



**Annual Assessment Report Template: Needs or Benchmarking**  
Academic Year: 2018-2019

**Date of Report Submission:** July 8, 2019

**Name of Department:** Office of Multicultural Student Success

**Name of Contact Person:** Cory Barnes

**Name of Person(s) completing report or contributing to the project:** Eva Long

**Type of Assessment:** Needs

**Part I: Follow-Up on Last Year's Assessment Report Recommendations**

The Office of Multicultural Student Success underwent a major reorganization in the last 3 years. As such, our energy was primarily spent on establishing foundational statements that define our mission, vision and values. Prior assessment projects were no longer relevant to our new structure and therefore of limited use. This year's project will serve as a baseline for our new structure and allow us to take data-driven action as we move forward.

**Part II: Report on This Year's Assessment Project**

**I. Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine the needs of undergraduate students served by the programs and resources offered in the Cultural and Resource Centers. We also explored if our assumptions aligned with the needs of the population we serve. The methodology consisted of a ten-question survey administered to 1599 unique student participants. The participants provided us with data that will help inform the work we do, affirm the assumption underlying our current practices and help to inform the ongoing development of the work we do. The findings indicated that an overwhelming majority of participants engage in Culture and Resource Center programming to find a sense of belonging and learn about other social identity groups. Our next step is to present these findings internally and address gaps that were discovered in the study.

**II. Assessment Question**

What do undergraduate students served by the Cultural and Resource Centers need relative to current department offerings?

**III. Introduction & Context**

**Project Overview**

Patton (2010) posits, "literature over the past few decades has consistently confirmed that students of color face discrimination and feelings of isolation within predominantly White collegiate spaces, whether the classroom, the residence hall, or the student union" (p. xvii). Patton speaks to the need for counter spaces at predominantly white institutions for students with marginalized identities and sexualities to help create a sense of belonging.

For this year's 2018-2019 assessment project, the Office of Multicultural Student Success conducted a needs assessment survey that consisted of ten-questions to amass data from our targeted population with the intent of using the data to inform our work. The survey was distributed to students who had participated in any of the myriad of programs, initiatives, events, and spaces offered in our office from January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019.

The strategic plan for 2024, Grounded in Mission, states that priority two is to ensure a welcoming, engaging, diverse, and inclusive campus environment. To that end, our office, the Office of Multicultural Student Success (OMSS) seeks to cultivate belongingness, retention, and persistence to graduation for students of color, students who demonstrate financial need, first-generation college students, undocumented immigrant students, and students with marginalized genders and sexualities. This assessment project was conducted to examine alignment with the institutional mission, our mission, and the needs of the target population we serve.

#### **IV. Data Collection & Methodology**

##### **Population and Sample**

This population of focus for this project was all undergraduate students who participated in any activities or services provided by the department. However, the sample for this project was limited to current DePaul students who participated in at least one activity or service hosted by the department during the past year and a half, between January 25, 2018 through May 23, 2019. The decision to collect data from this sample was to ensure students could speak to their relatively recent experiences with the Cultural and Resources Centers.

##### **Data Collection**

A ten-question survey was used as the data collection method. The survey was uniquely designed for this assessment project. Eva Long and Cory Barnes worked collaboratively to create the tool for this project. To populate the questions for the survey, Eva and Cory worked with their colleagues in OMSS to generate assumptions that informed the final questions posed in the survey. Only one method (survey) was used, and the information collected was demographical and sought to understand why participants visited the centers. The survey was distributed on May 28<sup>th</sup> 2019 and concluded at midnight on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

##### **Data Analysis**

Data were coded for themes by Eva Long, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Desi American (APIDA) coordinator in OMSS. Yosso's cultural wealth model was applied to determine best practices for needs in the cultural and resource centers from the data.

Yosso (2005) developed the cultural wealth model as a framework from an asset-based lens. Through this paradigm, the framework looks at how students navigate postsecondary education. The key here is the focus on their strengths and not from a deficit lens.

Yosso (2005) outlines six key tenets of the cultural wealth model:

- Aspirational

- Linguistic
- Familial
- Social
- Navigational
- Resistance

The six forms of cultural wealth anchor the experience of people of color in postsecondary education and serve as the driving forces in the cultivation and ultimately, analysis of the survey data. Quantitative data was analyzed by calculating counts and frequencies for each question item and rank to identify the areas of greatest need among students.

### **Participant Consent**

Consent was not obtained from participants. Participants were notified that the survey was optional. Additionally, they were informed that they would enter a raffle for ten prizes along with the first 50 respondents automatically qualifying for a \$10 gift card. The choice not to elect for consent was due to the following disclaimer which was provided to participants in the survey prompt: “Your identifiable information will not be directly linked to your survey responses.” We protected participant’s identity by distributing an anonymous survey through DePaul’s Qualtrics survey platform. We collected demographic information but did not collect student ID numbers.

