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&  
Faculty, staff, and students from the NAERCC

**An assessment of Native American students' perceptions of support and interpersonal climate between faculty, staff, and peers.**

By

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### **Abstract**

Native American students currently have the lowest enrollment and retention in continuing education in America. Once admitted & attending the percentage of students who are retained is also concerning. This assessment has benchmarked the perceived institutional support and campus climate for 1/3 of the Native students who use the new Native American Education, Research, and Cultural Center. In much of the literature there is a call for more qualitative vs quantitative assessments.

Through interviewing nine Native students and coding their interviews I have created a relative baseline. This assessment illustrates in students' own words what has made them feel most connected and least connected to the university. Native American students currently feel connected to the university through the Center, Native faculty, Native administration, and the community that has grown around the center. The third foundation beyond their academic ability from high school and socio-economic background is their relationships between faculty, administrators, and peers.

## **Acknowledgments**

To all the grandmothers, mothers, aunts, cousins, and sisters who have done the emotional labor protecting and guiding my family so that I could be in this place at this time, thank you. To all the grandfathers, fathers, uncles, cousins, and brothers who have sacrificed their physical and emotional safety to provide for family so that I could be in this place at this time, thank you. To all the overlapping and in-between relatives, and to those who do not identify with binary gender identities but whose labor have also built the network of resources to insure I could be here, now, thank you.

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## INTRODUCTION

“Sustainability lives in the people” – Beverley Grant

In the United States, Indigenous<sup>1</sup> students attending and completing continuing education programs<sup>2</sup> are currently the most underrepresented demographic. Indigenous students comprised 1% of the U.S. undergraduate population and less than 1% of the graduate population in 2018. (Postsecondary, 2018) According to the 2010 census data, Native American, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander as one group alone or in combination with other ethnic groups make up 2.1% of the Nation. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

The University of Wyoming (UW) is no exception to this national statistic. This Fall, 2018 UW had 66 American Indian or Alaska Native students enrolled on a campus of 12,450 students, this equates to 0.5% of the student body (S. Koller, personal communication, May 14, 2019), even though the population in Wyoming at large is 2.2% Native American. While enrollment and graduation rates are low, the University has made attempts in the past to bridge this gap. In August 2019 UW will mark the second year of its first-ever, Native American Education, Research, and Cultural Center (NAERCC, or the Center). The Center’s purpose is to support Native American students’ academic success and enrich their experience at UW while providing the general campus community a heightened awareness of Indigenous peoples’ history and current culture. The Center aims to hold space for Native American students to express their sovereignty, culture, and diverse traditions. In diversity, equity and inclusion terminology, the Center aims to provide a place “to be seen” – a form of recognition and appreciation from one’s

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<sup>1</sup> I chose to use the term Indigenous intentionally, See page 4, section: Notes on Preferred Terms, for more detail

<sup>2</sup> Continuing education at universities and colleges is a perceived indicator of success among predominantly Eurocentric scholars, often neglecting success as attributed to the advancement in trades and skilled crafts.



community or from people outside one's community who recognize the individuals unique, identity.

In this paper, I have explored the literature regarding Native student retention with an emphasis on faculty, staff, and peer-to-peer student relationships. Using one-on-one interviews, I have compiled responses into similar categories and described how students perceive the institutions' support.

### **Rationale**

According to Caplan and Ford (2014), not enough qualitative research has been done about student retention; most of the research is quantitative and focuses on students' GPA in relation to previous assessments like SAT and ACT scores as well as socio-economic evaluations. Caplan and Ford researched institutions with varying degrees of admission selection and different histories with diversity. They began their research with individual factors and ended with structural factors affecting graduation rates. The following excerpt encapsulates their rationale, "Focus on a structural view is of the utmost importance, for it is nothing less than tragic for those who manage to obtain admission to higher education to encounter unnecessary and demoralizing obstacles." (Caplan & Ford, 2014, p. 34)

What I expected to find based on previous research was a collection of microaggressions and microinvalidations from faculty, staff, and other students (Caplan, 2014). I also expected to find stories related to cultural discontinuity, resistance theory, and transcultural hypothesis (Shields, 2004). This research assessment is significant because it adds data points to the benchmarking of Native American and University relations by offering qualitative data related to

past and present experiences around the University's recent investments in Native students. Also, this work contributes to the small qualitative body of research on this issue more generally.

