

FAQ

WHAT IS THIS PROJECT?

A new home for the Multicultural Resource Center (MRC), the Mary Jean Price Walls Multicultural Resource Center Annex (Freddie Annex), and the Offices of Student Engagement (OSE).

This project will relocate the Office of Student Engagement and combine the two current multicultural resource centers into one new space located in what is currently the OSE. Though they often work together, the current Multicultural Resource Center and the Mary Jean Price Walls Multicultural Resource Center Annex are split between two separate, aging facilities in two different buildings. One facility is located in the basement of Freudenberger House, and the other is located on the west side of the ground floor of Plaster Student Union. The new spaces will be centrally located, highly visible, and improve access to the important student resources these departments offer.



HOW WILL THIS PROJECT BE DEVELOPED? IN MULTIPLE PHASES

PHASE 1

OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Office of Student Engagement will be relocated to the east end of the game center, where the current bowling lanes are located. The original OSE space was designed for 150 student groups, yet Missouri State University currently has over 350 student groups. This new space will accommodate staff offices, student organization offices, collaborative meeting space, and other resources for these growing groups.

PHASE 1

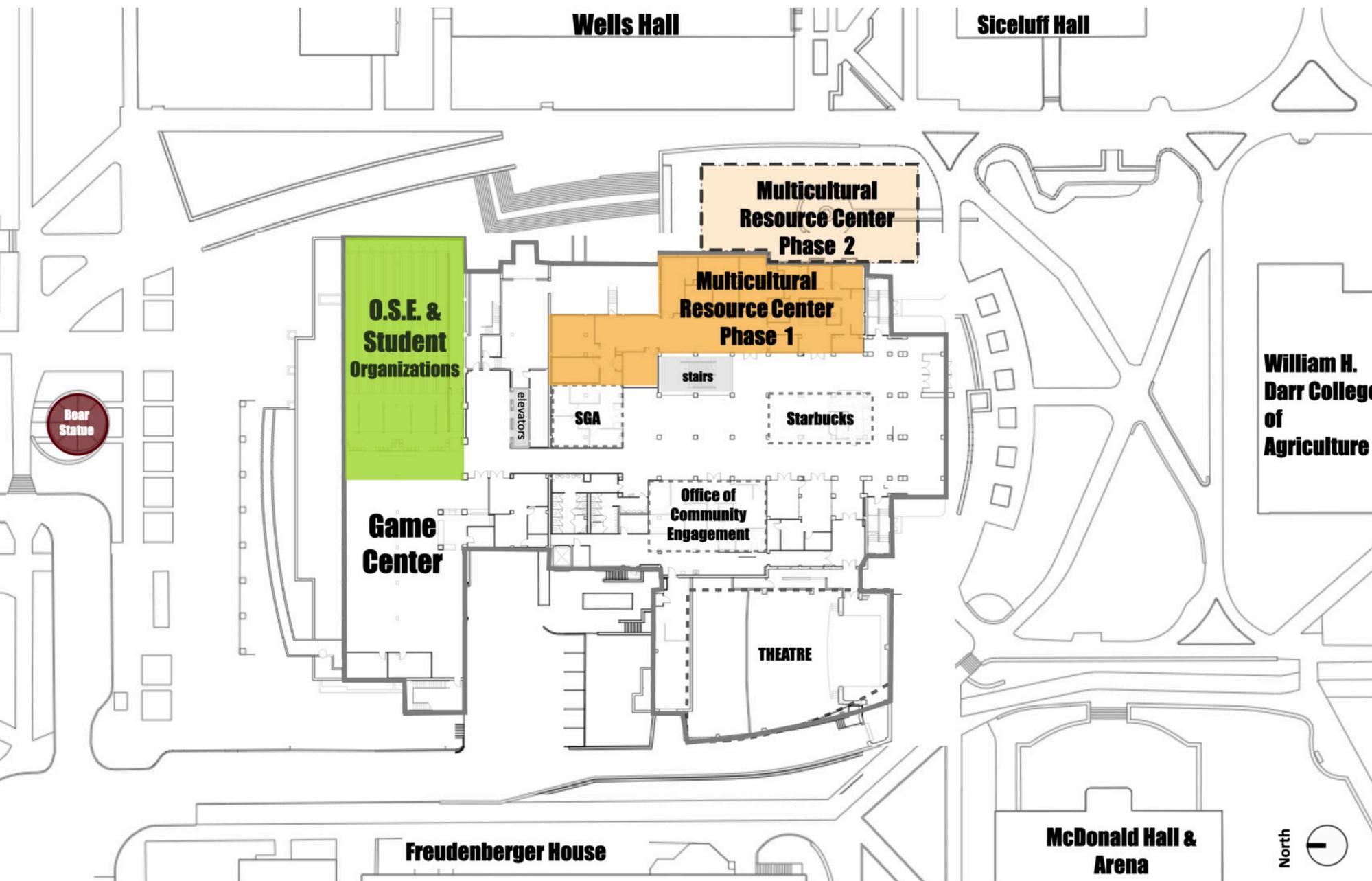
MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER

Phase one is fully funded and is scheduled to be completed by the beginning of next school year. The new MRC will include staff offices, student gathering spaces, a transitions closet, a reflection room, flexible student spaces, and other resources to support and empower under-represented students at MSU. The goal is to help everyone feel safe, supported, and welcome.