## **V. Data & Findings**

### **Response Rate and Demographics**

All students who have participated in any one Cultural and Resource Center program and event since January 25, 2018, as well as students affiliated with other OMSS programs were invited to participate in the OMSS Cultural and Resource Center’s survey. Students were identified by program managers and exported from the swipe function collected in OrgSync and Blackboard. We have chosen to sample participants who have engaged with any one of our programs to understand the effectiveness and satisfaction of current offerings from participants who are aware of the Cultural and Resource Centers. Participants who have opted into our services can speak to relevancy, effectiveness, and satisfaction of current programs and in addition to hopes and concerns to better build Centers that are conclusive of needs.

Swipe data identified 1,599, unique student participants. Email communication had been sent to 1,599 student participants on May 28, 2019. Additionally, OMSS program managers shared the survey with the participants in their programs which may have garnered additional respondents. The survey was open for a 10-day window frame; reminder emails were sent out on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and June 6<sup>th</sup>. A total of 508 participants completed the survey.

### **Key Findings**

- Demographic information was collected about the respondents. Results collected about race or ethnicity from participants show 31% (157) Hispanic/ Latino, 15% (76) African American, 14% (71) Asian, 29% (145) White, amongst indicators.
- To which gender identity participants most identify: 55% (332) Woman, 20% (120) Man, 16% (98) Cisgender, 6% (35) Non-binary/ gender queer, 2% (11) Trans.
- To which sexuality do participants most identify: 60% (306) Straight, 15% (77) Bi-sexual, 8% (41) Gay, 7% (38) Queer, 3% (15) Pansexual, 1% (7) Asexual. Please see Appendix A for a graph of demographic inquiries.
- 64% (325) spend their time at the Lincoln Park campus for academic purposes. 19% (97) spend their time at the Loop campus for academic purposes. 16% (82) spend their time at both campuses for academic purposes.
- 84% (421) spend their time at the Lincoln Park campus for social pursuits. 9% (45) spend their time at both campuses for academic pursuits. 7% (37) spend their time at the Loop campus for social pursuits.
- Participants were asked which of the Cultural and Resource Centers they have visited (check all that apply). 29% (250) visited the Latinx Cultural Center, 20% (176) visited the LGBTQIA+ Resource Center, 20% (172) have visited the Black Cultural Center, 18% (154) have visited the APIDA Cultural Center, and 13% (108) have never visited the Cultural and Resource Centers. The Centers encourage cross-cultural and Center engagement regardless if you identify in any of these spaces. Percentages of each Center visited have results that are close to one another. Please see Appendix B for the graph.
- Participants were asked to select reasons why they may go to the Cultural and Resource Centers. The listings provided were based on usage assumptions gathered by the staff of OMSS. Participants seek the Cultural and Resource Centers for: 25% (346) Sense of Belonging, 22% (297) Hanging out with friends, 18% (247) Physical Space/ Amenities, 15% (211) Engagement in critical conversations around naming, navigating, and resisting structural powers of power, privilege and oppression, 12% (167) Seeking advisement and referrals from Coordinators, 7% (97) It is a required assignment, <1% (2) Engagement with other centers outside of my identity. Distinctions between ‘hanging out with friends’ and feeling a ‘sense of belonging’ can be viewed as using the Centers as a physical space to spend time with friends and a ‘sense of belonging’ as the feeling of connection and community. Please see Appendix C for the graph.
- Participants were asked to measure the effectiveness of various program offerings of the Cultural and Resource Centers: Academic Culture, Coordinator’s Choice, PATHS Professional Institute, Intersect Series, Retreats, and Student-led programs. Effectiveness was measured by how the programs help participants feel a sense of belonging and provide tools and support to ensure their success at DePaul University. 22% (102) found programs supporting an Academic Culture to be extremely effective, 16% (76) found Coordinator’s Choice programs to be extremely effective, 19% (88) found PATHS Professional development programs to be extremely effective, 18% (82) found the Intersect Series to be extremely effective, 19% (88) found that overnight retreats were extremely effective and 34% (159) found that student-led programs were extremely effective. The

findings show that there is a higher percentage of participants who selected ‘N/A’ as of response than determining any of the programs on the scale of effectiveness. There is a notable high percentage ‘student-led programs’ to be extremely effective. Please see Appendix D for the graph.

