campus and reverberated against buildings, causing the dog wardens to look up, their tongues wagging.

The UCR campus, deemed an arena by some, was heading the spotlight last week because of the wave of racial incidents. But why? Some students, witnessing the protest, were confused about the issue. When the protest started, they were in front of the South Tower, a student audience viewed the night with confusion.

"Who's for racism?" Michael Davis, a senior philosophy major, said.

"I don't know what they're protesting. They interrogated me about who wants to get exposed. What did he have to do? Am I protesting against the band?"

What Davis didn't know, when many UCR students don't know, is the source of the multicultural coalition's frustration. They say their concerns spring from years of incidents caused by what they feel is anti-minority sentiment. The incident that sparked the rally, many protesters said, was a Biology teaching assistant's summer-time assault on Asian undergraduate. "There's 'The' Day. There's 'The' Day," said a professor who said he and TA in Professor Kallher's Alkatasar's Biology lab,

punched. They four times to the face last June. They said Arvelo "referred to other Asians as 'chinks,'" "slips" and "punks." Arvelo was convicted of misdemeanor battery and received a two-year probation sentence, but the administration reacted with punishment: Arvelo's campus punishment, which is considered about the nature of the attack on "The." Many students are calling the incident a case of racial hate.

Many campus ethnic groups interpreted the administration's response as an attempt to sweep racial issues under the carpet. Deanna Bell, a graduate TA in Comparative Literature, summed up these sentiments. "Had I punched the student I would be out of school."

If Arvelo's assault was the administration's spark, then the issue would be the administration's unhelpful response.

Although Tre didn't attend the rally, he explained what he perceived as the rally's cause, which didn't necessarily involve himself. "My case was not the main issue of the rally. I believe the rally was about students expressing their concerns about the administration's lack of sensitivity when dealing with racial incidents and issues on campus," he said.

Many view the summer assault as another incident in a string of possible campus racial hate crimes. Recently another student took place that angered campus ethnists. On Sept. 24, a teaching assistant, Bruce Cheng, was having a party at the Rappaport house with a friend around 12:30 a.m. As they were walking through the parking lot, a car drove towards them, he said. A

on-chair of MECCA, said, "Cases made up 25 percent of the class's population but represented only eight percent of the student body and fell into its faculty members."

Last week's protest adds a new chapter to the list of alleged racial events at UCR. As Medina pointed out during the protest, their demonstrations are calls for action: "We have demands and want met. We are not going to take anything, no compromise. These are not long term goals. We want them now."

This is not the only piece of evidence critics say indicates racism further back than this summer.

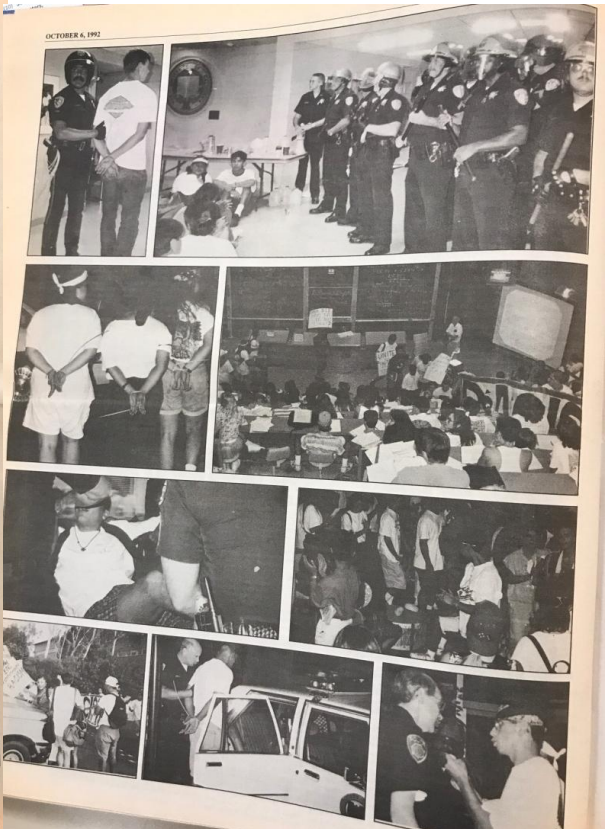
There were reports during the Civil war of Middle Eastern students being arrested on campus.

Students protested the Court's sponsorship of South West last year, successfully forcing the company from the event. Medina said that the beer company's chairman, William K. Coon, had publicly defended the participation of black men and that the beer company contributed funds to homophobic organizations.

In June of 1991 a black office worker took the university to court over alleged racial harassment and sexual harassment.

A harassment and hiring practices have been brought into question, with charges of sexism and harassment. A 1989 Phi Kappa Phi article detailed a class-action suit filed by two dozen staff members, charging discrimination, harassment and retaliation on the basis of race, age, national origin and disability against the university.