PHASE 2

MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER

In order to provide additional space and growth, the University and student groups are discussing the possibility of a phase two project for the Multicultural Resource Center. This project would consist of a three-story addition to the southeast corner of the Plaster Student Union. Phase two would be funded by a \$20.00 student fee and would need to be approved by a student vote, which has not yet been put on the ballot.



FAQ WHY ARE THESE SPACES IMPORTANT?

FREE
ONLINE
SURVEY



OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Why is a new space for the OSE important?

REASON #1 – MORE CAPACITY FOR STUDENT GROUPS

The original OSE space was designed for 150 student groups, yet Missouri State University currently has over 350 student groups. The new space will provide offices for new and current staff, appropriately sized rooms with storage for Traditions Council (TC), Student Activities Council (SAC), and Fraternity and Sorority life (FSL). It will also include space for the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), and contains a flexible student collaboration area where multiple groups can meet at one time.

REASON #2 – COLLABORATION

The new OSE space will serve as a hub that helps connect all of the campuses 350+ student organizations. One important part of the project will be a flexible collaboration area where multiple small groups of students from different organizations can meet, coordinate, brainstorm, and create. Flexible furniture, technology, tackable boards, and large marker boards are some of the planned amenities that will help facilitate and encourage cooperative engagement.

REASON #3 - IDENTITY

The current Office of Student Engagement space does not truly reflect its identity or mission. Many students do not know that this space is available and has resources for anyone in any student organizations to utilize. The vision for the new space is exciting. It's open, bright, inviting, colorful, and welcoming to showcase and celebrate the energy of student activities.

REASON #4 – IMPROVED OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT GROUPS

With so many student organizations, it can be difficult for new students to navigate the options that are available to them. The new OSE will have better opportunities for students to learn about all the different organizations Missouri State has to offer, including places for student organizations to advertise upcoming events, projects, and club meetings.

MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER

Why is a new space for the MRC important?

REASON #1 – MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY VALUES A DIVERSE CAMPUS

Missouri State University is a predominantly a white campus, with 79.7% of the students who identify as white. Yet, in a recent poll conducted, 98% of students agreed that having a diverse campus community makes Missouri State University a better place to learn, and 97% of students agreed that having exposure to different cultures will be helpful in their careers. Furthermore, one of the 2020-2021 University Action Plan focus items is to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion by “improve[ing] access, retention and graduation rates of underrepresented students”. Improving and expanding the MRC is one step that the University is taking toward this goal. It will be modern and prominently located in the PSU to better reflect how much the University values all members of its community.

REASON #2 – RESOURCES

Most student don't know the two current MRC facilities even exist. The current spaces are undersized for current programs, outdated, disconnected, and lack visual presence. The Multicultural Resource Center is focused on fostering and supporting the intellectual, social, and cultural development of all students, especially those from diverse cultural backgrounds and underrepresented student groups, including Black, LatinX, LGBTQIA+, first generation collegiate, international, and disabled students. It is an information hub for student growth and development as well as the exploration of identity and self. The staff develop education programs across campus, provide mentorship, help connect students with resources like scholarships, and assist in transitioning to college-life or into the workforce.

REASON #3 - COMMUNITY

This new space will serve as a safe place for Missouri State University's underrepresented students to meet other students like them, students who have shared their experiences. It will also be a place to build necessary supportive communities.

A sense of belonging is a basic human need, just like the need for food and shelter. Yet, not every student feels like they belong on campus because not everyone can relate to or feel understood by those around them. However, this can be address by providing a safe space that is conducive to building strong social connections with receptive, like-minded individuals that have shared experiences. Those communities can help create a sense of comfort where it's easier to be oneself and feel accepted, supported, and relaxed. Having a home for those communities is crucial for creating supportive networks that can help manage stress and cope with difficult situations.

REASON #4 – REST AND REPRIEVE

Being part of an underrepresented group can be stressful. Those who experience it, often cope by code-switching. Broadly, code-switching involves adjusting one's style of speech, appearance, behavior, and expression in ways that will optimize the comfort of others in exchange for fair treatment, quality service, and employment opportunities. Research suggests that code-switching often occurs in spaces where stereotypes of underrepresented groups run counter to what are considered “appropriate” behaviors and norms for a specific environment. Code-switching comes with great social and psychological repercussions. Seeking to avoid stereotypes is hard work, and can deplete cognitive resources and hinder performance. Feigning commonality with other students also reduces authentic self-expression and contributes to burnout. The new MRC will provide a reprieve from code-switching, a place for students to recharge and be themselves.