- Having reflected on all of the questions, participants were asked what they need from the Cultural and Resource Centers in an open-ended question format. Two hundred fifty-three open-ended responses were collected and sorted through common themes. 13.4% (34) asked for improvement and an increase in marketing efforts of programs and of the Cultural and Resource Centers, so peers who are unfamiliar with the service can build awareness. 9.4% (24) spoke to needing a greater sense of belonging and 7.5% (19) are looking for a safe space for cross-cultural peer engagement and/ or allyship opportunities.
- Marketing and outreach was a consistent theme throughout the open-ended responses that not only asks for an improvement (13%) but also connects to needing more events (8%), not knowing what the centers offer (5%), and a need to do more outreach (3%). Please see Appendix E for the full chart of open-ended responses.

## **VI. Discussion & Interpretation of Findings**

In reflection of the usage of the Cultural and Resource Center programs and offerings, there is a variety of reasons why students opt into these services. Some participants are utilizing the centers not affiliated with their own racial or ethnic identity. In fact, 29% of participants identified as Caucasian (White) and three of the four centers are race/ethnicity centered. While white students may identify as LGBTQIA+, 20% of respondents reported visiting the LGBTQIA+ Resource Center and many of them were students of color. This evidence highlights the assumption that White students are choosing to involve in deeper reflection and attempts to interact with other social identity group members through programs inside and outside of the centers. This should not be a surprise as the local, and national climate and rhetoric have propelled students to learn and take action against systems of inequality. The findings have shown an ask for an increase in programming to encourage cross-peer engagement and how to be an ally (as a White student) about social justice issues.

Question 9 as displayed in Appendix D asks participants to rate the effectiveness of the list of programs and services provided by the Cultural and Resource Centers that aims to provide a sense of belonging and provide tools of support to ensure their success at DePaul. Findings show that students do not demonstrate understanding of mentioned programs or do not participate in them (i.e. Academic Culture, PATHS, Coordinator’s Choice, and Intersect). Core programming offered by the Centers range in response rates from being ‘extremely effective’ to ‘extremely ineffective’ and ‘N/A.’ Academic Culture, Coordinator’s Choice, PATHS Professional Institute, Intersect Series, and Retreats have a greater Not Applicable percentage (>34%) than Effective rates (<22%) which may demonstrate that participants are not able to distinguish core programs significance or participant pool did not attend. On the other hand, 34% answered student-led programs to demonstrate extreme effectiveness. Student-led programs include collaborations with student organizations, independent interest projects related to culture, identity or heritage, and/ or showcasing student artwork in the Center.

Marketing and outreach to students have been a theme that has been reflected heavily in the survey. Findings show that: 1) participants want to know about what events are taking place in the Cultural and Resource Centers and 2) open ended response findings from participants show that they have benefitted from the programs offered by the Cultural and Resource Centers and have additionally expressed the need for greater outreach to those who don't know the Centers exist (i.e. first year students). Improved efforts may address the lack of understanding of various program offerings (Appendix D), a need for more events (9.4%, Appendix E) and participants who have engaged in the programs but don't know what the Cultural and Resource Centers offer (5.1%, Appendix E). The Cultural and Resource Centers have celebrated their first anniversary on January 25, 2019. This assessment survey will contribute to continued efforts to understand the needs of DePaul students in their engagement with the Cultural and Resource Centers. This survey does not highlight the unique needs of each identity-specific center. The OMSS Cultural and Resource Centers are striving towards an intersectional and intercultural model that encourages students to participate and engage regardless of race/ethnicity or gender and sexuality while simultaneously serving target populations ascribed by each center. Understanding of each identity-specific center should be conducted on a continuous cycle.

A limitation that may have affected the findings or sample size may be the timeline of when this assessment survey was executed. The assessment was conducted May 28 - June 7, which is impacted by finals week and graduation festivities. Additionally, the participant pool collected by OrgSync and Blackboard swipes. Not all programs facilitated by the Cultural and Resource Centers had an OrgSync page created so there may be students not captured in solicitation data.

## **VII. Recommendations and Plans for Action**

### **Recommendations**

1. The Cultural and Resource Centers should continue their efforts in community building and outreach to DePaul University to share programs and initiatives that support minoritized students and commitment to diversity and inclusion. The focus of community building initiatives is to grow the center's relationship with and outreach to various constituents, including students, parents, campus departments, city of Chicago, and national professional colleagues. Patton (2010) outlines, "... [the] three key strategies for community building [include] effective marketing, strategic campus and community involvement, and outreach to multiple communities" (p.140). First, the Cultural and Resource Centers must work hand-in-hand with the marketing team of OMSS and Division of Student Affairs to develop a comprehensive marketing plan. Findings show a need to improve the marketing of events and understanding and existence of the Cultural and Resource Centers. Participants who filled out the survey still don't understand what the centers offer. If you don't tell them, they definitely won't come. Our work towards innovation and transformation in the Cultural and Resource Centers, it does not serve its purpose if no one is aware of them. Currently, the marketing utilizes three large scale posters (atrium, suite window, O'Connell

hallway), OrgSync that has a following of 191 members, Facebook page of 1,188 'likes,' flyers in the centers, and an Instagram following of 237. Our following includes community members that are aware of OMSS and the Cultural and Resource Centers, but intentional outreach needs to be done to DePaul and Chicago members outside the perimeters of our present following.

