Emerging Leaders 2015: Campus Unification Proposal

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The Center for Leadership and Service

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The Center for Leadership and Service:

The 2015 Emerging Leaders class, embodied within your department, was charged with proposing a positive change on campus for our final project. Throughout the semester, our curriculum has focused on creating emotionally intelligent student leaders on our campus, as well as equipping them with the knowledge and resources they need to create a positive change. In September, the Emerging Leaders cohort took a trip to Boone, NC to visit Appalachian State University (ASU), a public university similar to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UTK), but located in North Carolina, as well as Lees-McRae College, a private four-year college in Banner Elk, NC. The aspect of ASU’s campus that stood out the most was the cohesiveness of student organizations, student leaders, and administration. After returning to Knoxville, we evolved our experiences at ASU into a passion for creating a more unified campus between our student organizations, general student body, and administration. Our idea for a campus leaders retreat came from the passion that was created through our experience to Boone. We have a desire to see our campus be brought together as one true Tennessee.

We are proposing a retreat, UniTy, for campus leaders that will aid our campus in breaking barriers, building bridges, creating awareness, educating student leaders, connecting them with each other, and creating a campus feeling that will allow our students to feel as if Rocky top is truly their “home sweet home.” Our proposal is important to the progression of our campus because through initiating a stride towards campus unification, we intend to move our campus toward becoming a ‘Top 25 University’.  If we fail to initiate this movement, we risk the possibility of regression, ultimately making us an even more divided campus than we are today.

Throughout the following pages of our proposal, our team details important aspects of UniTy. While we know we are taking on a large task, we are proposing this retreat to you in hopes that you will want to aid us in our initiative. Whether this be through financial means, or supporting us as we move our idea forward, we welcome your help and support as we work towards making The University of Tennessee at Knoxville the greatest and most unified campus it can be. We are excited to see where this initiative takes us as one Big Orange Family.

Respectfully,

**The 2015 Emerging Leaders Campus Unification Team**:

Kahlil Bostick, Alex Crockett, Lauren Hood, Sam Lane, Malik Luckett,

Michael Perdos, Rachel Ricker, Lorena Roberts, Cullen Sayegh, and Emma Zijlstra

1. **Overview:**

In order to improve upon the issue of unification between student organizations and groups, as well as between the student body and the administration, we are proposing the idea of a retreat called UniTy. This weekend-long experience will target students who show an interest and passion for leadership in organizations and student-led groups. The mission of UniTy is to educate, connect, and bring awareness on important social issues to all student leaders on campus by breaking barriers through a weekend of enlightenment. We believe that through a program like UniTy, clubs, organizations, and student groups can work together on common projects and goals to create a better student body community at the University of Tennessee as well as connect with the administration present to foster relationships and connections with each other. This program will give students of different communities on campus a place to interact with one another. Breakout sessions will provide participants a setting that encourages civil dialogue about issues on campus as well as throughout the world, and encourages collaboration in place of competition. Each of these aspects of the UniTy retreat will lead to educating the student body and creating awareness at UT about social issues, and connecting groups of students by breaking barriers between them. In the first year of this retreat, we are proposing to serve 50 students. These students will come from a variety of backgrounds, some in campus organizations, and others that represent unofficial groups of students. We hope that this retreat will instill emotional intelligence across the campus and unify students to create a positive change at the University of Tennessee, ultimately making the 2015 Emerging Leaders 25 person cohort include student leaders all across campus, allowing the students of UTK to be served better by our Volunteer leaders.

Our mission statement to educate, bring awareness, connect, and break barriers can be broken down and explained in the following bullets:

