



Black Student Success Center

PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

Our key objectives for this document are to share the Phase 1 temporary strategy for the expansion of the Black Student Success Center and the relative facility implications and budget needs to support this important initiative. The future, permanent, location for the Black Student Success Center will be determined by the Facilities Master Plan.

BACKGROUND

Pasadena Area Community College District's (PCC) mission to create an equity-minded learning community, and its efforts to close equity and opportunity gaps in degree completion and transfers for Black/African American students is consistent with the institutional priorities outlined in the Educational Master Plan and the statewide Vision for Success Goals. Our institutional priority of working towards building an equity-minded learning community rests on the strategy of weaving existing and emerging resources to further establish equity-minded impact efforts and communicate a sense of belonging for students who have been historically marginalized in higher education (Equity Plan, 2019).

The pro-active and intentional goal of addressing the needs of Black/African American students at Pasadena City College has led to the College's commitment to expanding The Black Student Success Center. Research has shown that the creation of highly visible locations on college campuses that foster a sense of belonging directly correlates to the increase of student retention, academic achievement, and persistence to degree attainment (Strayhorn, 2008). Having a dedicated, highly-visible, physical space creates a sense of community through bonds with faculty, staff, peers, and organizations and affirms the collective support perceived on campus by students (Harper & John Quaye, 2007, Strayhorn, 2008).

On June 17, 2020, the Pasadena Area Community College District passed and adopted resolution number 653 whereby PCC firmly declared its solidarity with Black Lives Matter and announced its commitment to the soundness and advancement of our Black/African American students, faculty, and staff. PCC pledged its commitment to the inclusion and progress of Black/African American students, and to close all equity gaps. ***It is with this commitment in mind that the Facilities Standing Committee, in allyship with our Black/African American faculty, staff and students work to advance justice and equity at our college to expand the services offered and create a new location for the Black Student Success Center.***



GOALS OF PROJECT

Our understanding of the project's goals are as follows:

1) Determine space requirements

We recognize that there is a parallel effort underway to assess the use of facilities on campus and create new academic spaces to serve the College's growing space needs. Our work will not conflict with that of the approved Facilities Master Plan. Rather, both efforts will complement one another, seeking to implement a phased approach so that we may gain additional insights throughout the process. (Reference Addendum A)

- Service capacity – the center should serve 45-50 students at anytime
- Offices – the center should have a minimum of 3 closed office spaces but preferably 4
- Convertible/flexible space – the center should have space for presentations, special events, and studying
- Tutoring space – the space should have areas where tutoring services can be provided (similar to the athletic zone)
- Conference Room – the center staff should have access to a nearby conference room areas or have one dedicated.
- Exterior of center – the center should be adjacent to outdoor spaces.
- Classroom space – the center staff should have access to nearby classroom space to be used for workshops, guest speakers, etc.
- Miscellaneous – the center should have a check-in station, good lighting, and carpet.

2) Locate existing space on the Colorado campus

Review existing spaces on campus that require minimal modification that does not require Division of the State Architect (DSA) approval. (Reference Addendum B)

- CC Building (Lancer Pantry)
- L Building (Career Center),
- R Building (R523 – classroom)
- D building (D300) – **ruled out due to current usage demands

3) Review budget requirements

With growing budget concerns in mind, our goal is to locate spaces that require minimal renovation where existing furniture can be utilized. The proposed budget for Phase 1 of this



project is not to exceed \$10,000 given the future investment in realizing the approved Facilities Master Plan.

APPROACH

To help achieve the goals of the project, the evaluation team reviewed current unassigned and/or vacant spaces across the Colorado campus. By gathering information on locations and uncovering useful insights about how Black/African American students, staff, and faculty intend to use the space, we hope to move beyond our assumptions or guesses that may be off the mark. The more knowledge we learn upfront, the more confident we can be that our choices will lead to a final decision that meets project goals, solves the right problems, and addresses the needs of our Black/African American students in current and future phases of this project.

Evaluation team

A cross-functional team of stakeholders –Co-chairs of the Facilities Standing Committee, Ujima / Blackademia Counseling faculty, student representatives, Facilities Space Modification Coordinator, Information Technology, and the Assistant Superintendent of Business and Administrative Services and the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, all participated in the evaluation process. In addition, a survey targeting the end-users of the space has also been designed and launched by the Ujima / Blackademia Counseling faculty.