### **Research Question**

My project has assessed nine Native American students' current perception of UW support and the campus climate towards these students' presence and culture. Previous research suggests three factors determine any student's retention in Eurocentric<sup>3</sup> continuing education: 1) their academic achievement they bring from high school, 2) their socio-economic support, and 3) their relationships with peers, faculty, and administration (Aydin, 2017). My project aimed to focus on the third factor, but I analyzed responses that broached the first and second factors as well. My question is a non-experimental qualitative phenomenology assessment in which my unit of analysis is how Native American students have experienced UW support from faculty, staff, and peers. I used deductive coding applied to interviews with students who described their experiences in their own word. I identified common themes students shared that aligned with theoretical frameworks related to retention in continuing education. My results should aid UW as they continue their efforts to retain Native American students by benchmarking a small window on the struggles and successes students have faced.

### **Institutional justification**

From the institutional perspective, three distinct self-interests align with increasing retention in historically underrepresented populations, "Low graduation rates: (a) cost universities scarce resources; (b) weaken the ability to meet educational objects; and (c) reflect the universities' inability to meet the educational, social, and emotional needs of students"

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<sup>3</sup> I chose to use the term Eurocentric intentionally, See page 4, section Notes on Preferred Terms, for more detail

(Mangold, Bean, Adams, Schwab & Lynch, 2002, p. 1). Institutions are strengthened overall by providing support, care, and attending to the needs of historically underrepresented students.

### **Notes on Preferred Terms**

In this paper, I will use terms like Native American, Native, Native student, and Indigenous interchangeably to signify a student who identifies with a tribal community in North America, including Alaska and the islands surrounding North American. The University's application for admission, like many University applications, denote *American Indian or Alaska Native* and *Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Island*, as options of self-identification for Indigenous people. These forms ask for racial identification. Race is a concept brought into modern human classification based on color and skeletal structure in the last 300 years via European philosophers, when in fact what the forms are asking for is a person's ethnic identity (Smedley, 2012). Race only allows for a false dichotomy of human identity while ethnicity allows space for trans-culturalism, thus recognizing the full spectrum of human identity. (Barbara, 2014) The University application does offer a choice for ethnicity, however, it has only two options, either Hispanic which includes Chicano, Mexican, Latino, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South, and Central America, or option two, Non-Hispanic. This used to be a mystery to me until I read Tuck and Yang's article (2012), I now recognize this ethnic acceptance of Hispanic as the American social colonial encouragement for people of color to assimilate into Whiteness and encourage colonial actions against Indigenous people. At the same time, it offers a "move towards innocence" described in the article as "colonial equivocation." For the purpose of this paper, the terms Native American, Native, Native student, and Indigenous will be used to describe people who identify with tribal nations residing on this continent and nearby islands. I

will not use American Indian or Indian as the term Indian is a long-standing mistake by wayward, lost European exploitive merchant-soldier-colonizers.

Based on other research articles that have used the following terms, White, dominant class or group, western or European society, western or European culture, and western centralism, I have chosen to use Eurocentric, when referring to the people and systems that maintain colonial ethic. I will also use White Institutional Presence (WIP), and Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) as articles in my literature review center their research on unpacking these terms. White as a reference term centers color and ignores the nuanced ethnic identity of European settlers and reinforces a human divide. Before settlers came to the North and South American continent, Europeans practiced colonization on tribal communities of Europe. (Turdell, 2001) By calling a culture dominant, we maintain its dominance. Once the broader cultural context is named, understood, and decoded, we can work to dismantle outdated thinking and incorporate other cultural norms, ways of thinking, and being into the broader cultural context.