1. **Education:** Educating these leaders on issues pertaining social justice, diversity and real-world issues will be the main focus of this component of the break out sessions.  Often times, many associate the injustice and lack of empathy towards minorities from the majority as a product of ignorance.  Here at UniTy, we will strive to inform our campus leaders on important issues pertaining to these three topics, to ensure that a lack of knowledge or understanding is not the cause.  With that, it leaves individual with a decision to make a decision: are you actually prejudice/racist or are you going to take this information and inform others/make a difference?
2. **Awareness:** To bring awareness at UniTy we will provide a multitude of opportunities for the participants to engage in dialogue and learn from other’s experiences. Throughout all of our breakout sessions, participants will listen to issues pertaining to our campus. By actively listening, participants will become aware that issues within their group or organization are campus wide issues not just organizational issues. Also, through our breakout sessions they will become aware of world issues and gain the knowledge of acceptance over tolerance.
3. **Connection:** One of the largest overall goals for UniTy is to facilitate and foster an environment where campus organization leaders can take advantage of an opportunity to build relationships with other campus organization leaders, as well as faculty and staff. While there are retreats at UT that focus on leadership education, we do not have an operating retreat for student leaders that focuses on networking and collaboration. Our goal in creating a retreat like UniTy is to give these leaders the opportunity and then environment to be able to progress and unify our campus through connecting with other students.
4. **Breaking Barriers:** There will be a lot of barriers that will be needed to break through in order to get this project rolling. We will have to do a lot of motivating in order to get both administrators and students on board with the idea of this retreat. This retreat will be so beneficial in uniting students, organizations, and administrators on and throughout campus. All organizations on campus are important and relevant in making this university a Top 25 university because each organization, whether they have ten members or 200 members, make this place Rocky Top. Each club, organization, class, and group have a specific purpose on this campus and we believe that once they focus on each others needs and problems, this campus can be more unified and accepting.
5. **Budget:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Off-Campus Retreat\*\*** |  |
| Transportation | **$2,100** |
| Lodging ($23/person) | **$1,610** |
| Meals ($45/person) | **$3,150** |
| Supplies (Markers, poster board, pens, and handouts) | **$125** |
| T-shirts ($6ea.) | **$420** |
| **Total** | **$7,405** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **On-Campus Retreat\*\*** |  |
| Supplies (Markers, poster board, pens, and handouts) | **$125** |
| Meals (for 70) | **$1,600** |
| T-shirts ($6ea.) | **$420** |
| Potential Rental Fees (Tables, Chairs, facility) | **$1,000** |
| **Total** | **$3,145** |

*\*\*Based on 50 participants and 20 others that include student leaders, staff and administration*

*\*\*On campus meals include catering from Einstein's Bagels, Jersey Mike's, Buddy’s Barbecue*

1. **Partnerships:**

**List of suggested administrators/faculty partners:**

**Ashleigh Moyer**- *Director*, Center for Student Engagement

Ms. Moyer works directly with student organizations and would be beneficial to our retreat for student organization leaders because she serves as such as fantastic resource. By allowing students to have the chance to create a relationship with her, they will not be shy about coming to her for advice or help in the future.

**Tenea Lowery** *- Assistant Director,* Sorority and Fraternity Life

Ms. Lowery works primarily with the National Pan-Hellenic Council and the Multicultural Greek Council Organizations. She has a lot of great insight how to better serve the campus and is very transparent, which the culture we are trying to create at UniTy. By allowing students the opportunity to create and foster a relationship with her, they will be more inclined to come for advice in the future.

**Dr. Melissa Shivers**- *Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students,* Office of the Dean of Students

Dr. Shivers spends every day on our campus working towards giving our students the best experience possible. Through her attendance at UniTy, our campus organization leaders will have the ability to foster a relationship with her and utilize her and her office as a resource. Dr. Shivers will be able to serve as a resource for our students in attendance as well as create a sense of transparency from the administration to our students.

**Dr. Danny Glassman** - *Associate Dean of Students*, Office of the Dean of Students

Dr. Glassman’s primary roles at UTK include leadership and connection, supervising areas related to leadership development and campus connections, and will be a key figure in helping our team develop relationships with on and off campus partners. His attendance at UniTy will closely relate to his job description and, along with Dr. Shivers, will add to the transparency of administration in the eyes of our students.

**Dr. Virginia Stormer** - *Honors Advisors,* Honors and Scholars Programs

Dr. Stormer works primarily with first and second-year honors students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Aiming to connect students inside and outside the classroom, Dr. Stormer will be critical to creating partnerships with students from across campus. Understanding the opportunities within the University of Tennessee System and individual departments such as the Honors and Scholars Program, Dr. Stormer will be able to provide insight and advice on how to help connect UnIty participants with organizations, departments, and faculty and can help recruit and impact attendees.