Evaluation Summary

The project committee discussed and first considered unassigned vacated spaces in the following buildings; CC Building (Lancer Pantry), L Building (Career Center), and R Building (R523) with the space requirements in mind.

- CC Building (Lancer Pantry)
 - **Pros:** Location is near the existing Ujima program space in the CC Building and there is a conference room adjacent that could be utilized.
 - **Cons:** Space does not accommodate the service capacity, lacks visibility, lacks the necessary office space for program staff and faculty without renovation, and lacks sufficient space for tutoring area and personal counseling. Extending the Black Student Success Center into the Lancer Pantry would exceed the proposed budget for Phase 1.
- L Building (Career Center)
 - **Pros:** Location is highly visible and connected to various student service support areas (Admissions, Financial Aid, Counseling and the Transfer



Center), space accommodates service capacity requirements, has the necessary office space for program staff and faculty, has sufficient space for tutoring area and personal counseling, has adjustable carpet tiles which provide efficient modification capabilities of electrical outlets/charging stations, has existing furniture for use and requires little facilities modification.

- **Cons:** Space does not have a dedicated conference room.
- R Building (R523 – classroom)
 - **Pros:** space accommodates service capacity requirements, has sufficient space for tutoring, workshops and events, and a conference room.
 - **Cons:** Space would require substantial modifications to meet the center needs. The space modifications for office space, personal counseling and tutoring, and a conference room would exceed the proposed Phase 1 budget.
- D building (D300) – **ruled out due to current usage demands
 - Currently, D300 is serving a considerable amount of students and therefore not an optimal option to use as it would negatively impact existing services offered by the Learning Assistance Center.

RECOMMENDATION

The Facilities Standing Committee, in allyship with our Black/African American faculty, staff, and students, formally recommends the vacated Career Center as the optimal space for Phase 1 for the Black Student Success Center. (Reference Addendum C)

Rationale:

- Space is highly-visible, demonstrating the commitment of Pasadena City College to our Black/African American students, faculty, and staff.
- Space would require minimal modifications and existing furniture and office space would be leveraged for the Center's needs.
- Space is located close to critical services needed to support Black/African American Students – Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Counseling, and the Transfer Center.
- Space location and needs would be reconsidered when and the District moves forward with the Facilities Master Plan and redesign of L Building and R Building renovations.

Addendum A

Black Student Success Center Wish list

An open floor plan to maintain an inviting environment that allows students to flow into each area and readily make use of resources is essential. Frosted sliding glass doors or retractable/pocket doors on office spaces would provide privacy during one-on-one meetings while maintaining open lines of sight otherwise (Figure 1 below). For maximum flexibility, a retractable room divider to partition the main lounge/tutoring area into two spaces is also desired (Figure 2 below).

Ideally, the Black Student Success Center would like to remain permanently in the Campus Center. The proximity to other important resources such as the bookstore, student bank, Piazza, and office of student life make this location ideal.

A. Service capacity: 45-50 students

B. Offices – (Minimum 3, but preferably 4)

1. Office for the Program Coordinator
 - One station/desk
2. Counseling/Personal therapy
 - 2 stations/desks
3. Program office (state of the art)
 - 4 stations/Desks
 - Mac computers for each station
 - Giant Calendar
 - Whiteboard with marker and eraser holder tray
 - Storage space -- lockers/cubbies for office assistants
4. Coaching (state of the art)
 - 3 stations/desks (2 active coaches; anticipating a third)
 - Desktop computers for each station
 - Giant Calendar
 - Whiteboard with marker and eraser holder tray
 - Student seating
 - Storage space -- lockers/cubbies for tutors

C. Lounge area – (Convertible/flexible space for presentations, special events, studying, etc.)

- Couches and chairs

Figure 1 Frosted Glass sliding doors



- Charging stations
- Flat-screen TV for presentations & to highlight graduates (or short throw projector)
- Library/shelving

D. Tutoring space: (Similar to the Zone)

- Hidden monitor desks (Figure 3 below)
- Chairs
- Charging stations
- Laptop cart (currently have 4 computers to lend)
- Whiteboard with marker and eraser holder tray