Due to direct quotation, at times, I will use Indian and white as per continuity to the source.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Part 1: Academic Literature Review

This chapter is organized by topic and follows the progression of my understanding and highlights best practices related to my research question. Beginning with a novice approach, I narrow to the contemporary core understanding of Indigenous students' retention at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI). A general search led me to the factors affecting any college student's retention. I also wanted to assess social & emotional learning under the assumption – completion of continuing education depends on an emotional factor, equal-to or more-than one's academic ability or financial support. After looking into this body of research with students generally, I altered my search terms to review Indigenous student retention. Searching with terms like “underrepresented populations/communities,” “minority retention” and “Native American student retention,” results that I found shaped the rest of my literature review and specific research method.

Most articles were found on the UW online database connected to the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Journal Storage (JSTOR) and a few articles were found via Google Scholar. One text on identity was recommended by Dr. Angela Jaime's Native American Studies library.

#### **General: college student retention**

I searched for the most recent articles on college first-year students success and retention. I came across Gokcen Aydin's study in which he used a survey and writing sample taken at the beginning and end of participant's first-year as indicators of personal success and achievement as defined through English proficiency. The author provided a definition of success and took a self-

deterministic stance that I do not agree with, however, his results did support my initial assumption that students' agency plays a large role in a student's ability to succeed in continuing education. A correlational data analysis found that personal variables significantly predicted student success,  $p < .05$ . Personal variables such as positive stress, time pressure, and classroom communication were among the top factors present in relation to student improvement (2017). This research was conducted in Turkey, and as in similar research conducted in the US, it found that classroom communication is essential. The article also mentions, "changing perspectives in modern education systems, success means more than grades and includes emotional, social, cognitive, and academic development" (2017, p. 93). As illustrated in this quote, whole student education includes emotional, social, and cognitive development which aligns well with the discipline of social emotional learning.

### **Social emotional learning**

The authors Wang, Wilhite, Wyatt, Young, Blomker, and Wilhite (2012) found that emotional skills, capacities or abilities play into a student's ability to cope with environmental demands and can contribute to academic achievement. Further, the article speaks to first-year student challenges that in addition to workload, time management, and self-reliance away from family, they also face more diversity than their high school experience (Wang et al., 2012).

Seal, Beauchamp, Miguel, and Scott (2011) created a self-report instrument to assess social and emotional development and surveyed 632 freshmen with this quantitative 48-item measure. Many of the tests for Emotional Intelligence (EI) were created for the workplace, but as education has evolved from discipline-based to a whole student education model, EI tests have been designed specifically for college students. This article details the design for a specific EI test meant for first-year students.

As my “general: college student retention” questions narrowed, I decided to isolate Native American student retention studies. In the first round of articles, I found more focus on institutional studies rather than students ability or background; this led me to narrow in on research projects assessing institutional performance.

### **White institutional presence and voices of diversity**

I read in a few abstracts the term White Institutional Presence (WIP), I sought to understand WIP before continuing. Author Gusa’s (2010) meta-analysis focused on Black and White student relationships to unpack the impact of whiteness on-campus climate. Gusa explains that most colleges and universities in America were made for and by white men. The institution functions for their success, the institutional core values were sourced from Protestant & industrial era consciousnesses as well as middle-class *White American ideology*.

The framework of White American ideology, according to Gusa, are as follows; *white ascendancy, monoculturalism, white blindness, and white estrangement* (Gusa, 2010). White ascendancy and monoculturalism are rooted in the notion that white is right. For example, global beauty standards are heavily white ascending, white hairstyles have been coded as the professional look for the workplace while natural Black hair is not considered professional. Another example, news anchors for national broadcasting need to have a Northeastern Ohio accent (Broxton, Demby, Meraji, 2018, August 8) and if they have an ethnic accent need vocal coaching or can’t work in National news. White Blindness and estrangement show up in my interviews, and mirror findings found by Gusa. For example, white blindness is reflected in statements like, “we don’t have a culture,” or “isn’t racism over why we are still talking about this.” Estrangement shows up in the way communities of color were often segregated to other neighborhoods so white people could live without having to interact with people of color, and as

a result, made future interactions awkward. In extreme yet frequent cases these interactions are fatal, the heavy policing for bodies of color is also rooted in many other oppressive systems, yet estrangement has also served in this arrangement of violence.