2. Historically, there has been a dissonance and disconnect between culture centers and White students, but we must consider conceptualizing cultural spaces to deconstruct Whiteness. Minoritized students are experiencing a hostile campus climate due to cultural centers being the hub and centralization of multiculturalism. It is paramount for the Cultural and Resource Centers "...to re-center in a social justice antiracist framework, for it implies that marginalized and privileged ethnic/racial cultural groups need to engage in a space where White students are challenged to think about their own identity by interacting with students of other races and ethnicities in a space cultivated on the basis of the experiences of the subjugated, not the privileged" (Patton, p.125). The centers should not only look at how they are addressing issues affecting minoritized students but how we are engaging a multicultural campus through campus programming that challenges the dominant culture. Appendix A demonstrates a significant 29% of White students who filled out the survey. 7.5% of responses in Appendix E asks for more cross-peer engagement and programs that suggest allyship conversations for communities the centers serve. There is a need to offer opportunities of engaging in programs that allow students to understand the social construction of Whiteness and dominance. It is essential for institutions to acknowledge the multiplicity of voices and experiences throughout the fabric of the campus and must encourage intercultural engagement in purposeful and meaningful ways.
3. Administrative practices are just as important as cultural programming and community outreach. For practitioners who are charged with promoting multiculturalism and education, it is necessary to think through operations (both physical and human) to construct an environment that is culturally sensitive. The environment that we create plays a major role in meeting students' needs. "By ensuring that centers are physically structured to be out of real use to students and encouraging staff in the center to establish a cultural environment of warmth and welcome, we recognize that culture is not only about celebration, ritual and tradition but also about space, rootedness and belonging" (Patton, p. 144). Presently, the center staff includes Coordinators, Front Desk Assistants, and student Programming Assistants. At the end of the assessment survey, participants were asked what they need from the Cultural and Resource Centers in an open-ended format. In Appendix E, 9% (24) have expressed a need for a sense of belonging, 8% (19) have expressed a need for a safe space for engagement while

Appendix C records 25% (346) of participants seeking out the Cultural and Resource Centers for a sense of belonging. Administrative practices that will be prioritized for the purposes of this assessment will be the cultivation of a cultural environment and staff professional development. “Culture centers should consistently be reminded of their obligation to serve as a culturally safe space where students of color [and communities of marginalized gender and sexualities], can see themselves reflected, embraced, and valued” (Patton, p.145). When planning for innovation and change, regardless of facility restraint, we most always begin from a model of excellence and challenge ourselves to the vision of the facility of excellence.

4. Finally, customer service training is a critical administrative component of effectively managing a culture center. “All staff from full-time workers to work-study students should engage in ongoing customer service training, as warm and welcoming interactions comprise the essence of culture centers” (Patton, p.149). In Appendix E, 9% (24) have expressed the need for a sense of belonging, 3% (8) have expressed a need for a safe space on campus, 2% (4) saying that there is a feeling of a cliquey environment in the Centers. With key findings, a training to cultivate a warm and welcoming environment by greeting those who enter while engaging new students in conversation about programs and offerings. The synergy between engaging centers to a student-centered environment cultivated by staff and peers will foster an environment that encourages a safe space, sense of belonging, and community building.

## **Action Plan**

### **Cultural and Resource Centers Comprehensive Marketing Plan**

- Summer 2019: Internal reflection, assessment, and evaluation of current marketing strategy with the marketing graduate assistant and Assistant Director of OMSS who currently oversees marketing and communication
- Fall 2019: Develop an outline of the marketing plan in writing to be used as a guide to building common language and understanding of execution and responsibilities. This should include efforts to outreach to the target population of each center, general constituents of DePaul including faculty, staff, and all students, and campus departments.
- Fall 2019: Develop an outreach tool to inform all students of program offerings in the Cultural and Resource Centers. Distribution of information should extend beyond current memberships displayed in social media followings.
- Fall 2019: Evaluate the ‘identity-specific cultural and resource center’ section of the DePaul OMSS website to provide a clearer understanding of the programs and services offered by the centers. For



example, the website encourages students to visit a Coordinator for additional support, but office numbers are not provided.

- Fall 2019: Maximize usage and interactions with DeHUB, the new online platform students will be interfacing with for more ways to be involved. Develop intentional, purposeful, and proactive ways to engage with students through DeHUB because it's an institutionalized platform used for student engagement across the Division of Student Affairs.