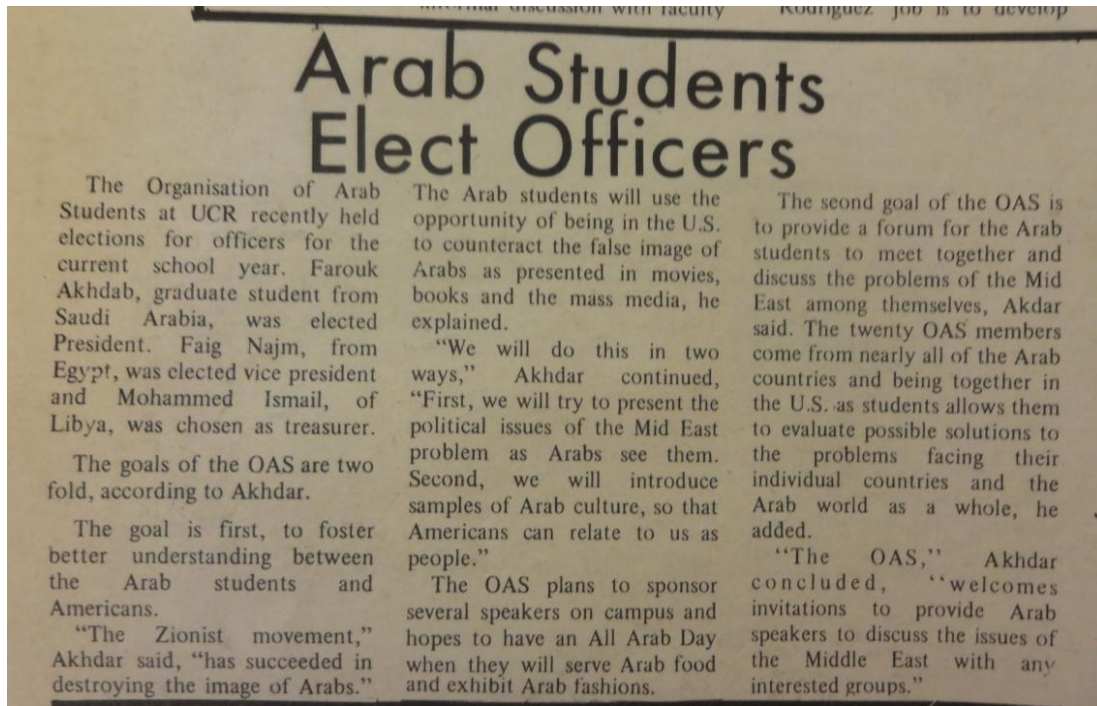
A protest in January, 1991, against the UC Regents to disinvest the campus. Lalo Medina, then



Photos on this page and B-2 were taken by staff writer Jen Barkler of the Highlander. The story is by Magazine Editor Victoria Salinas and News Editor Mendi Bolinger.

APPENDIX R

ARAB STUDENT ASSOCIATION



APPENDIX S

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT EMAIL

University of California, Riverside

Participant Recruitment Email

Letter from researcher to the potential participant

To: [Student affairs staff who work in the UCR cultural centers]

From: Marcela Ramirez, PhD Student

As a student affairs staff member, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview related to your overall experience as a cultural center professional at UCR.

You are invited to participate in a research study examining the experiences of cultural center professionals in higher education. This study is being conducted by Marcela Ramirez, PhD student from the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Riverside.

Your participation is voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your work environment or standing with UCR. You will not receive payment for your participation. Should you choose to participate, all identifying information will be deleted at the end of the study and no one other than the researcher will access information in the mean time.

If you would like to know more information about this study, please respond to this email and you will be provided with more information.

You do not have to respond if you are not interested in this study. If you do not respond, no one will contact you further.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Principal Investigator, Marcela Ramirez at marcelar@ucr.edu or 909-997-1117

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[PI SIGNATURE AND NAME]



APPENDIX T

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

STUDY TITLE: Experiences of Cultural Center Professionals in Higher Education

INVESTIGATORS:

Marcela Ramirez, University of California, Riverside, Graduate School of Education
Eddie Comeaux, Ph.D., University of California, Riverside, Graduate School of Education

PURPOSE: The investigators would like to invite you to participate in a research study to understand the experiences of student affairs staff working as cultural center professionals in higher education. Your general experiences, day to day work life in the cultural centers at UCR, and perspectives on effecting change on campus are the major topics of inquiry.

PROCEDURES: You will participate in two one-on-one interviews lasting no more than 1.5 hrs per interview. Participation is limited to individuals who are at least 18 years old and who are currently student affairs staff members working at cultural centers at UCR. The areas explored during the interviews include: 1) your personal and professional background, 2) tools and strategies for effecting change on campus, and 3) history of the cultural centers at UCR.