Gusa also highlights other features of White American ideology that function as follows:

- Individualism, self-reliance, independence
- Capitalism ideas about property, profit, and competition
- Meritocracy – equality of opportunity but not necessarily in outcome
- White standards of decorum equate to normal social and academic behavior

(Gusa, 2010)

With these concepts, Gusa's meta-analysis named and unpacked the WIP, such as that at the core of UW's institutional structure.

Caplan and Ford (2014), conducted a mixed methods study that involved four universities, both public and private institutions from across the USA. Their mixed method study used interviews along with questionnaires. They collected demographics on family background, individual academic history, and an array of on-campus experiences. Their target size was 50 students of mixed gender from African American, Asian-American, Latinas/os and Native American students with three white men and three white women as well from each of the four institutions.

Interviews highlighted students' own viewpoints and encouraged rich and elaborate responses; they found racism and sexism in each institution. This study gave me an example of what kind of study I wanted to conduct and encouragement. They also state the need for more qualitative assessments.



## **Cultural discontinuity, resistance theory, and transcultural hypothesis**

In contrast, the following two articles by (Agboo, 2001) and (Huffman 2001) were not my favorite to read, as the language was antiquated; and the authors approached from a deficit perspective. However, their findings were useful in the creation of this and other works relating to Native American student retention.

The cultural discontinuity experienced by Native American students within [Eurocentric] educational environments often lies in the [Eurocentric] culture's school settings' concept of time and space, discrepancies and distortions in the curriculum that combine to cause the low achievement of Native American students (Agboo, 2001, p36)

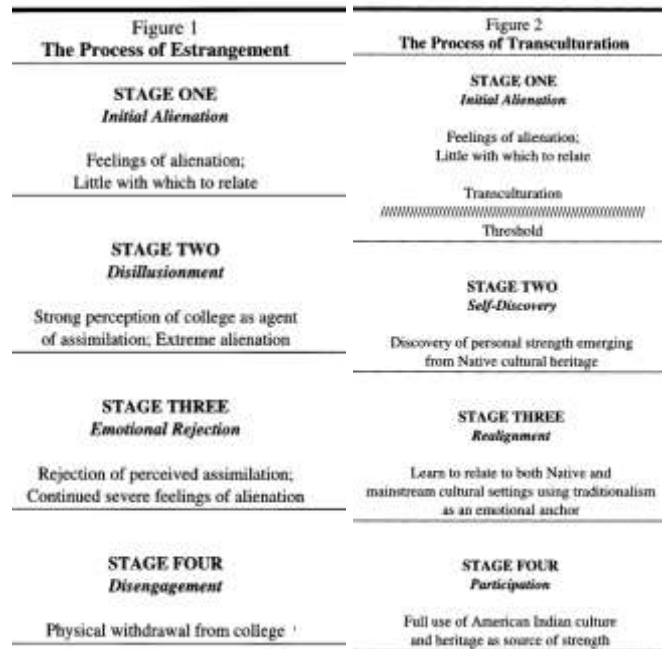
This recognition of differences and their effect on students is essential in understanding the next article's explanation of how Native students have been able to overcome and perform well in the Eurocentric educational environment.

Huffman wrote, despite having values, behavior, political and economic power differences with the Eurocentric culture present in the academic system, Native American students' have been noted using resistance theory and transculturation hypothesis as tools of persistence in their continuing education programs. These concepts, *cultural discontinuity*, *resistance theory*, and *transcultural hypothesis* have all come from the interdisciplinary mixing of sociology, psychology, and education.

Resistance theory is held by students from ethnic communities by maintaining their culture via questioning, pushing back, and sometimes leaving academia as the pedagogy and epistemology offered are counter to their cultural identity (Erickson, 1987). Transculturation, as described by (Lewin, 1948) is the use of one's culture by an individual from an American

minority group to their advantage. In four distinct uses, first, as an emotional anchor, assimilation can be avoided by finding self-worth in one's culture when confronted with difficult cultural situations in academia. Second, the importance of the transcultural threshold, where a person identifies the overt and covert ways their culture is being diminished and decides to embrace or estrange. Third, the ability to engage two cultural settings becoming a new and emerging tool for the individual. Finally, the process of cultural learning that will continue throughout the life of the person engaging in multiple histories while engaging their heritage and identity.