#### **Re-center Cultural and Resource Centers in a social justice framework.**

- Fall 2019: What are the benchmarks and learning outcomes of the Cultural and Resource Center's programming offerings amongst Academic Culture, Intersect Series, PATHS Professional Institute, and Coordinator's Choice? How are we creating an assessment tool to measure the effectiveness of programs put on in each center? Are our programs touching upon understanding complex knowledge of systems of oppression, develop skills of empathy and building relationships across difference, and value growth and self-transformation? Develop learning outcomes for Academic Culture, Intersect Series, PATHS Professional Institute, and Coordinator's Choice to then measure the effectiveness of each program.
- Fall 2019: Engage in discussion on how to carve out margins in each center there individuals can engage in provocative conversations on interrogating dominant discourse. Appendix E highlights responses to encourage more cross-peer engagement and programming across identity specific centers. The opportunity to re-center programs in a social justice framework is through the Intersect Series. The Intersect Series would allow for all students to interrogate Whiteness and identify systemic intersections of social justice issues including gender, class, sexuality, etc. Re-imagine Intersect Series within a social justice framework and education.

#### **Administrative Practices and Operations**

- Summer 2019: Evaluation of administrative practices and operations with the professional staff of Cultural and Resource Centers as well as Front Desk Assistants. Take insight from both to inform support of daily operations of the Center as well as engagement with Front Desk Assistants. This evaluation will also inform para-professional training, specifically for the Front Desk Assistants that take place in August 2019. Additionally, the evaluation will also inform the job expectations of Front Desk Assistants beyond the heavily emphasized 'swipe' role.

#### **Sharing the results**

- Results will be shared with the Cultural and Resource Centers staff, including Associate Director of OMSS, Coordinators of all identity-specific centers.

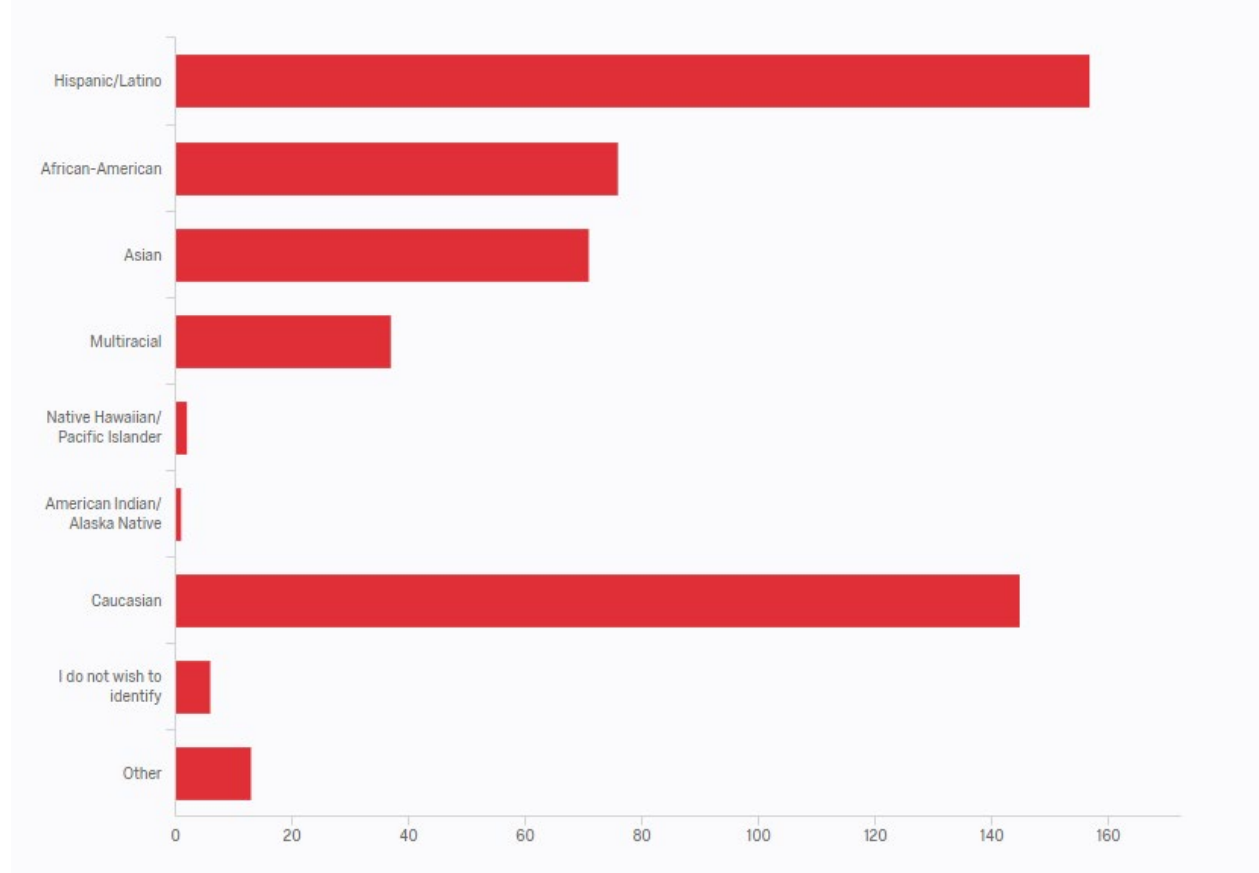
- A presentation will be conducted in a Team Meeting in Fall 2019 at the completion of the final report to inform decisions and strategic planning for 2019-2020 academic year and beyond.
- Under the advisement of each Coordinator, results will be shared with student Programming Assistants in respective Center when needed to address gaps in programming and services.
- Results and next steps will be shared with student leaders (Front Desk Assistants, Programming Assistants) of the Cultural and Resource Centers to inform a departmental commitment to promoting, building, and providing a high-quality level experience for the DePaul community.
- The final report will be shared with the Director of OMSS to inform their understanding of the current needs of the Cultural and Resource Centers to support in any advocacy needed institutionally, divisionally, and within the department.

