



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

DATE: October 19, 2020

TO: Dr. John Nicklow
President, University of New Orleans

THROUGH: Dr. Carolyn Golz
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students

LeeAnne Sipe
Interim Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

From: Joy Ballard
Assistant Director, Student Involvement and Leadership

RE: Project Account for Multicultural Lounge

*Approved
JAN 10/21/20*

Cung 10/19/2020

JB 10/19/2020

Memorandum

Per purchasing guidelines the UNO Student Government Association is requesting approval for a project account to be created to fund the renovation for the Multicultural Lounge. This project will be funded through the Student Government Association and a private donor, and overseen by the Diversity Engagement Center. SGA wishes to transfer \$29,335.36 from the senate reserve account. This price was agreed upon based on the proposal provided from the Office of Student Affairs.

This project was passed through the senate legislation B.F20.I004 on October 7, 2020. (See Attached)

CC: Julianne Romero, Student Body President

B.F20.1004

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Referred To:
Date Filed: 9-23-2020
Number of Pages Total: 3

Sponsor:
Senator Alex Bellow
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A Bill

This is a bill to allocate \$29,335.36 from the Senate Reserve Account to assist The Diversity Engagement Center of Student Affairs for renovation efforts which will be hosted on Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Whereas, the Diversity Engagement Center, will be known as the Multicultural lounge and is funded by Student Affairs;

Whereas, the renovation is necessary to the UNO community because the UL System mission is "to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Therefore, it is integral to furthering that mission is supporting efforts to create diverse and welcoming campus communities for all students.

Whereas, the renovation will provide a physical space for students to gather and for community building;

Whereas, the renovation will allow access to information about resources on campus and in the community;

Whereas, the renovation will allow students to meet a variety of students from different backgrounds through center participation and programming;

Whereas, the renovation will allow students to connect with mentors and form relationships that foster their personal growth;

Whereas, all students are invited to visit the Diversity Engagement Center once it is finished with renovations.

Whereas, the Student Government Association of the University of New Orleans logo will appear with the Diversity Engagement Center;

Whereas, this does not give SGA any responsibility for maintaining or staffing the Diversity Engagement Center;

Whereas, as part of our (SGA) Compound Resolution to Condemn Actions of Racial Injustice and in Support of the Black Lives Matter Movement we stated, "SGA supports administration's endeavors to provide or update the space for multicultural students that is more welcoming than the current Diversity Lounge;

Whereas, the specific monies will include \$12,132.00 for furniture, and \$17,203.36 for general construction.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION THAT:

- I. THE AMOUNT OF \$29,335.36 BE ALLOCATED FROM THE Senate Reserve Account TO Student Affairs FOR the renovation of the Diversity Engagement Center.

- II. ALL UNUSED FUNDS SHALL REVERT BACK TO THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION AT THE END OF THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR.
 - III. SEE ATTACHED BUDGET.
 - IV. The Diversity Engagement Center SHALL REPORT BACK TO THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION WITHIN 30 DAYS UPON COMPLETION OF THE EVENT.
-

Senate Action: <u>Pass</u>	Vote: <u>13-1-2</u>
<u><i>David LeB</i></u>	<u>10-7-2020</u>
PRESIDING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE	DATE
SGA President's Action: <u>Pass</u>	
<u><i>Julianne Roman</i></u>	<u>10/13/2020</u>
SGA PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE	DATE
VETO OVERRIDE	
Senate Action on Veto: _____	Vote: _____
_____	_____
PRESIDING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE	DATE

Highlighted Portions are what we will be funding. We will fund all furniture if passed, and the difference will partially fund some of the general construction.

