



To: Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

From: Lori McDonald, Vice President for Student Affairs

Date: September 23, 2024

Subject: Review and Approval of Centers for Compliance with Equal Opportunity Initiatives ([R131](#))

The University of Utah requests the review and approval of two new centers that have been established according to the [USHE HB 261 Guidance](#) to be compliant with [Utah Code 53B-1-118](#): 1) the **Center for Community and Cultural Engagement (CCE)** and 2) the **Center for Student Access and Resources (CSAR)**.

**Background:**

To ensure that “centers cannot influence student participation in programs or promote differential treatment of students based on personal identity characteristics,”<sup>1</sup> the U analyzed centers that had been a part of the former Division of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and centers in Student Affairs that were considered identity-related in some way.

It was determined that the Black Cultural Center (BCC), the Center for Equity and Student Belonging (CESB), the LGBT Resource Center (LGBTRC), and the Women’s Resource Center (WRC) would need to be significantly changed to ensure that “centers should be organizationally separate and distinct from student success and support services.”<sup>2</sup>

The student support services that were offered from these centers, such as private scholarship cohort management, student resource navigation, skill-building workshops, embedded mental health counseling, printers, and lounge space were combined into the Center for Student Access and Resources (CSAR), and the cultural programming and community engagement functions were combined into the Center for Community and Cultural Engagement (CCE), each with an emphasis to be open and welcoming to all students. Staff from the four former centers were reassigned to these new departments ,and others were placed with existing Student Affairs departments including Student Leadership & Involvement, and the Office of the Dean of Students.

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<sup>1</sup> [Guidance](#), page 6

<sup>2</sup> [Guidance](#), page 7

Other centers that were reviewed were determined to *not* be focused on a personal identity characteristic<sup>3</sup> covered by the new law (such as ability/disability, immigration status, veteran status, or political/sovereign status, such as membership in a federally recognized American Indian tribe).

The American Indian Resource Center was renamed the Center for Native Excellence and Tribal Engagement. This department is integral to the execution of the MOU the University has with the Ute Indian Tribe. The cultural awareness and educational programming from this office has always been open to all campus community members, but this clarification is now being specifically emphasized.

### **R131 Center Requirements:**

#### **The Center for Community and Cultural Engagement**

The CCE is designed to serve a variety of cultures, populations, and groups and aims for all students to have the opportunity to explore, cultivate, and access cultural education that will best support overall well-being and success. These groups include, but are not limited to, the identities affiliated with the former centers.

- 4.1 *Must be focused on cultural education, celebration, engagement, and awareness;*
- 4.2 *Must be designed to provide opportunities for all students to learn with and from one another; and*
- 4.3 *Cannot influence student participation in programs or promote differential treatment of students based on personal identity characteristics.*

The CCE meets all criteria by focusing on broad cultural education and engagement without promoting any form of differential treatment. All programs and activities are designed to be educational and open to all, providing a platform for all students to participate equally. As a center, CCE also does not provide student resources such as scholarships, continuation grants, advising/coaching, etc.

#### **Additional compliance requirements**

1. *Prohibited Submissions and Trainings: Under HB 261, the University may not require or solicit submissions that promote differential treatment based on personal identity characteristics. HB 261 prohibits mandatory trainings that promote prohibited discriminatory practices.*

CCE does not require submissions from students, staff, or faculty that relate to personal identity characteristics in ways that would promote differential treatment.

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<sup>3</sup> "Personal identity characteristics" means an individual's race, color, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, or gender identity. [Utah Code 53B-1-118 \(1\)\(b\)](#)

All activities within the CCE are designed to focus on cultural education and awareness rather than promoting any form of discriminatory practices as defined by HB 261.

Although CCE offers cultural education in the form of workshops, panels, etc., there are no mandatory training sessions that are designed to promote any discriminatory practices as outlined by HB 261. All educational programs and workshops that promote cultural understanding are voluntary and are open to all students at the University of Utah.