References

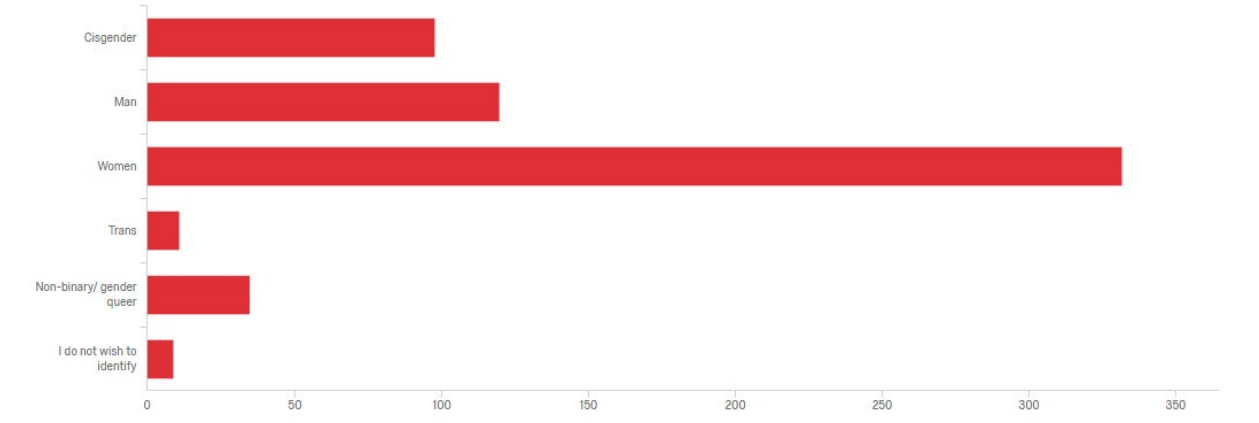
- Patton, L. D. (2010). *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69–91.

### APPENDIX A

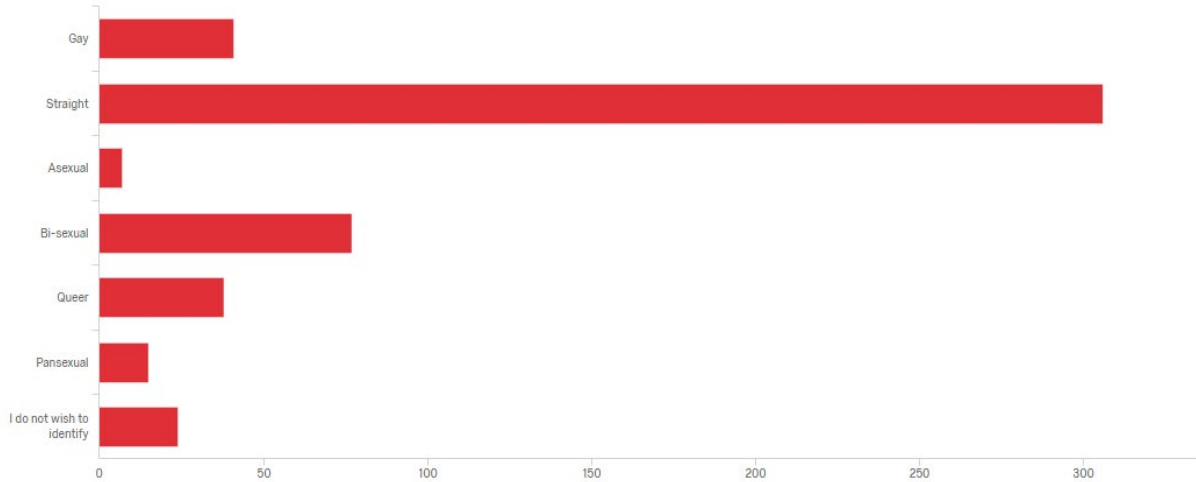
To which race or ethnicity do you most identify?