Appendix B: Estimated Costs of Model 2

Demolition

201B Removal of Glass Panel \$300

201B Ceiling Removal \$4,428.90

General Construction

Walls \$5,578/02

Lighting \$1,480.00

Electrical \$1,200.00

Data Box & Conduit Only \$680.00

Painting \$7,427.58

Interior Doors 5 \$7,250.00

Glass Entry Doors \$2,300.00

Ceiling \$3,900.00

HVAC \$4,800.00

Contingency 20% \$6,923.12

Construction Estimate \$41,538.72

Technology

TBD \$5,000

Furniture

50" TV 2 \$500.00

Coffee Table 2 \$200.00

Side Tables 6 \$200.00

Armchair 170 \$2,720.00

Loveseat 3 \$510.00

Single Writing Desks 10 \$769.00

Double Tier Lockers 2 \$684.00

Wooden Desk Chairs 40 \$2,400.00

Conference Table (95" x 35") 1 \$489.00

Boat Shaped Conference Table 1 \$1200

Power Outlet Tables 4 \$800

Black Roller Chairs 12 \$1560.00

Bean bags 2 \$100

Furniture cost \$12,132.00

Total Cost \$58,670.72

Diversity Engagement Center Proposal for expansion

Prepared by Dr. Desirée Anderson, Associate Dean, Diversity and Student Affairs

September 22, 2020

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Executive Summary:

This document serves as a proposal to expand the Diversity Engagement Center to a full-service student center and lounge. This physical space would function as a nucleus where diversity and inclusion are valued publicly and openly. It would be a place in which students who have often felt disenfranchised or marginalized have a space where they could enhance their sense of community and belonging. This physical space would be welcome to all students with a particular focus on developing allies for historically marginalized communities, building self-advocacy, and educating the campus community about issues that concern those same communities.

The center would serve several purposes:

- Act as a physical location for students to gather and connect with one;
- Act as a resource center with information about campus and community resources;
- Develop programming and activities that respond to the needs of these students in relation to diversity and inclusion.

Estimated costs associated with renovation including demolition, construction, technology updates, and furniture maxes out at about \$60,000.

Statement of Purpose:

As the demographics of the student population continues to shift in higher education it becomes essential that institutions shift with it. As institutions of higher education student population changes, it is unclear if the higher presence or historically marginalized students has increased harmony or increased racial tension (U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, 2003). As such, many institutions have developed diversity statements or commitments. The UL system is no different. The UL System mission is “to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access. Integral to furthering that mission is supporting efforts to create diverse and welcoming campus communities for all students. The System has encouraged institutions not only to attract and admit students from various backgrounds and experiences but also to support and retain these students once they are on our campuses” (p.17).

A UL System report called Strengthening and Advancing the UL System with Respect to Diversity, Student Cost Savings, and Transparency outlines basic recommendations for institutions in the system to build greater student diversity. These include but are not limited to; improve the application, admission, enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates of underrepresented students of color, be committed to promoting student body diversity and inclusion on their campuses, provide outreach and recruitment for underrepresented students, provide support services for its students, and foster an inclusive campus climate. To accomplish these goals, it is imperative that students feel as if they have a sense of belonging. A sense of belonging “is a challenging concept because it has both a psychological and a behavioral meaning. As a psychological term, belonging connotes the opposite of feelings of alienation. We can measure individual’s subjective experiences of feelings of belonging, or the lack thereof, as part of a diagnostic strategy for assessing how well we are doing at enabling the academic and professional flourishing of all members of our community. Drawing on the literature on sense of community, we can say that belonging entails the following elements:

- **Experiences of membership:** individuals have an ownership stake in a community

- **Influence:** positive influence from others and ability to be positive influence and role model to others
- **Integration and fulfillment of needs:** members find their participation in the community rewarding
- **Shared emotional connection:** opportunity to bond through formal and informal events and interactions” (Harvard report)

One way to achieve this sense of belonging is to cultivate and increase centralized and identifiable support programs delineated to serve racial and ethnic minority students and to provide a more inclusive environment for various protected and underrepresented identities, including sexual orientation, sex, gender and gender expression, disability, religion and creed, veteran status, class background, national origin, including undocumented students, international and non-English speaking, and age.

