

Consultant Report Summary

Stevenson Union

Association of College Unions International consultants visited the Stevenson Union on February 28 and 29, 2008. While on campus they met with a wide array of constituents interested in the Stevenson Union and developed a full report of recommendations. A summary of the report follows.

Summary of Recommendations by Floor

1st Floor: Underground

The Queer Resource Center and Women's Resource Center should remain where they are. Acknowledging that there are visibility concerns, there are mixed desires about staying or moving from the same constituents. Both consumers of the services who seem to like the space, and administrators working directly with the programs, seem unconvinced that the offices should move. These two resource centers like to have proximity to one another and desire a "safe space" for students to visit.

Arena and Diversions are both large program spaces on the 1st floor and are not both viable. Maintain one or the other, and the Arena seems like a better option to retain as a multipurpose meeting space. *Diversions* is underutilized and perceived as locked most of the time. Consideration should be given to bring the Outdoor Program into the union on the lower level into the *Diversions* space or to the development of a Media Center which would house all student publications, KSOC, and Student Publicity together in the current *Diversions* space.

Second Floor

Elmo's, Java Union and the Raised Lounge need to be places where students enjoy spending time. A significant amount of re-visioning of these spaces needs to occur to make them successful "hang-out," eating and "see and be seen" spaces.

Information Desk: an information desk is needed on this floor. This location should be able to give directions, inform individuals about meeting locations, and answer basic questions.

Rogue River Room is in need of updating with new carpet, paint, and storage. A/V problems are significant. This space needs to be a priority investment.

No visible evidence of SOU was found on this floor. There needs to be a sense of place and identity with SOU. School paraphernalia, colors and pictures should be widely spread through out this floor and the SU in general.

Third Floor

Sours Leadership Center was a primary concern for all groups interviewed. The consultants support the concept of removing a significant number of cubicles and the development of comfortable lounge space. Some students expressed an interest in converting the conference room to senate offices. The consultants do not recommend this

conversion based on their collective experience. That being said, they strongly recommend that an exterior door be added to the outside wall of the conference room allowing for access from the hallway, rather than having to enter the Sours space to gain entry.

Multicultural Student Center is a vibrant space with lots of students using the space and interacting. Consultant observation was that not just students of color access and feel comfortable in this space. Given that, along with the current SOU culture surrounding the viability and affinity to cultural centers, the consultants recommend that the Multicultural Student Center expand into the Student Publicity area. Expansion would allow for a Coordinator office and more space for Multicultural Coalition groups.

Student Publicity should move away from their space to allow for MRC expansion. This center could move to either the old VPSA vacant space across from the Involvement Center or into a Media Center in Diversions if that suggestion is pursued.

The prominent display of University administrator portraits, both past and present, conveyed a sense that students are in “administrative” space on the third floor. The consultants strongly recommend that student leader photographs join those of the university administrative leaders and that more be done to convey a sense of students are partners in leading the institution with administrators.

Vice President of Student Affairs Office. There are pros and cons of upper administrative offices being placed in the union. This is ultimately a university decision. If this office were moved consultants did not identify an appropriate office/service that would neatly fit or replace the office. And, even with significant reshuffling and remodeling, there was not an obvious replacement and/or use of the area.

Summary of Top 5 General Recommendations

1. A professional staff member should be hired who has the direct advising of student governance as a significant aspect of his or her position. This individual would support student government through leadership development, transitions, assist with relationships and connections and be consistently available to provide help with questions and problems.
2. Additionally, a position (it could be the same position as recommendation #1) should be created that nurtures a strong sense of campus life.
3. A structure should be put in place that facilitates student input into decision making processes of both the university and the student union.
4. Building on recommendation #3, a Stevenson Union advisory board should be put in place that functions throughout the year. The current structure of SUAC provides a central focus on fiscal responsibilities and operates as a *de facto* student board of the union.
5. The student fees subcommittee for the union act in a board capacity or relinquish their authority to a new board which can help management/administrators with strategic direction and guidance.