To which gender identity do you most identify? (Please select all that apply)

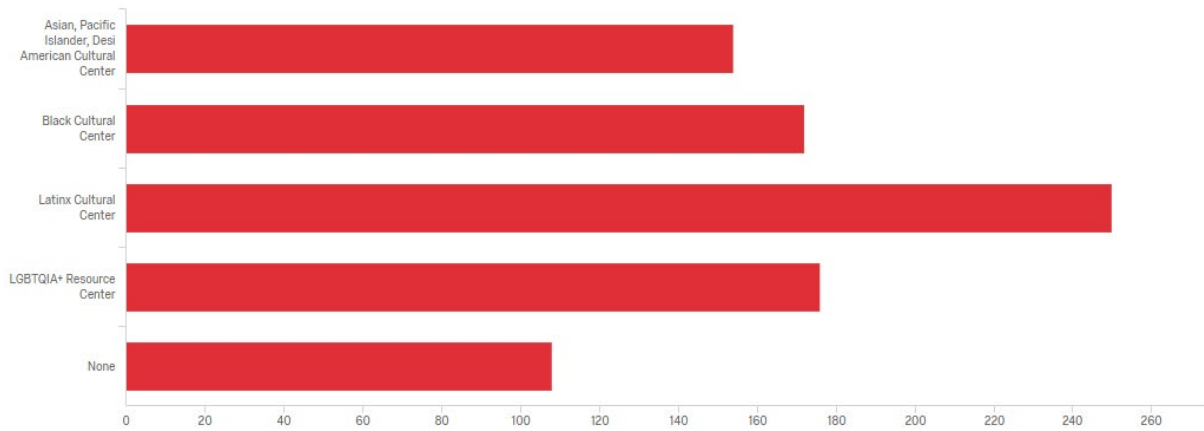


To which sexuality do you most identify?