In Huffman's article, qualitative research was conducted by interviewing 69 Native American students in which the author coined a concept called *cultural masks* that explain how the interviewees used transcultural identity in academic settings. He created a four-stage framework called the *process of transculturation*.



**Figure 1** (Huffman, 2001)

Figure 1 is from Huffman's paper, demonstrating the four stages, which are initial alienation, self-discovery, realignment, and participation. In the first stage, initial alienation occurs, and the student has the choice of either moving towards self-discovery or disillusionment. Next, the student either engages in realignment or emotional rejection. Lastly, the student either enters participation or disengagement. (2001) In his own words: "The transculturated students of this study displayed the unique ability to interact within and between cultures as demanded by the situation. However, the process leading through this social-psychological maze was extremely complex" (Huffman, 2001, p. 11). Huffman's Cultural Masks was from an outsider perspective. Had he investigated early work from the sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author, writer, and editor W.E.B. Du Bois., Huffman would have cited in his work the cultural masks, cultural discontinuity, and transculturation all have roots in what Du Bois called double-consciousness, Du Bois says,

...It is a peculiar sensation, this *double-consciousness*, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels [their] two-ness, an American, a [person of color]; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder... (Du Bois W. E. B., 1903)

In Huffman's article, he describes transcultural students as those who use their ethnic identity as a firm social-psychological anchor and display confidence and sense of security that emerge from their American Indian identity as well as possessing a strong identification with traditional American Indian culture and have no desire to assimilate. Huffman found that assimilated students have few or no problems with cultural discontinuity. Problems occur to

some extent, with marginal students and students who are estranged from the university experience have significant to extreme difficulty. While transcultural students find strength in their Native American identity, cultural values, and spirituality to persist and move toward degree completion. (Huffman, 2001)

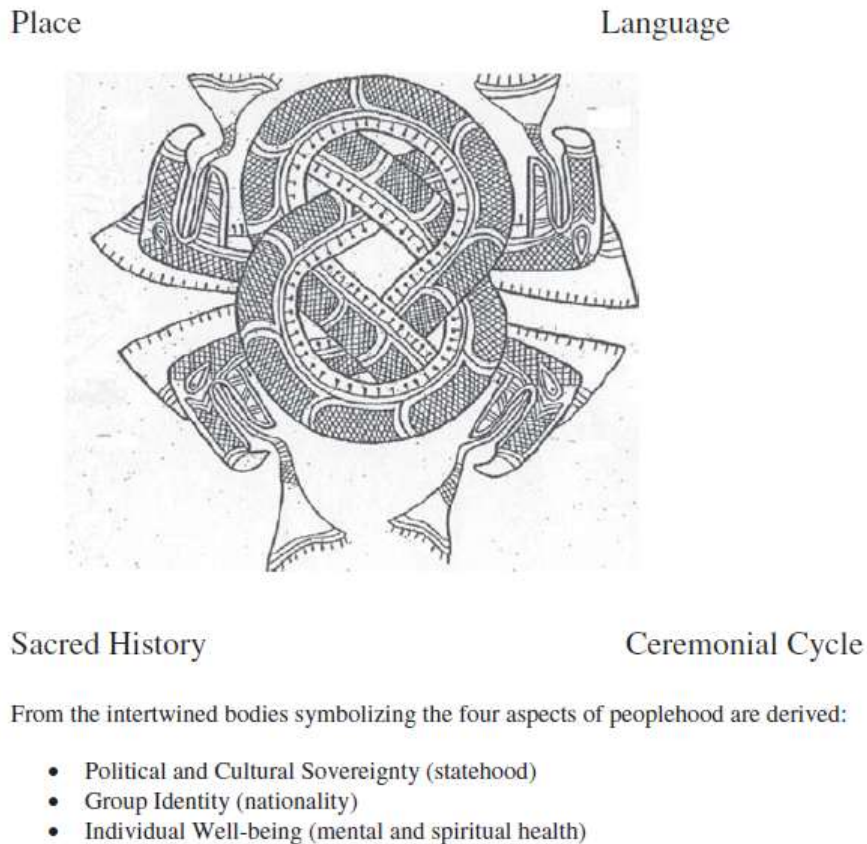
The social-psychological maze Huffman describes comes from an outsider's perspective. In the next sections, authors who cite Huffman's work but are indigenous researchers and thus insiders, offer a more holistic understanding of what those cultural values are and how spirituality functions for some Native students.