The University of New Orleans prides itself on being the most diverse institution in the UL system. However, diversity does not always equal inclusion and the perception of inclusion impacts the University’s ability to recruit and retain students. While the University has some distinct cultural studies programs, the faculty of color population is significantly disproportionate to the existing and growing student population. Large portions of the student population do not see themselves reflected in the University campus. Student clubs and organizations, specifically cultural clubs, very seldom interface with one another to be able to build relationships and coalitions with one another. Additionally, in a commuter environment, staying on campus to connect and engage is crucial for student persistence, retention and completion. While there are many spaces to “connect” on the campus it is often difficult to know which spaces are welcoming and affirming for students from historically marginalized communities.

This call for a space was specifically asked for by students during the Pretzels with the President and has been echoed by other students since. As Pittman (1994) states, students of color on his campus frequently say, “We need a safe space, a refuge, a place where we can go and just be ourselves without feeling the pressures and constraints of an ever-present white world.” While the space would not be just for students of color the need for a place to go is ever present still in 2019. To achieve this, the University of New Orleans will need a multi-pronged and staged approach that will transform and modify the current ethos on campus to create a more culturally inclusive, equitable and supportive environment. This approach will need to happen through targeted support at all stages of student life from recruitment and retention to graduation and beyond as alumni of this institution as well as addressing needs for social/co-curricular programming and community building, and place making and built environments. Equally important is an integration of curricular and co-curricular efforts for a welcoming and inclusive campus. The proposal articulates how this multi-pronged approach can be accomplished through the establishment of a full-service diversity and inclusion center/lounge.

Goals of the Center/Lounge:

The primary goal of the center/lounge is to provide a visible welcoming space to build connections across campus. The goal of creating a resource and gathering center focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion is to support students in personal growth and connection to the campus. In addition, it would support their understanding and awareness of diversity. Keeping students on campus, engaged in community-building, supports student retention rates. When

students are facing issues of isolation, microaggressions, etc. they do not know where to turn and this physical space would give these students a point of focus to receive resources and build on their existing communities. Essential to this will be to help all students explore/define identity and increase cultural awareness and knowledge of self while advancing students' multicultural understanding for success in the professional world by infusing diversity and diverse perspectives into curricular/co-curricular programming. Hu & Kuh (2003) recommended for institutions to enhance opportunities for interaction between students of diverse backgrounds in "educationally purposeful ways" (p. 321) to expand the learning and development of all. Thus, the Center/Lounge would expand training and resources to address discrimination, bias, misconceptions, and stereotypes through peer educators and work collaboratively to increase awareness of social issues.

The creation of a strong and visible student center/lounge does not minimize the need and necessity of integrated diversity and inclusion into the fabric of the institution rather the creation of the center enhances and helps to maintain the integration. Beyond this, the goal is to connect the Center to departments, offices and programs across campus, thereby ensuring all programs are meeting the diverse needs of students and incorporating high quality multicultural education into the experience of all UNO students. The Center must work with a larger umbrella of diverse populations on campus. This will require that the Center collaborate with all the offices and departments already supporting those populations. If the Center does not make such an intentional shift to expand its work and reach out to all departments and programs, then the university will never fully realize its goal of integrated diversity and inclusion.

Specifically, the goals of the center are to:

- Provide a physical space for students to gathering and for community building.
- Access information about resources on campus and in the community.
- Allow students to meet a variety of students from different backgrounds through center participation and programming.
- Incentive students' connection with mentors in relationships that foster their personal growth.

Identified student needs (notes from multicultural student council meeting):

- Common communal space
 - Storage space for student clubs
 - Meeting space because rooms are often reserved
 - Visible space to know when stuff is happening
 - Safe space to be oneself
 - Better accessibility
 - Could be the student union that we don't have
 - Reserved space dedicated to the students first
 - More user-friendly space
-

Vision for the Space:

History of existing space:

The current location of the Diversity Engagement Center came as a result of a Diversity and Equity group recommendation. The first clear mention was during a retreat for retention and recruiting whereby faculty and staff corroborated on several initiatives to determine best practice and most urgent needs on campus. After being placed in a variety of small-group task forces, participants in the Diversity and Equity group outlined an immediate need for both a physical space and widespread awareness regarding Diversity Affairs. Additionally, Dr. Nicklow was the Provost at the time and utilized this information to make it one of his clear initiatives both as Provost and eventually President of UNO. After looking at several locations across campus (namely the Library and the 1st floor of the UC), the current office was decided upon as still satisfying several criteria (physical space, central location). However, since its inception, it is clear to many that the current location of the Diversity Engagement Center is in fact not ideal in the way that it is designed. The physical space is located at the back of a room that is more often than not locked and inaccessible because of room set up. It can send a message, whether intentional or not, that the space is not important and is only worth being hidden.

Space expansion:

While the most ideal space would require a capital campaign to build a new space there are a few things that would be essential to making the expanded space welcoming, affirming, and impactful. At a minimum the space would include a large lounge space designated as a student space that can be access at least 16 hours a day, if not 24 hours. This space would include a conference/meeting that could be reserved as well as quiet/study space. There would be a need for an office space to house the existing graduate student and student workers with the possibility of additional full-time staff. Additionally, there would be storage space like cabinets or lockers for cultural clubs to keep their belongings throughout the year. Finally, the physically space would need beyond basic furniture room for decorative items that are culturally relevant and representative of the student body. A more expanded breakdown of the vision for the space can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B includes estimated costs.

Ideal makeup of the space

- Community space/lounge*
- Event space
- Office space*
- Conference room*
- Study/Quiet room
- Gender inclusive restroom
- Storage Lockers/Cabinets for student clubs and organizations*
- Storage space for the center
- Kitchenette space

*indicates minimal desired needs

Programming and Services

With the expansion of the space would also require an expansion of services and resources. To ensure that use of the space and to enhance the sense of belonging the center would offer a wide variety of programming and services such as a peer mentoring program, a peer educator program, a resource library, retreats, training and workshops, and more. Already in motion is a move to increase leadership opportunities by developing the peer educator program to start this spring and the peer mentoring program to begin in fall 2020. In order for these to be successful there needs to be a place where these are housed. The existing Diversity Engagement Center is small and uninviting, small.

Peer Educator Program:

A Peer Equity and Resource Educator (PERE) engages students in building an inclusive community with one-time and on-going opportunities on behalf of the Diversity Engagement Center (DEC). Students reflect on and share their own experiences while learning from others and their different perspectives. Peer Equity and Resource Educators foster intercultural communication skills, identity development, and ally-ship. PEREs organize bi-weekly programs and socials as well as coordinate the cultural graduate celebration.

Peer Mentoring Program:

The goal of the Peer Mentor Program is to pair incoming first-year students and new transfer students with upper-class student mentors who serve as coaches, role models, advisers, guides, and referral agents to facilitate the transition into the University of New Orleans. The program is open to any student with particular focus on students from historically marginalized communities in order to increase student retention by alleviating initial isolation, increasing student involvement and interaction, and providing the student with additional encouragement and inspiration to be successful by bridging the gap between institutional services and support systems.

Enhanced Safe Space training:

The existing Safe Space training would be expanded to include multiple tiers of training offered separately to students and faculty/staff. It would include more information around intersectionality, history, and power structures.

Services

Some of the expanded services would include; considering methods for emergency financial support to assist students including book scholarships and emergency funds, a resource library, intentional connections and collaboration to alumni networks

Anticipated Outcome(s):

The expansion of a full-service center could lead to the following results:

1. A visible and easily accessible location for services and place making for underrepresented students.
 2. Centralization of services that support (not replace) recruitment efforts focused on racial and ethnic minority students
 3. Embedding of support services that complement and build upon the activities and club-based structure of Student Involvement and Leadership
 4. Engaging the students and broader campus community in events and initiatives designed to increase dialogue, awareness, and engagement within and across various groups.
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5. Build community through intentional programs and services that enhance underrepresented students' sense of belonging, and support the leadership growth and development of underrepresented students.
6. Educational resource center where supplies and used textbooks are donated and then shared with students in need which would lighten the financial load for students
7. Leadership opportunities that focus specifically on cultural and community development
8. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion activities and programming hub for students with support from faculty and staff
9. Recruitment, employment, retention of historically marginalized students as contrasted with overall rates.