*2. Prohibited Discriminatory Practices: HB 261 restricts institutions from engaging in or maintaining any policy, procedure, practice, program, or office that promotes differential treatment based on personal identity characteristics*

CCE's mission is aligned with promoting cultural education and engagement rather than engaging in any differential treatment based on personal identity characteristics. Programs, such as cultural heritage celebrations and intercultural dialogues, are open to all students and aim to foster an inclusive environment where all students can learn from each other.

CCE operates independently of student success and support services. The center's purpose is distinct and focuses on cultural education, not on providing student success services, which are managed through the appropriate university offices.

*3. Institutional Speech and Expression: HB 261 prohibits institutions from taking or expressing a position on certain topics such as anti-racism, critical race theory, and others unless necessary for compliance with state or federal law.*

CCE's communication and programming are focused on educational imperatives that promote understanding and cultural engagement without expressing institutional positions on prohibited topics as outlined in HB 261. The center strives to ensure that all activities are educational and open to multiple viewpoints, promoting a balanced approach to cultural education.

The Center for Community and Cultural Engagement at the University of Utah was designed to comply with the requirements established under HB 261 and the corresponding guidance provided by USHE. By aligning its mission, programs, and operations with state law, the Center for Community & Cultural Education will serve as a model for cultural engagement and education on campus, while upholding the principles of non-discrimination.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A for more details about the Center for Community and Cultural Engagement

## **The Center for Student Access and Resources**

CSAR supports student success and well-being by centralizing resources that were provided through former identity centers to emphasize that assistance is available for all students while also managing privately funded scholarship cohort programs. It was intentionally created as distinct and organizationally separate from CCE that leads cultural engagement and awareness work. CSAR empowers students to succeed through scholarship opportunities, personalized one-on-one support, skill-building workshops, and support navigating higher education systems.

### Compliance Requirements

1. **Prohibited Trainings:** We have reviewed and identified all mandatory trainings staff holding positions in CSAR need to complete and have ensured that none promote prohibited discriminatory practices as defined by HB 261. Mandatory training now solely includes legally required content, such as Culture of Respect, Firearms on Campus, Title IX, and FERPA.
2. **Prohibited Submissions:** CSAR does not require any prohibited submissions to gain employment or access to a resource, such as financial aid and/or scholarships. Policies, guidelines, and practices have been revised to eliminate requirements for submissions or statements that articulate an individual's position on issues related to differential treatment based on the personal identity characteristics defined in the law (i.e. for scholarship applications).
3. **Prohibited Discriminatory Practices:** CSAR's programs provide support based on individual needs without reference to their individual personal identity characteristics. The center does not engage in practices that influence decisions or funding opportunities for students based on their personal identity characteristics defined in the law.
4. **Renaming and Restructuring:** In their previous state, the University of Utah resource centers that centered around personal identity characteristics were not able to exist under state law HB 261. We went through a process of separating resources from cultural education functions to comply with the law. Reporting structures, names, and titles have been revised to reflect a focus on student success and support.

In summary, the Center for Student Access and Resources will assist students in navigating challenges and connecting them to essential resources. Additionally, the center will fulfill responsibilities associated with scholarship cohort programs and create additional cohort experiences open to all students.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B for more details about the Center for Student Access and Resources.

**Supporting Information:**

Appendix A – Center for Community and Cultural Engagement

Appendix B – Center for Student Access and Resources

Appendix C – Organizational Chart

Announcements and Communications

Aug. 30, 2024: [University regroups after changes to diversity efforts](#) (UMC)

Aug. 23, 2024: [Introducing the Center for Student Access and Resources](#) (UMC)

Aug. 15, 2024: [FAQ: HB 261 guidance for students](#) (UMC)

June 28, 2024: [Under new state law, university transforms diversity efforts](#) (UMC)

June 20, 2024: [University reorganizes, closes some student resource centers](#) (UMC)

June 20, 2024: [Student Affairs Unveils New Organizational Structure to Enhance Student Success and Well-being](#) (STUDENT AFFAIRS)