### **Indigenous methodology: sharing circles and Peoplehood Model**

From the findings in these previous articles, I isolated Native American college retention research and sought out the most recent articles. In the recently published findings on *sharing circles* – an indigenous methodology drawing from indigenous epistemology, Tachine, Cabrera, and Yellow Bird (2016, 2017) applied qualitative narrative inquiry methods to explore the use of sharing between Native students to create a sense of belonging. Tachine, Cabrera, and Yellow Bird (2016) conducted a literature review which compared focus groups to sharing circles. According to Tachine et al., a focus groups moderator is fundamentally a marketing agent working to gather a unified feeling from participants towards the sale of a product. The authors explain how a sharing circle allows for authentic vulnerability because of the moderator's insider connection with participants, in Tachine's case, the fact that they are also Native American. Another element differentiating sharing circles from focus groups is the use of cultural protocol: recognition, reciprocity, and relationships involved with the act of sharing stories with others (Tachine, et al., 2016). In Eurocentric society, sharing is transactional, while in indigenous

communities sharing is done to connect the interrelatedness of all things and is tied to a belief of responsibility towards communal survival and progress (Tachine, et al., 2016).

In Tachine, et al., (2017), the authors conducted interviews using sharing circles with 24 Native students using the Peoplehood model as the theoretical framework. Their qualitative study looked for positive and negative factors affecting *sense of belonging* with first-year students. The Peoplehood model explores and explains a sense of belonging identified through four parts, language, ceremonial cycles, sacred history, and land. Tachine, et al., coined the phrase used in their study, *Peoplehood Sense of Belonging*.



**Figure 2** (Tachine, et al., 2017)

Through the Peoplehood model, they claimed intellectual and emotional sovereignty from the typical, statehood, nationalism, ethnicity, and sectarian membership categorizations that Native people have been forced to choose as official recognition of their identity. Further,

Tachine et al. (2017) asserted that the sense of belonging and connection to a community for Native American college students has a greater meaning. Native ways of knowing tend to embody interconnectedness (Tachine, et al., 2017). In keeping with these findings, Tachine et al. stated that a Native student center provides support equivalent to the institution's inability to validate Native American students (2017). This sentiment may appear counter to the welcoming support of a Center dedicated to, Native students' academic success, enrichment in their university experience, and provide the campus community a greater awareness of Indigenous peoples' history and current culture, yet the contradiction stands valid. The duality of emotion, joy for the institution providing means for focused support and the bitter frustration due to the institutional need to create focused support because as a whole, the University is not a welcoming place for students from different lived cultural experiences. Especially ones with long histories of boarding schools with active programs to disconnect native students from their culture. As Centers go, it is more about the people inside, creating a sense of belonging rather than the building, computers, and printers, while extremely helpful implements, fruitless without faculty and staff who can create and hold space for students to feel seen and heard.

Most studies focus on students' academics, financial support, motivation, and other personal factors as indicators, which only reveals the product of individual abilities. This study goes deeper to explore the student's communal antecedent to persistence. Non-Native Colleges and Universities (NNCU) operate as PWIs. Native American cultural identity often includes extended family as immediate family and value the maintaining close connections with all family member. A WIP promotes the opposite, where continuing education is often viewed as a time to separate from parents and siblings (Tachine, et al., 2017).

Also, in this article Tachine, et al., considered social media as an added opportunity for peers to make *microaggressive, microinvalidating*, and racist comments. Microaggressions are the common experiences of prejudice and discrimination that marginalized groups and individuals encounter in social settings (Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solorzano, 2009). Microaggressions include microassault – an explicit racial derogation primarily by verbal attack but can also be a nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions. Also included, microinsults – acted out by rudeness and insensitivity that demeans a person’s ethnic heritage or identity. (Hinton, 2004) Further, the authors gave evidence towards Native students’ desire to remain close to family by sharing data from the Gates Millennium Scholarship recipients, indicating that Native students favored schools located close to home. Lastly, according to the authors, Native students also rely on traditional ceremonies, and spirituality to assist in academic achievement (Tachine, et al., 2017).