**Proposed On-Campus Partners:**

Howard Baker Center

Chancellor’s Honors Program

Multicultural Student Life

Greek Life

Office of the Dean of Students

PRIDE Center

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

University Housing, *Division of Student Life*

**\*Note: At this time, we are unable to propose a list of off campus partners. The locations in question may have contractual obligations with other groups that prevents businesses and other groups from coming onto campus and providing services for certain events. As a result, we have considered some options but cannot propose an extensive list as the final location has yet to be determined.**

**Proposed On-campus locations:**

Howard Baker Center\*\*

Alumni Memorial Building

Panhellenic Building

\*\**the HBC would provide an opportunity for our team to partner with a food service other than Aramark, as the HBC does not hold a contract with them while other locations on campus may*

**Proposed Off-campus locations:**

Clyde Austin 4-H Center, Greeneville, Tennessee

Eagle Rock Retreat Center, Tallassee, Tennessee

Camp Wesley Woods, Townsend, Tennessee

1. **Schedule and Programs:**

**Off-Campus Schedule**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
| **8:00 am** |  | **Breakfast with Family Clusters** |
| **9:00 am** |  | **Breakout Session 2** |
| **10:00 am** |  |  |
| **11:00 am** |  | **Breakout Session 3** |
| **12:00 pm** |  |  |
| **1:00 pm** |  | **Lunch** |
| **2:00 pm** |  | **Open Forum** |
| **3:00 pm** |  |  |
| **4:00 pm** |  | **Family Clusters** |
| **5:00 pm** | **Arrival/Dinner** |  |
| **6:00 pm** | **Opening Ceremony** | **Dinner with Administrator** |
| **7:00 pm** | **Question and Answer Session** |  |
| **8:00 pm** | **Breakout Session 1** | **Wrap-up and Leave** |
| **9:00 pm** | **Family Clusters** |  |
| **10:00 pm** |  |  |
| **11:00 pm** | **Lights Out** |  |

**On-Campus Schedule**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Time:** | **Saturday** |
| **8:00 am** | **Breakfast and Check-In** |
| **9:00 am** | **Opening Ceremony** |
| **10:00 am** | **Family Clusters** |
| **11:00 am** | **Breakout Session 1** |
| **12:00 pm** | **Lunch with Administrator** |
| **1:00 pm** |  |
| **2:00 pm** | **Breakout Session 2** |
| **3:00 pm** | **Breakout Session 3** |
| **4:00 pm** | **Open Forum** |
| **5:00 pm** |  |
| **6:00 pm** | **Dinner** |
| **7:00 pm** | **Family Clusters- Set Yearly Goals** |
| **8:00 pm** | **S’Mores/Bonfire** |
| **9:00 pm** |  |
| **10:00 pm** |  |
| **11:00 pm** | **Official Ending of UniTy** |

1. **Breakout Session 1:** Social Justice Education

**Learning Outcomes:**

* Acceptance vs. Tolerance: learning the difference between the two and exemplifying our understanding through on and off campus activities
* Systematic oppression: acknowledging its existence and informing our peers.
* Discuss events specific to The University of Tennessee involving social injustice and talking about them and taking action; not just reading about them.

**Breakout Session 2:** Informational Sessions with Administrators

**Learning Outcomes:**

* Transparency between administration and students.
* The administration’s thoughts on issues that have happened both on campus and off campus and what they are learning from it to better our research institution.
* Partners: Office of Diversity & Inclusion, Pride Center, Center for Leadership and Service (Ignite and Alt Break),  Dean of Students, Center for Student Engagement, Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life, Honors, Housing.

**Breakout Session 3:** Open Forum

**Learning Outcomes:**

* Know the issues surrounding our campus.
* Be aware of what you can do to change the culture.
* Take your knowledge from the retreat back to those you know and educate them about issues and how to help fix them.