May 1, 2024: [New EDI guidance for campus](#) (UMC)

April 19, 2024: [U working to preserve essential student support efforts](#) (UMC)



**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY &  
CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT**

STUDENT AFFAIRS  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH



**The Center for Community & Cultural Engagement (CCE) empowers individuals and groups to exercise agency by providing platforms for everyone to express their individuality, hopes, needs, concerns, and aspirations. Culture and community are informed by all ways of life pertaining to our collective and individual experiences, beliefs, achievements, laws, institutions, forms of art, etc. At CCE, all students, faculty, and staff have the opportunity to explore, cultivate, and access cultural education and community that will best support overall well-being and success.**

**In essence, the Center for Community and Cultural Engagement serves as a catalyst for developing a more connected and universally accessible university community. By embracing cultural awareness, promoting agency, and upholding accountability, we strive to create a vibrant campus environment where culture and community are celebrated, observed, and respected.**



## WELCOME TO CCE!



Our lounge space is open to all students and offers snacks, beverages, a small library, and study spaces.



### 1 Location

CCE is located at 200 S Central Campus Dr, RM 408 & 409, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

We are on the 4th floor of the Union - Come say hi!

### 2 Available to all

CCE provides two computers for all students to use, along with free printing and a beautiful view





**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY &  
CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT**

STUDENT AFFAIRS  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

**MISSION**

**VISION**

### **Purpose**

The Center for Community & Cultural Engagement fosters connection, collaboration, and meaningful engagement among students, faculty, staff, and the broader community. Serving as a bridge between the University of Utah and its surroundings, it offers experiential learning, cultural celebrations, and civic involvement, enhancing the university's role in building strong, mutually beneficial relationships.

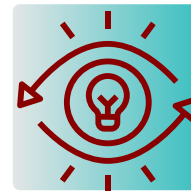
### **Rationale**

The Center provides vital events and programming that support the holistic development of students and the enrichment of campus life. By offering programs that cultivate a sense of belonging and community, the Center empowers individuals to explore different cultural perspectives, develop social skills, and engage in collaborative projects that address community needs.



### **Mission**

We support student well-being and success by providing pathways to vibrant community and culture through education and celebration of unique heritage, experiences, and practices.



### **Vision**

Our vision is for students to connect, cultivate, celebrate, and engage with vibrant communities and cultures of all backgrounds.



# What we offer



Cultural Educational Event(s) and cultural awareness - hosted regularly to facilitate student learning with and from one another to spread awareness and promote cultural education. By providing opportunities for intercultural dialogue and learning, we empower individuals to become global citizens equipped to navigate and contribute to an increasingly multicultural society.

## CULTURAL EDUCATION

- Panels
- Film Screenings
- Cultural Wellness Series
- Workshops
- Lectures
- Community Services Projects
- I am U Thriving
- Gallery Walks
- Cultural Awareness

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- CCE Student Lounge
- Art Gallery Walks
- Concerts
- Dances
- Townhalls
- Community Service Projects
- Receptions
- Potlucks & BBQs
- Heritage/Cultural Celebrations

Community Engagement Event(s) - hosted regularly in celebration of various heritage/history months and weeks. CCE actively engages with local and campus communities to facilitate meaningful collaborations and imperatives. By partnering with community organizations, cultural groups, and educational institutions, we strive to address social issues, celebrate cultural heritage, and promote fairness and participation.



## **Advisory Board**

### **Purpose and Mission:**


The Advisory Board for the Center for Community and Cultural Engagement (CCE) at University of Utah is dedicated to fostering meaningful interactions between the university and the broader community. Our mission is to enhance cultural understanding, promote community collaboration, and drive impactful initiatives that bridge the gap between academic and local spheres.

### **Meetings:**

The Advisory Board meets quarterly, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. These meetings serve as a forum for discussing progress, addressing challenges, and strategizing future initiatives.

### **Commitment:**

Members are expected to actively participate in meetings, contribute to discussions, and engage in board activities. Term lengths and specific expectations will be defined in collaboration with the board's chair.



# Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities

1



## Strategic Guidance:

Provide expert advice and strategic direction for the development and implementation of programs and initiatives that align with the CCEC's mission.

2



## Community Liaison:

Act as a liaison between the university and various community stakeholders to ensure that CCE initiatives are relevant and responsive to community needs.

3



## Program Development:

Support the creation and refinement of cultural and community engagement programs that reflect multiple perspectives and foster inviting dialogue.

4



## Advancement Development:

Assist in identifying funding opportunities and community partners to support CCE activities and ensure the sustainability of its programs.

5



## Evaluation:

Contribute to the evaluation and assessment of CCE programs and activities to ensure they meet their goals and continuously improve based on feedback and outcomes. Ensure that CCE remains in compliance with USHE guidance and HB 261 to provide a welcoming environment for all students.

# Advisory Board Composition

1



## University Faculty and Staff

Experts in cultural studies, community engagement, and related fields.

2



## Community Leaders:

Representatives from local organizations, cultural institutions, and civic groups.

3



## Students:

Undergraduate and graduate students who bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas.

4



## Alumni:

Former students with a vested interest in community and cultural development.

5



## External Experts:

Professionals and thought leaders in community engagement and cultural affairs.

**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY & CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT**  
STUDENT AFFAIRS  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

# FESTIVAL OF CULTURE

When	Time	Where
	From Till	123 Anywhere St., Any City, ST 12345

**This event is open to all!**

# Marketing Sample

FESTIVAL OF CULTURE: CELEBRATING WORLD CULTURAL DIVERSITY DAY

Hosted by the Center for Community & Cultural Engagement

University of Utah

This event is designed to celebrate the richness of global cultures and foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for diversity within our community. All are welcome to attend!!

# Get Involved



Together, we can build a vibrant community—one connection at a time.



**Instagram**

**@uofucce**



**Discord**

**U Community & Cultural  
Engagement**




**Email**

**[culture@utah.edu](mailto:culture@utah.edu)**

Students can visit us in-person or online to learn more about upcoming events and learn how everyone can get involved and be included. Whether students are new to campus or a seasoned U of U student, there's always something at the Center for Community & Cultural Engagement for everyone.

Stay connected with us on social media and keep an eye on our event calendar for updates on all that's happening.









CSAR

# CSAR OFFERINGS

**Our mission:** We support student well-being and success through scholarship opportunities, personalized one-on-one support, community engagement, skill-building, and support navigating higher education systems.

- ✓ Scholarships
- ✓ Cohort programs with peer mentor support
- ✓ Student Resource Navigation (SRN)
- ✓ Student lounge & group room
- ✓ Skill-building workshops

 @uofuCSAR  Union 411  
 studentresources.utah.edu  
 studentresources@utah.edu



**CENTER FOR STUDENT  
ACCESS & RESOURCES**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

# CSAR OFFERINGS

Our offerings are  
open to ALL students.



- ✔ **Scholarships:** We offer over \$2 million in tuition scholarships for students with experiences, interests and career passions, and those facing financial stress or other academic barriers. Our scholars receive one-on-one support from our SRNs.
- ✔ **Cohort programs with peer mentor support:** Our cohort programs prioritize student retention, graduation, and career readiness, as well as belonging through group activities, and skill-building through Student Resource Navigator and peer support.
- ✔ **Student Resource Navigation (SRN):** Our Student Resource Navigators take a holistic view of each student's experience and help them succeed by connecting them with resources, opportunities, and supporting them through their academic journey.
- ✔ **Student lounge & group room:** We offer gathering spaces for students to study, socialize, reserve private space, and relax. Our space also offers several resources that students can take advantage of (including a computer and printer, microwave, and lending library).
- ✔ **Skill-building workshops:** Our workshops offer an opportunity to learn important skills to help students succeed in school, access resources, and prepare for post-graduation. These include study hall hours, collaborations with U Career Success (salary negotiation, career coaching), and social gatherings.