Metrics: *(How will outcomes be measured?)*

- 1) Student visits to the space using a log-in system
 - 2) Improved ratings on campus climate surveys of underrepresented students
 - 3) Improved recruitment and retention rates for historically marginalized and underrepresented students
 - 4) Enhanced awareness and increased commitment to support multiculturalism and diversity by all students (majority and minority students)
 - 5) Increased enrollment and a more positive experience for underrepresented students
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References:

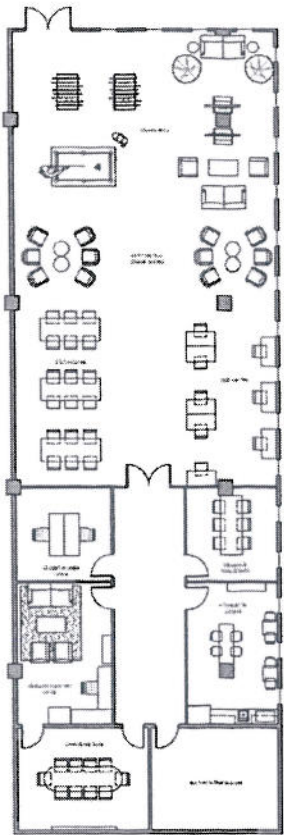
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- Pittman, E. (1994) Cultural Centers on Predominantly White Campuses: Campus, Cultural and Social Comfort Equals Retention in Black Issues in Higher Education, Volume 11, number 16, p. 104. Accessed online at <http://alana.vassar.edu/resources/cultural-spaces.html> Accessed November 8, 2019.
- Saluri, D. (1985). Case Studies and Successful Programs. In Noel, L., Levitz, R., Saluri, D., & Associates (Eds.), *Increasing Student Retention* (pp. 402-447). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
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- U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service. (2003). *Responding to hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents on college/university campuses*. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/archive/crs/pubs/university92003.htm>
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Appendix A:

Vision for expansion of existing space-UC Gallery Lounge:

The vision for an expansion of the existing Diversity Engagement Space includes splitting the UC gallery in half where the pillars in the middle of the room already exist. The length of the room would serve as the newly renovated space using the existing glass door as the entrance for the space.

The space would be an open concept until about the $\frac{3}{4}$ mark of the existing space to include traditional student lounge furniture and possible games, TVs. The latter half would be designed as offices, conference room, interfaith prayer/meditation space, and quiet/study room as well as a kitchenette and student club lockers/storage space.



The Square boxes are where the existing pillars are located in the lounge. Upon first entering the space you would be met with active games like pool or foosball to the far side of the room would be couches and TVs located on the opposite sides of the existing pillars. This visual provides the most ideal renovation but it is most likely more expensive than reasonable. **Model 1** would require the least renovation. It would add more comfortable lounge and study furniture and build a barrier where the pillars currently exist in the middle of the room and continue to renovate as funding is available.

Model 2 provides adequate space for programming and an administrative staff office

- Open concept space for gathering with single and group study space
- A large space for organizational and intersectional collaboration, presentations, and group gatherings (1 room current Diversity Engagement Center)
- A room for academic study and mentorship (1 room)
- Interfaith prayer space (existing space)
- Administrative office

Model 3 provides adequate space for a variety of programming uses, administrative offices and space for growth:

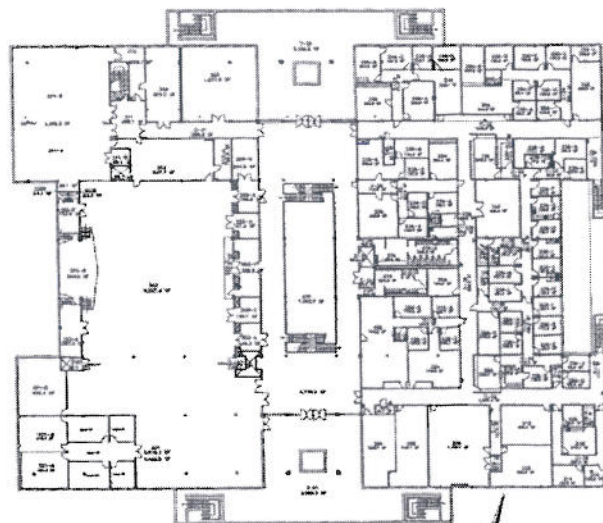
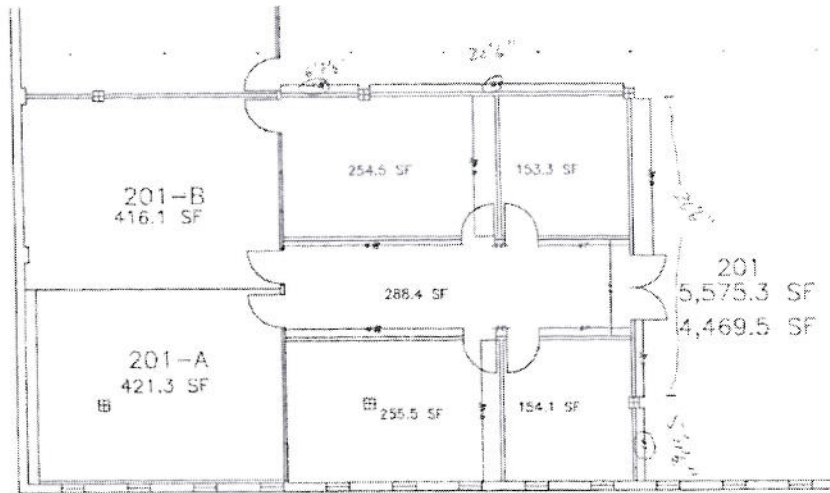
- Open concept space for gathering with single and group study space
- A large space for organizational and intersectional

collaboration, presentations, and group gatherings (1 room current Diversity Engagement Center)

- A room for academic study and mentorship (1 room)
- Interfaith prayer space (existing space)
- Administrative office (2 rooms)
- A kitchen or a cafe space (1 room)

Updated mark up of space from Facilities Services: Model 2

Based on feedback from Facilities Services, the best option is Model 2. This gives administrative and programming space but leaves open the upper portion to be used as overflow for the ballroom and reduces cost that would be associated to maintain fire codes.



UNL UNIVERSITY CENTER 2ND FLOOR
GROSS AREA: 59,432.6 SQ. FT.
USEABLE AREA: 43,568.7 SQ. FT.

Appendix B: Estimated Costs of Model 2

Demolition		
201B	Removal of Glass Panel	\$300
201B	Ceiling Removal	\$4,428.90
General Construction		
Walls		\$5,578/02
Lighting		\$1,480.00
Electrical		\$1,200.00
Data	Box & Conduit Only	\$680.00
Painting		\$7,427.58
Interior Doors	5	\$7,250.00
Glass Entry Doors		\$2,300.00
Ceiling		\$3,900.00
HVAC		\$4,800.00
Contingency	20%	\$6,923.12
<i>Construction Estimate</i>		<i>\$41,538.72</i>
Technology		
<i>TBD</i>		<i>\$5,000</i>
Furniture		
50" TV	2	\$500.00
Coffee Table	2	\$200.00
Side Tables	6	\$200.00
Armchair	170	\$2,720.00
Loveseat	3	\$510.00
Single Writing Desks	10	\$769.00
Double Tier Lockers	2	\$684.00
Wooden Desk Chairs	40	\$2,400.00
Conference Table (95" x 35")	1	\$489.00
Boat Shaped Conference Table	1	\$1200
Power Outlet Tables	4	\$800
Black Roller Chairs	12	\$1560.00
Bean bags	2	\$100
<i>Furniture cost</i>		<i>\$12,132.00</i>
Total Cost		\$58,670.72