1. **Curriculum Outline for Social Justice Education (Breakout Session 1):**

Our team intends to educate and create awareness of many different issues on campus, including social justice, gender, sexuality, and race. The following are suggested resources that we could use for this breakout session:

* *Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria* by Dr. Beverly Tatum
* *The New Jim Crowe* by Michelle Alexander
* *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan
* *Man Up: Cracking the Code of Modern Manhood* by Carlos Andres Gomez
* *I Am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism* by Lee Maracle
* *Ain’t I a Woman* by Bell Hooks
* *The Autobiography of Malcom X* Transcribed by Alex Haley
* Partnering with the Volunteers Speak Up movement on campus through the Center for Health and Wellness
* Partnering with the Office of Multicultural Student Life and taking advantage of their Diversity Educators

Through providing the opportunity for campus organization leaders to go through trainings, discuss excerpts from literature, and experience an educational training about relevant current events on our campus, they will feel equipped to not only handle different situations on our campus and within their organizations but educate the members of their individual organizations as well. This will foster conversation and discussion among our participants about important issues on campus and in our world.

1. **Proposed Follow- Up Plan:**

Our proposal for UniTy is not set in stone, and is meant to be tweaked over the years in order to ensure we are providing the best environment and experience to our participants possible. We intend to do so through the following methods of feedback:

Organizational Reports: By requiring each organization to complete their own report following the retreat with details of how they have improved following their experience at the retreat, the UniTy Retention Committee (URC), will have the opportunity and ability to alter aspects of the retreat as needed. Each organization will have approximately two weeks following the retreat to have their individualized reports completed. This will allow the URC to understand what needs improvement as well as what went according to plan and had the largest impact on the organizations in attendance.

Retreat Leader Reports:  These reports will be completed by our retreat leaders and will be used to improve UniTy.  Retreat leaders will be composed of members of campus that are knowledgeable in the area of leadership and their suggestions will give the URC the insight they were unable to access throughout the retreat. With the retreat leaders’ “behind the scenes” point of view on UniTy as a whole, the URC will be able to better fit the needs of both the participants and retreat leaders together.

Participant Reports:  Similar to the instructor review for each course taken at UT (SAIS), the UniTy committee will send out a similar report to all participants regarding their experience during the retreat. Through the implementation of this survey, the committee will be able to attain useful feedback from the participants who were up close and personal with the retreat itself. This survey will be sent out within approximately four weeks following the retreat in order to allow each participant to see how their experiences have played out in their day-to-day life.

Incentives: The UniTy committee will work with organizational boards across campus to provide incentives for individuals, organizations, or family clusters that showcase the mission statement of UniTy through making a positive impact on the UTK campus. Through polling the student body as a whole to discover what incentives would be coveted the most, we hope to ignite some ideas of incentive as the following: luncheon with our Chancellor, front row seats to a football or basketball game, or some television time on the Vol Channel. These incentives are flexible and may vary year to year, depending on what the UniTy committee decides, as well as what seems to be more popular throughout the student body on campus.

1. **Theories in UniTy:**

While developing the outline for this event, several leadership and group development theories were vital in ensuring that efforts were intentionally planned to address certain issues and to create specific results and opportunities for retreat attendees. Group and Society values of the Social Change Model, the ability “to embrace one’s Howard,” and Emotional Intelligence are key to ensuring that UniTy works within theoretical frameworks that will help achieve the goal of campus unification.