E. Conference room – (for coordinating, planning, off-campus contacts meetings, staff meetings, club meetings, and student use)

- Conference Table and chairs (to seat 5-7?)
- Whiteboard with marker and eraser holder tray
- Short throw projector
- Flat-panel T.V. for presentations

Figure 2: Retractable room divider



F. Kitchenette – (Similar to the one in the career center)

- Small pantry for water and snacks
- Refrigerator
- Storage space for supplies

G. Exterior of center

- Seating with outlets where students can eat
- Corkboard for flyers and announcements
- Adjacent to outdoors (if possible)

H. Classroom space – (also to be used for workshops, guest speakers, etc.)

- Adjacent to the center
- Flexible/movable desks and chairs
- Dedicated to courses such as Black History, Sociology, etc.

I. Miscellaneous

- Check-in station
- Printing station to provide free, limited printing (e.g., 10 pages)
- Dark carpet (to conceal any spills that may occur)
- Good lighting
- Matching furniture

Addendum B

Lancer Pantry



Career Center





Career Center – continued



R 523





Addendum C

Esteemed Members of the College Council,

The Facilities Standing Committee would like to recommend that Pasadena City College (PCC) support the expansion of The Black Student Success Center.

The expansion of The Black Student Success Center supports PCC's mission to create an equity-minded learning community, and its efforts to close equity and achievement gaps in degree completion and transfers. This endeavor is consistent with the institutional priorities outlined in the Educational Master Plan and the statewide Vision for Success Goals. For example, our institutional priority of working towards building an equity-minded learning community rests on the strategy of weaving existing and emerging resources to further establish equity-minded impact efforts and communicate a sense of belonging for students who have been historically marginalized in higher education (Equity Plan, 2019).

During the June 4, 2020 listening forum hosted by Dr. Gena Lopez, there were several commendations for the support programs and services provided by the Black Student Success Center (e.g., Ujima and Blacademia). Students repeatedly attributed their college success to these programs and to the support services they received. Significantly, these testimonials illustrated that our students had developed a sense of belonging by way of this success center. These accounts are consistent with research indicating that, particularly for students of color, individuals who develop a sense of belonging within their institution exhibit higher success rates overall. More precisely, research has shown that sense of belonging is a powerful force associated with student retention, academic achievement, and persistence to degree attainment (Strayhorn, 2008). Moreover, sense of belonging has been positively correlated with academic achievement through bonds with faculty, staff, peers, and organizations (Harper & John Quaye, 2007). Furthermore, Strayhorn (2008) affirms that sense of belonging is a reflection of the collective support perceived on campus by students.

As you are aware, on June 17, 2020, the Pasadena Area Community College District passed and adopted resolution number 653. Employing this document, PCC firmly declared its solidarity with Black Lives Matter and announced its commitment to the soundness and advancement of our Black/African American students, faculty, and staff. PCC pledged its commitment to the inclusion and progress of Black/African American students, and to close all equity gaps. Finally, PCC called on the members of our community to work towards advancing justice and equity at our college and within our society.

In accordance with these resolutions, and as one way to work towards the goals that have been set, the Facilities Standing Committee is dedicated to supporting the allocation of a larger, dedicated space for The Black Student Success Center. Research on this issue has identified fundamental aspects to establish resource centers that fully support Black/African American students. These elements include dedicated space, dedicated staff, permanent funding, student services, community resources, academic support, student organizations, cultural programming, and research agenda (Patton, 2006). Meeting the needs of our students is an ongoing process. Once established, future evaluations of the center will substantiate PCC's resolve to support our Black/African American students, faculty, and staff.



Thank you for your consideration,
The Facilities Standing Committee

Harper, S. R., & John Quaye, S. (2007). Student organizations as venues for Black identity expression and development among African American male student leaders. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(2), 127-144. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/166

Patton, L.D. (2006). Black culture centers: still central to student learning. *About Campus*, 11(2), 2-8. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.160>

Strayhorn, T.L. (2008). Sentido de pertenencia: a hierarchical analysis predicting sense of belonging among Latino college students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 7(4), 301-320. doi: 10.1177/1538192708320474