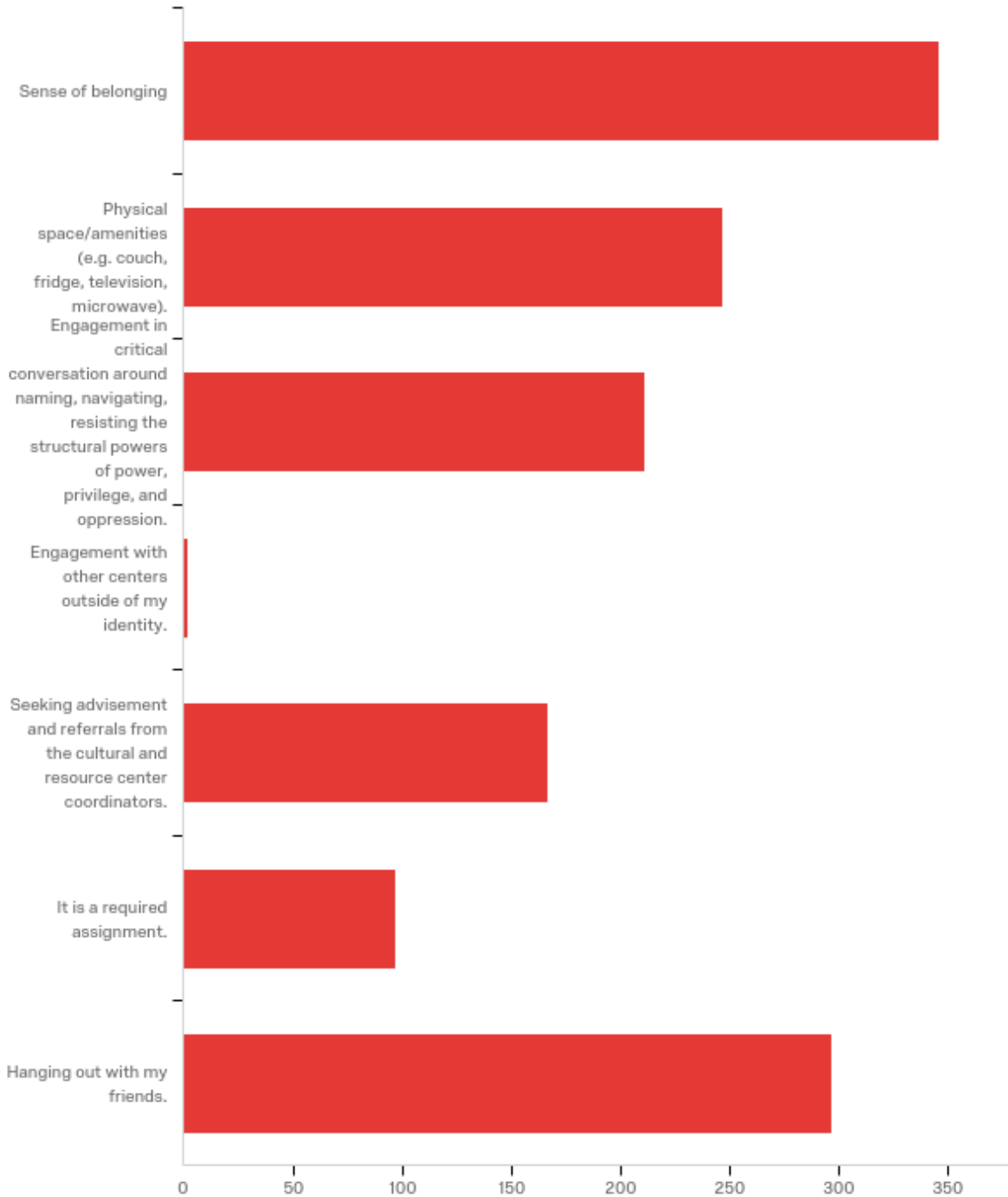
### APPENDIX B

Which of the following cultural and resource centers at DePaul have you visited (Check all that apply)



### Appendix C

I go to the cultural and resource centers for:



### Appendix D

Below are a list of activities and services provided by our cultural centers on campus. How effectively do each of these activities help you feel a sense of belonging and provide tools and support to ensure your success at DePaul?

#	Field	Extremely effective	Very effective	Moderately effective	Slightly effective	Not effective at all	Not applicable	Total
1	Academic Culture (i.e. Latinx Healing as Resistance, ABD and Me)	21.98% 102	23.92% 111	14.66% 68	4.31% 20	1.08% 5	34.05% 158	464
2	Coordinator's Choice (i.e. Turn Up the Mic w/ Terisa Siagatonu, Queer the Lens)	16.45% 76	20.35% 94	16.23% 75	4.11% 19	0.22% 1	42.64% 197	462
3	PATHS Professional Institute (i.e. Networking, Intrapreneurship)	18.97% 88	19.61% 91	13.79% 64	6.25% 29	1.29% 6	40.09% 186	464
4	Intersect Series (i.e. Rafiki, Intersectionality and Dialogue)	17.86% 82	24.18% 111	13.51% 62	4.14% 19	1.74% 8	38.56% 177	459
5	Retreats (i.e. Latinx Retreat, Sankofa)	19.21% 88	18.56% 85	10.92% 50	4.59% 21	1.09% 5	45.63% 209	458
6	Student led Programs (i.e. art gallery, film screenings, potlucks)	34.34% 159	33.05% 153	12.74% 59	2.59% 12	0.65% 3	16.63% 77	463

### Appendix E

Having reflected on all the questions, what do you need from the Cultural and Resource Centers?

Improve marketing of events and/ or Centers	34	13.40%
Sense of belonging	24	9.40%
More events	19	7.50%
Safe space for cross peer engagement, allyship opportunities	19	7.50%
Scholarships and workshops on Financial Aid assistance	14	5.50%
Don't know what the Cultural and Resource Centers offer	13	5.10%
Community Building activities	10	3.90%
Cross cultural collaboration/ programming with all Centers	9	3.50%
More student led programs and activities	9	3.50%
Professional Development Workshops (networking)	9	3.50%
Safe space on campus	8	3.10%
Intersectional programming	7	2.70%
Outreach to students	7	2.70%
Support for Middle Eastern/ Arab students	7	2.70%
Academic and Advising Support	6	2.30%
A place to spend time in between classes	5	1.90%
Collaboration with different departments on campus	5	1.90%
Mass email newsletter/ communication	5	1.90%
Snacks	5	1.90%
Resources at Loop Campus	4	1.50%
There is a clique-y environment	4	1.50%
Equipment: Computers, Printer	3	1.10%

Space to reflect and heal	3	1.10%
Forks and spoons	2	<1%
Graduate student engagement	2	<1%
Mental Health Workshops	2	<1%
More events for commuters	2	<1%
More faculty engagement	2	<1%
Try best to not have overlapping events	2	<1%
Welcomed by front desk assistance	2	<1%
A sense of belonging that is not too radical	1	<1%
Alumni Engagement	1	<1%
Decorations/ Mural	1	<1%
Events during the day	1	<1%
First gen student programs	1	<1%
Less events in Centers for more opportunities to hang out	1	<1%
More funding towards cultural greek organizations	1	<1%
Open for longer hours	1	<1%
Social justice training for campus community	1	<1%
To be more effective (?)	1	<1%