Date: October 17, 2011
To: Campus Change Team
From: Multicultural Center Student Leaders Council- Jenelle Herry
RE: MC UCT Mid-fall 2011 Report

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Proposal: Campus Awareness

We would like to educate the community at the University of Minnesota Duluth so they have a better understanding of multiculturalism and the benefits of the Multicultural Center. We would like people to feel comfortable being a part of the Multicultural Center by providing them with accurate information about the space and resources available to make UMD a more inclusive campus climate. We’d like potential and current students who are interested in or attending the University of Minnesota Duluth to feel like the Multicultural Center is a comfortable and accepting place for them regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, political views, socio-economic status, or age. We’d like faculty, staff, and administration to show support for our efforts and promote diversity and inclusivity. We want to improve the campus climate so that all are welcome and accepted.

We seek to make our campus at the University of Minnesota Duluth a more culturally knowledgeable and accepting place. We are hoping to teach our entire campus community how to adequately promote and provide information about the Multicultural Center resources, services, groups and events. This would apply to Campus Goals 1, 2 and 5 in making this campus a safe, diverse and accepting community for all that attend regardless of identities.

Goals:

It has come to our attention that many students, staff, faculty and administration when coming through the Multicultural Center have little or no knowledge about our cubicles and offices. This has become increasingly clearer when listening to tour guides explain our cubicles who haven’t the faintest ideas of what to say to prospective students and families and with some responses of not knowing what the Multicultural Center is in lieu of recent events. Often times comments come off as ignorant because many people in our UMD community haven’t had the training and background of what the Multicultural Center is and does. We would like staff, faculty, administration, student leaders and campus tour guides alike to have a mandatory training in which they learn about multiculturalism as a whole and the available resources that are offered in the Multicultural Center so they can engage all students in what our center does. We’d like to make our campus a more inclusive place and by having accountability and integrity to provide accurate and unbiased information, we can change the climate.

Action Items:

As part of staff/faculty/administration, student leaders, resident advisors and tour guide training, we would ask that a training be provided about multiculturalism and diversity and the benefits of the Multicultural Center. We would also ask that there be a tour provided of the Multicultural Center to familiarize themselves with this area and what each individual group and cubicles do. We could have representatives of each cubicle or their faculty advisor present in each cubicle for any questions about our services.

For staff/faculty/administration, we would ask that they promote our Center in their classes and encourage their students as well as themselves to come to events put on by groups in the Multicultural Center. By doing this, students could feel that employees of the University accept all students and are willing to understand them as individuals. Students would also know that they have support of authority and that our University as a whole is committed to inclusivity.

For tour guides, we would ask that along with their training they become familiar with a script from the “Connect” handout of what all nine cubicles do. This will ensure that all potential
students are getting correct and positive information. There will be a large sign in the front of
the Multicultural Center with this information for all to see. Cubicles will also post information
on the outside of their doors about what each organization does, their meeting times for that
semester and some important events making it easier to remember. By posting on the outside of
our cubicles all students can know how to get involved and the purpose of each organization.
We want to promote that the Multicultural Center isn’t just for underrepresented groups, but for
all students at UMD.

**Intended Outcomes:**
We’ll know that the University of Minnesota Duluth community is more aware when we hear
accurate information presented by staff, faculty, administration, student leaders and tour guides.
We’ll know that UMD is more inclusive and accepting of diversity when numbers of
underrepresented groups in attendance at UMD are higher.
We’ll know we have support when more students get involved and attend more events about
multiculturalism and diversity.
We’ll know employees are aware when they make an effort to promote, sponsor and/or attend
our events. As well as trying to establish a relationship with students who are outside the norm
of heterosexual, white, middle class students.
We’ll know that our campus is inclusive when response times and counteractions are clear and
known to the student body at large for incidents that may happen in the future.
We’ll know we’re supported and UMD is more inclusive when the Multicultural Center is not
the only place where underrepresented groups feel comfortable and safe.

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**Proposal: Gender Neutral Bathrooms**

This initiative requests that signage on all existing single-stall lockable gendered restrooms
located on the University Campus be changed to gender neutral terms.

* We are enclosing a list of the bathrooms that have been identified as current or potential
gender neutral bathrooms.
Primary Goal:

This initiative specifically requests that signage be changed from gendered restrooms to unisex restrooms; thereby beginning a move toward the creation of a more accessible and accepting environment for everyone including families, persons with disabilities, breastfeeding mothers, and gender queer or intersexed persons.

As cited from the University of Minnesota Mission Statement, the University system strives to provide an “environment that embodies the values of academic freedom, responsibility, integrity, and cooperation; that provides an atmosphere of mutual respect, free from raci

The current setup of gendered restrooms prevents these persons from having access to University facilities by restricting access based upon gender. Through this restriction there is less access to persons with disabilities as it may be necessary to move to a different floor to access a facility that represents their gender. This can also be a problem for those who do not identify as either male or female, as there is not a facility available for them that are readily accessible. Additionally, breastfeeding mothers and families may desire a private and safe area that is accessible, and a single-stall lockable unisex restroom is ideal.

Chancellor Black (as stated within his statement to Members of the UMD Campus Community), “One of my top priorities is to create a learning and working environment that embeds the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion into all aspects of our programs”. (http://www.d.umn.edu/chancellor/climate/)

Our proposed initiative would help support Chancellor Black’s previously stated priority for the UMD Campus, through benefiting persons with disabilities, families gender queer or intersexed persons, as well as breastfeeding mothers we they will be allowed equal access to university facilities. By creating a more accessible and accepting environment throughout the campus we set an expectation for the wider community to be inclusionary as well.

What will help us achieve our goal?

1. As the administration has previously recognized the need to be inclusive of all persons and provide equal access to all UMD facilities, we believe that through the cooperation with our proposed initiative, many would benefit.

2. The values stated here are also in accordance this proposal, taken from Facilities Management’s Mission Statement::
   • “Safety and Health of our campus community”
   • “Responsible Use of our human, natural, and financial resources”
As stated in the vision, Facilities Management strives to:

- “Consider long-term environmental, financial, and human impacts in decision making”
- “Remain flexible to benefit from new opportunities”
- “Promote innovation to achieve our mission”

(https://www.d.umn.edu/fm/about/mission.htm)

Through cooperation with Facilities Management in changing all signage on existing single-stall lockable gendered restrooms located on the University Campus to gender neutral terms, the stated values of safety and health, the responsible use of resources, commitment to innovation and flexibility with new opportunities, and considering long-term impacts encompassed within their Mission Statement will be realized with a small amount of effort and cost.

**Intended Outcomes:**
Access to UMD facilities for all persons, without their needing to seek out a safe or appropriate restroom to:
- Change a baby
- Hide sexual or gender identity
- Breastfeed
- Use a facility privately, due to disability or other concerns
- Additional safety and health for all students, faculty and staff within the campus community.
- Development of a respectful, positive relationship between the University’s students, faculty and staff.
- Creating an inclusive campus environment for all persons.

**Responsibility:**
In examining the Campus Change Team Membership and Team Representatives, we feel that the following persons would be best suited to take the lead of this initiative:

- Chancellor’s Cabinet - The Administration

- John King - Facilities Management