Working according to the Social Change Model, the group of students who implemented this program focused on three key competencies. Looking to develop strong groups across campus, the retreat looks to develop attendee’s leadership abilities to collaborate and to engage in civil discussions with others. Collaboration requires individuals be aware and competent of intercultural values and perspectives (Komives et al., pg. 68). Bringing leaders to this retreat, interpersonal relationships are fostered between individuals who may not otherwise meet. UniTy will provide opportunities for interpersonal relationships to be formed outside of planned sessions and group activities, but family clusters and the Open Forum with campus leaders will provide formal and guided pathways for retreat attendees to identify opportunities for cross campus partnerships. Family clusters will create an intimate environment where a small number of campus leaders can come together and to discuss important issues relevant to each individual. Leading them through trust building exercises and activities that stress empathetic listening and reflective dialogue will help them recognize the value in shared visions; however, working in groups can bring opposing viewpoints and personalities together (Komives et al., pg. 54). The breakout session on social justice and diversity, therefore, would provide opportunities for individuals to advance their knowledge in this topic area, to critically think about and challenge their viewpoint on pertinent issues, and to engage in a dialogue about these issues on campus. Educating attendees on issues related to social justice and diversity creates an environment where leaders can engage in important conversations with the ability to actively listen, to engage in a dialogue, and to mediate and negotiate with those around them. Creating cross campus partnerships that are able to collaborate with one another and to engage in civil dialogues ensures that stable communities are formed at the University of Tennessee, but individuals must support and invest in these communities before they begin to flourish and change campus culture. Connecting each individual to the University of Tennessee will develop effective citizenship and intentional service, dedication, and involvement. This investment is a crucial part of developing the society/community aspects of the social change model and creating widespread change. Without this investment, efforts to make a more unified campus would quickly fade after leaving the groups and sessions of the retreat (Komives et al., pg. 54). The breakout session with campus administrators will provide an opportunity for students to address concerns that have negatively impacted their college experience up to this point. Understanding how these obstacles can be addressed could help UniTy attendees become more connected with campus culture and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; however, many aspects of becoming a devoted member of the community cannot be instilled over a weekend retreat, but working to develop a sense of belonging for each student begins this process and allows them to appreciate the diverse backgrounds and values of each student and allows them to develop a personal responsibility to creating socially just and equal environments for everyone to learn and grow in.

Within the fields of leadership theory and development, there is an idea of “embracing your Howard.” “Howard” represents an individual or group that opposes and competes with one another in countless situations; however, the two must work together in order to accomplish a goal or to move the group forward (Sullivan). Uniting a campus of 30,000 students will not come without controversy and rivalries forming between leaders, groups, and individual members within each organization. As a result, bringing retreat participants to understand the value of embracing your Howard and using your relationship to make the greatest possible change. Engaging participants in breakout sessions and family clusters that introduce them to new groups, ideas, and issues will help create an appreciation for a multiple and diverse perspectives. Collaboration is key to overcoming issues with one’s “Howard,” but there must be a genuine appreciation for finding opportunities to lead together and to agree upon solutions that unite supporters from all areas of campus and address a common goal (Sullivan). Open forums and individual conversations will also provide a stage for UniTy participants to break down barriers that clouded their view of other student leaders and to see the validity in their viewpoint and issues and to find common ground that can help foster the collaboration process. Joining in these exercises will help overcome the personal conflicts that prevent leaders from joining forces and creating change. Whether through instilling an appreciation for differing viewpoints through diversity training or increasing awareness of the needs of others through empathetic discussions, the retreat reinforces the skills needed to identify, to embrace, and to lead with one’s Howard.

These changes require leaders be aware of themselves, those around them, and the environment they are in. Emotional intelligence, as a result, is a key to the success of this retreat and maintaining a unified campus. Emotionally intelligent leadership requires a leader to be aware of their own emotions, the emotions of others, and the influences of the environment and to understand how these things must be addressed when working with others (Caruso et al., pg. 97). Bringing leaders to be aware of their emotions, actions, and values can be difficult, but placing them in an environment where they are forced to compare and evaluate themselves can bring about self-awareness. The breakout sessions focusing on social justice and diversity and campus issues affecting retreat participants will paint a broad picture of the multiple identities and cultures represented at the University of Tennessee. Learning about these alternative perspectives can spark a process of self-reflection that leads UniTy participants to understand their values and biases more fully. Possessing the ability to self-assess one’s emotions and their influence on those around challenges one to become adaptable and able to optimistically self-control themselves to ensure the group’s progress. Unifying campus, however, requires that leaders work with one another and across campus to implement programs benefiting all students. Connecting self-aware campus leaders pushes them to empathetically reflect on their relationships with one another and to understand how different factors from their own values and emotions to organizational norms will affect the plan of action as they aim to make change (Caruso et al., pg. 97, 101-102). While the retreat will only be able to house a limited number of student leaders in its first year, connecting the participants in small groups will help ensure that this cross campus connections are made. Training family cluster facilitators to guide healthy discussions that address a number of controversial but important topics will ensure a safe space is provided for this process of self-discovery and growth to continue with each individual. Engaging in this process with a group of people will help develop an awareness of those around them as well. Seeing each other work through a similar process helps instill empathy and awareness for those around you and, ultimately, allows one to grasp how their emotions and actions can influence the group as a whole. The self-awareness and awareness of others is key to unifying campus; however, without the proper motivation and purpose, these abilities will produce little change (Caruso et al., pg. 102-103). Emotionally intelligent leaders, as a result, must be socially aware of the world they are working with and understand that each individual is facing different but equally important issues. The combination of social justice and diversity training and multiple discussions about issues affecting groups on campus will help bring an awareness of the social structures that they are working in. Understanding the relationships between the individual, group, and social aspects of society provides an opportunity to develop actions and projects that effectively address and work within the problems affecting them. Orientating their actions, therefore, to mirror servant leadership and to empathetically support and benefit others will allow them to connect with their peers and to create the type of bonds that cannot be shaken by minor conflicts or normal challenges of college life.