Comparing Tachine, et al., the insider approach, to Huffman, the outsider approach, Tachine, et al., used cultural protocol and story sharing to create a qualitative study creating the peoplehood sense of belonging that was owned by the students and authors. Huffman’s approach created a Eurocentric four-stage framework describing Native students experience as a decision-making process, either drop out or complete their continuing education through transculturation and is owned by Huffman as the intellectual creator of the framework and the students are subjects who use the framework. As illustrated by the progression of this literature review, Native students’ retention in continuing education hinges on cultural values that are counter to Eurocentric values and beliefs found on many university campuses around the nation. As I read these articles, I designed my assessment to align closer with that of Tachine, et al. In my methods

I left the amount of time students chose to share open and altered my interview questions to ask students for stories.

### **Indigenous identity**

In choosing to group a community by a particular identity for research purposes, it is critical to recognize the complexity of individual diversity. In seeking to identify common challenges and solutions for a community, the individual differences between students, in this case, who represent a variety of independent nations can be lost. “It is problematic to treat Native American students as one group when they represent a variety of independent nations” (Lundberg 2014, p.270), however, for this research, like other non-white communities I have put forth a unified Native identity. To be othered, by a PWI creates a shared lived experience of its own. This creates a unique strength and resilience that supports the transcultural hypothesis I apply to this research.

Perry G. Horse writes in an essay “Thus my consciousness as an Indian person is an amalgamation of perceptions influenced by the complex interplay of cultural-political sensibility, language ability, and a kind of synchronistic sense of events” (2001 p. 101). In his Indigenous identity description and the rest of his essay, Horse offers a framework for Indigenous people to identify at varying levels of connection. Considering the entirety of indigenous nations and those nations whose cultural-political sensibility, language and sense of events have been entirely erased; this definition only allows for the largest nations to assert a claim to indigeneity. Within my methods, I intentionally used language, such as “affiliated with an indigenous community” to include those students who do not have enrolled member status but have been raised in indigenous communities and experience cultural discontinuity in PWI’s.



Another conflicting indigenous identity dialogue is the asterisking (at risk) indigenous people on institutional documentation. The act perpetuates the colonial narrative that Native people are disappearing, barely hanging on, and soon to become extinct (Tuck & Yang, 2012). The asterisk also moves to lump Natives close to other minorities, even though the distinction is relevant when considering that all land in America is Native land (2012).

Identity is a difficult, multidimensional, ever-growing personal journey. In academia, both students and teachers should be encouraged to uncover their history as much as they are able. It is empowering to know where one comes from and the story of the people who came before you, to inform where you are going.

## **Part 2: Local Context and History Review**

The history between UW and Native students is well described in the comprehensive summary written in March 2016 by John F. Nutter, titled: *American Indian Programs at the University of Wyoming 1975-2015*. The summary is a collection of thoughts and a review of documents covering 40 years. Nutter organized it into four sections: *Student Support*, *Academics*, *Scholarships*, and *Institutional Activity*. Another purpose of his summary was to verify if funds from the Wind River tribes facilitated their intended purpose; employing a Native American student advisor, and his general conclusion was yes.

The sections below will summarize the parts of the report most relevant to my project, analyzed in sections with specific waypoints. While I wanted to edit out antiquated terminology like the term Indian, I decided to leave the term in due to its use in acronyms.

## **UW's first action and a resulting first council**

Starting in the 70's UW's first effort to support Native students was to provide a master's degree in counseling through the College of Education for students from Wind River. During this decade, tribal members, university representatives, and Central Wyoming College (CWC) met and, through some early program trial and error, created a council. In 1983 the Indian Education Coordinating Council (IECC) was formed from these meetings, CWC being closer to the reservation had more pressing student related considerations, so they withdrew from the council. Membership was open, and the council included students, professors, and tribal representatives.

