First Reading: November 18, 2014

Second Reading: December 2, 2014

Pass:

Other:

Resolution 14-14-F Resolution to Support “Many Neighborhoods, One Community” Cultural Centers Project

PURPOSE: For the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University to support the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion in the establishment of minority cultural centers around campus in order to promote retention, diversity and alumni support.

WHEREAS: The cultural centers would be welcoming to all people and would promote learning in regards to history, heritage and culture of the different minorities, and

WHEREAS: Minority students are expected to immerse themselves in the campus environment, with no acknowledgement of their culture and history. These centers would serve as an entity that is devoted to being that space for them on campus, and

WHEREAS: A sense of belonging and social integration has long been noted as an essential component to the success of all college students, and

WHEREAS: Cultural centers play an important role in the retention of minority students. Supportive relationships with peers, faculty, staff and administrators result in student persistence, which is positively correlated with increased retention rates. Cultural centers are often where this relationship building occurs. Many students come from environments that do not prepare them for college. Many of these students, with the help of Cultural Centers, devise coping skills and build confidence that allow them to function in the academic environment. These skills, coupled with other forms of institutional support, help students become adjusted to the campus climate, and

WHEREAS: Cultural centers also increase student involvement and leadership, build community, help with establishing historical pride, identity, and self-preservation. Literature shows that these are essential components for increasing retention of minority students. These supportive environments serve as a safe space on campuses that facilitate student learning, enhance students’ leadership skills, and teach students the importance of being involved on campus, and

WHEREAS: The Centers at Western Kentucky University will be a place that affirms the University’s minority communities through encouraging academic excellence, supporting recruitment and retention efforts, providing specialized student services, community development and culture enhancement through programming and networking, and

WHEREAS: Currently, the following benchmark universities have established similar centers: University of Louisville, Berea College, University of Kentucky, Morehead University, Kentucky State University, Indiana University, University of Southern Indiana, Purdue University, University of Tennessee, and Vanderbilt University.

THEREFORE: Be it resolved that the Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University supports the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion in the establishment of minority cultural centers around campus in order to promote retention, diversity and alumni support.

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