AUDIO RECORDING: With your consent these interviews will be audio recorded. The audio-recording will be transcribed either by the investigator or professional transcriber. If you decline to be audio recorded, you may still participate in the study.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in one interview will take approximately 1.5 hour. If you agree to a second interview, the individual interview will take no more than 1.5 hour.

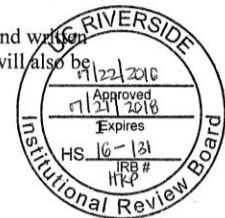
RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are minimal risks associated with this study. You can skip a question or choose not to answer a question at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your employment. You can also withdraw your participation at any time. The benefits reasonably expected from this study are the ability to ask for a report of the study's findings (which will not identify any individuals). I cannot and do not guarantee that you will receive any additional benefits from this study. The research itself will enhance higher education's understanding of the experiences of cultural center professionals.

PAYMENTS: You will not receive any payment for your participation.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE STUDY: Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or terminate participation at any time. You also have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you choose to withdraw from the study, please communicate with the researcher immediately. There will be no negative consequences as a result of your decision to withdraw. If you choose to stop participating completely, the researcher will destroy any data received from you, including audio-recordings, transcripts or documents you may have shared.

CONFIDENTIALTY: Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. The participant names themselves are not utilized and will also be

Version: July-16



removed from transcribed audio-recordings. In the case of individuals who share scenarios with others by name, the name of the individual will be removed and a pseudonym or "student, staff, faculty, administrator" classification will be utilized. All research records, including audio-recordings, transcriptions, researcher notes and documents will be stored in a locked cabinet and password protected computer. The principal investigator and faculty advisor will be the only people who will have access to this study's records to protect your safety and welfare. A professional transcriber may have access to the audio-recording for transcription purposes and will agree to protect your confidentiality.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions or concerns about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Principal Investigator, Marcela Ramirez at marcelar@ucr.edu or 951-827-5383. You can also contact the faculty advisor, Eddie Comeaux at eddie.comeaux@ucr.edu or 951-827-3934.

Independent Contact: If you have questions about your rights or complaints as a research subject, please contact the IRB Chairperson at (951) 827 - 4802 during business hours, or to contact them by email at irb@ucr.edu.

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.
Please initial Yes No

I give consent to be audio recorded during this interview.
Please initial Yes No

I give consent for recordings resulting from this study to be analyzed by the researcher for the finalized study which will not identify any individuals.
Please initial Yes No

I give consent to be contacted for a second interview.
Please initial Yes No

I give consent for the second interview to be audio-recorded.
Please initial Yes No

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT: I understand that participation in the study is voluntary. I may refuse to answer any question or discontinue my involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I might otherwise be entitled. My decision will not affect my future relationship with UC Riverside. My signature below indicates that I have read the information in this consent form and I consent to participate.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PRINT NAME _____

Version: July-16



APPENDIX U

GENERAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Personal and Professional Background:

- 1) Would you tell me a little bit about yourself and your background? General information such as where you grew up and any personal identifiers that are important to you.
- 2) What is your educational background? What degrees have you earned? If you are currently working on pursuing a degree please share a bit about that experience.
- 3) How did you end up working as a cultural center professional at UCR? What about this position was interesting to you?
- 4) What are your day to day job duties? Please describe a typical work day.
- 5) What professional training have you received if any? What additional skills or training do you need or would like to acquire? Are you a member of any professional organizations?
- 6) What theories, if any, inform your practice as a cultural center professional?
- 7) Can you share a time when you applied theoretical constructs to your work as a cultural center professional? What was the impact on students, the center or the institution?
- 8) How do your personal identities such as race/ethnicity or any other identifiers impact or influence your work as a cultural center professional?

Effecting Change on Campus:

- 9) What do the terms change agent and grassroots leader mean to you? Follow-up: Would you consider yourself a grassroots leader or change agent?
- 10) What are some of your tried and true strategies for effecting change on campus?
- 11) What are some of the common barriers? How do you navigate these challenges?
- 12) How do you go about creating allies and coalition building?
- 13) How do you initiate and navigate conversations about social change on campus?
- 14) Who else does this work with you? Does anyone challenge the work?
- 15) How would you describe the culture and racial climate of this campus?
- 16) How do you think your peers or the administration perceive your work as a cultural center professional? How does the administration respond to your work?

Cultural Centers at UCR

- 17) Can you please share your understanding of the historical background of the center?
- 18) What would you say is the role, purpose and function of the cultural center on campus?
- 19) What is the organizational structure of the cultural center and who do you report to?
- 20) What is the most rewarding aspect of working in a cultural center? What is the most challenging?
- 21) Take a moment to reflect on your experiences as a cultural center professional at UCR. What have been some of your challenges and triumphs?
- 22) Describe a time when your work as a cultural center professional was appreciated. When was it not?
- 23) What are some of the major issues you and the center are currently working on?
- 24) What is the role of cultural centers in the future? What is the unfinished work?
- 25) Do you have any final thoughts or additional comments regarding any previous or unasked questions?