1. **Journey to Becoming a ‘Top 25 University’**

The University of Tennessee developed the Top 25 Initiative in 2010 with the goal of attaining a ranking as one of the nation’s top 25 public universities within the near future. The university uses the U.S. News and World Report ranking criteria as its benchmark for the Top 25 initiative. The measures include: Assessment by Administrators at Peer Institutions, Retention of Students, Faculty Resources, Student Selectivity, Financial Resources, Alumni Giving, and Graduation Rates. The University of Tennessee particularly struggles with retention and graduation rates, two factors that are inextricably linked. With a retention rate of 85.8% and a 4-year graduation rate of 39%, UT pales in comparison to rival SEC schools with similar demographics such as the University of Georgia (94% and 61%, respectively) or the University of Florida (95.8% and 67%, respectively) in retention and graduation rates (U.S. News and World Report). Since retention and graduation rates are reflective of the overall student experience, it is integral that UT implement a program aimed at providing students with an engaging and welcoming environment. Student inclusivity and involvement are essential towards improving the college experience. These factors make it easier for first year students to acclimate to college life. Research shows that, on average, the more a student is involved with his university, the healthier he is both mentally and physically (Crissman et. al.). The more engaged student also has higher grades as well. UniTy addresses the issue of student engagement on UT’s campus. By connecting fellow students with each other, and providing a space for social justice training, leadership development, and networking, the program has the potential to increase student engagement exponentially. Increased student engagement lifts retention and graduation rates, while also making the university more desirable to potential students and faculty.

While there are no true precedents for a program like UniTy, the opportunity to make it a trailblazing program for universities and student organizations across the country is an extensive one. The result is a mixture of different programs across the country. Appalachian State University’s APPs council unifies various groups on campus under a central programing umbrella. LeaderShape, a national program that fosters leadership education across campuses, was also used as a model for UniTy, especially concerning the programming involved during the retreat. Unified homecomings like the one at Clemson University also helped inspire UniTy at Rocky Top. In addition, an online program called OrgSync, is used by many of the nation’s large public universities to digitally connect organizations, students, and faculty. UniTy is similar to the software, but it would engage students in real life. Student leaders and concerned peers will finally have a place to work together on issues facing the university. Redundancy in programming and organizations, such as the multiple campus recycling groups, will be eliminated as well, leading to more efficient student-run initiatives. Faculty and administration can also hear the student population better when they work and communicate together.

1. **Timeline:**

January 2016:

* Begin contacting proposed on-campus partners, including offices as well as individuals
* Meet with intended on-campus partners to discuss budget revisions as well as revise portions of the proposal as needed
* Two 2015 EL Campus Unification Members will volunteer to serve as co-chairs of URC
  + These two ELs will discuss possible committee members and reach out to individuals based on the URC outline listed below

February:

* Create inaugural URC
  + Intended committee members:
    - 2- 2015 Emerging Leaders Campus Unification Team Members (First Co-Chairs)
      * Responsibilities: Leading meetings, Taking minutes, Ensuring effective communication between committee members, Aligning actions and goals with timeline, Ensuring funding is met, and other duties as deemed necessary.
    - 3- 2015 SPARK attendees
    - 1- Graduate Assistant in the Center for Leadership and Service
    - 3- Faculty Mentors from the Center for Leadership and Service, Office of the Dean of Students, and Office of Diversity and Inclusion
* Set first meeting with URC members, decide on a location and approve budget
* Discuss fundraising ideas and approve financial partnerships
* Set future meeting dates

March:

* Committee members will begin working on the retreat outline, gathering a “full-picture” view of the retreat
  + Open discussion should be facilitated to ensure all viewpoints are included and represented
* Set a date and location for UniTy
* Discuss application process for participants or if UniTy will be left open to all
* Begin fundraising

April:

* Analyze current financial assets to plan future fundraising activities for UniTy
* Revise and approve curriculum for UniTy

May:

* Divide labor among committee members for the summer of 2016
  + The following categories should be completed over the summer:
    - Funding
    - Location and schedule affirmation
    - Curriculum Affirmation
* If an application process is utilized, applications should during at this time**.**

Summer 2016:

* Each group within the committee should meet and ensure the accountability goals have been fulfilled

Fall 2016:

* Close application portal after first weeks of semester.
* Review applications and select attendees
* Purchase materials
* Be in contact with location staff (whether it is on or off campus)
* Finalize funding

1. **Benchmarks**

* Year One:
  + Our team hopes to serve 50 organizational student leaders across campus by providing them with an experience at UniTy that cannot be duplicated. Our hope is that through serving this population, we create a foundation and stimulate support for our initiative.
* Year Five:
  + By the fifth year of UniTy, through the use of the UniTy Retention Committee (URC), we hope to see 100 participants served through our efforts. By this point, Homecoming will hopefully become a more inclusive event on our campus, and more organizations will begin to partner with each other in order to reach their goals and successfully execute their events. We also hope to see UTK become a ‘Top 25 University’ and that some of its success to this prestigious place in the rankings will be due to the efforts we have made in creating an initiative to unify our campus through UniTy.
* Year Ten:
  + The tenth anniversary of UniTy will prove to be a large one, as our team hopes we will have created a place for UniTy on our campus that cannot be replaced. If the URC executes it’s job correctly, there should be no question that UniTy is needed here on our campus. Our hope is that every organization leader feels welcome to attend and *wants* to be a part of the experience we offer. Our goal for the tenth year anniversary is 150 - 175 participants.

1. **Future Funding:**

The Emerging Leader Campus Unification team hopes that UniTy will continue beyond the first year once our partners, as well as general population of UTK, sees that it is of utmost importance to unifying our campus. Ideally, once UniTy is implemented every year and begins to make noticeable changes on our campus, we would like for an endowment to be created for the furthering of UniTy for decades to come. Through the generous donations of our partners, we know UniTy can be supported through it’s first few years, but we hope to see it supported over a longer duration of time through something such as an endowment. If not, there is always the possibility of contacting more partners and creating more fundraising opportunities in order to ensure that this important event on our campus continues to operate at its fullest potential.

1. **Anticipated Impact:**

Our team anticipates that UniTy will provide an outlet for connection, education, and awareness for our campus organization leaders on campus. Through the proposed overview, budget, schedule, and curriculum, we are hoping to create an environment where Tennessee Volunteers can become one true Tennessee outside of Neyland Stadium. Following our trip to Appalachian State University, where they showcased their fully connected and highly devoted to campus unity student body, we became passionate about making The University of Tennessee follow in their footsteps. Through the implementation of a retreat like UniTy, we want our campus to become as fully functional as it can, by reaching its full potential, following the creation of pathways from student leader to student leader, organization to organization, and student body to administration. This will leave no room for barriers to become part of the culture here on campus. The depletion of the divides that wiggle their way between groups on campus will create an accepting environment on our campus, allowing every student to be involved and feel like they belong in our Big Orange Family. While initiating a campus unification movement, we know we are taking on a big task, but there’s no doubt that we can do so with the help of partnerships across our campus. The impact that UniTy could have at The University of Tennessee is so grandeur, it cannot be estimated. We hope to work together with offices all over campus to make our dream a reality.

1. **Citations:**

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