## **Utah example, first program dollars & IEO**

Barry Ballard was hired in 1978 as a counselor in the Student Support Services office, he was aided by Pat Goggles, from the Northern Arapahoe Nation. With Pat's assistance, they made frequent trips to Wind River and made connections with tribal leaders. In early 1983, Pius Moss from the Arapaho Nation, who was also a teacher of Arapahoe culture, met with Ballard raising concerns that CWC students and his son's credits were not transferring to UW. Through tribal meetings and continued conversations, Ballard took an idea gained from a regional Association for Special Programs in Region Eight (ASPIRE) conference and set out to learn from three nearby Utah universities. Assessing the three universities' Native support and other programs, Ballard created a model UW could implement. Another takeaway from ASPIRE was the need for a dedicated individual who could be available to Native students for direct support in all things university related. Two years later, in 1985, the Indian Education Office (IEO) was launched. IEO provided: "orientation, academic and personal counseling, tutoring, an emergency contact plan, coordination with tribes and families, a study hall, and paraprofessional counselors to help Indian American students graduate" (Nutter, 2016, p.2). UW offered to find permanent funding

if the program could source and operate on private funding for two years. Both Wind River tribal business councils petitioned oil and gas operators for donations. Acquiring private funding was successful, and after the two years, UW joined the effort.

### **IEOs lineage of Directors**

IEO hired their first director in 1986, Barbara Gentry from the Aquinnah Wampanoag Nation. She applied for a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education, launching project NATIVE, Native American Training in Vital Education. The first director left in spring 1987 and was replaced by Debora Reed from the Northern Ute Nation and served for four years. In that time, the Northern Arapaho Endowment (NAE) was established. In 1991 Roberta Wilson took up the position, and the IEO was shifted from the Office of Educational Opportunity to the College of Arts and Sciences. Project NATIVE ended in 1992, in 1991 the office of admissions decided to add a recruiter dedicated to recruiting ethnic minority students. Roberta Wilson was dismissed as director, students and reservation community were divided as a result.

### **Director Judith Antell**

A new director, Judith Antell from the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Nation, White Earth Reservation, was hired in 1993 under her leadership IEO transitioned to the American Indian Studies (AIS) Program. Judith Antell was responsible for creating the program curriculum, recruitment, retention, and support. She also established the first honoring celebration for Native graduates, held on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1993. Another achievement was the creation of the American Indian Alumni recognition and award ceremony. She also began a variety of student support services and outreach efforts, including an American Indian Alumni Association, building ties to the Wind River Reservation and off-reservation Indian Centers, establishing Native language

programs, supporting American Indian student organizations, and other efforts outlined in the summary. It became increasingly difficult for one academic faculty/director to lead and manage so many efforts in a newly formed department as well as continue teaching, attending committee meetings, advising, performing research, and other administrative responsibilities for two programs. AIS did not offer tenure like the Department of Sociology had; six years in and Judith Antell suggested a shift in structural responsibility, lightening her load.

### **Minority (Multicultural) Affairs Manager**

The structural shift was needed, but some leaders in the reservation community were concerned; they expressed the importance of having all native programs and support under one department. The transition of moving student support with academic, financial, and social matters occurred from 1999 to 2001. Tammy Mack, an Osage Ojibwe UW graduate was hired using Wyoming Legislature funding allocated for a Minority Affairs Manager. She managed the academic, financial, and social student support as well as instituting, Talking Circles – a monthly luncheon for American Indian students featuring Native foods – and served as an adviser to the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. Minority Affairs changed its name to Multicultural Affairs, also during this time the Chief Washakie Endowment was established. In 2004 Tammy Mack took a position in financial aid and a new Multicultural Affairs Manager was hired in 2005. Two years later in 2007, the position opened again, and due to a non-competitive salary, the position remained vacant. The Native student advisor role was passed from staff member to staff member. The Dean at the time implemented a different advising model which divided minority students evenly among the Multicultural Affairs staff with disregard to advisors lived experience in relation to the students they advised. This sufficed for four years at which time it became apparent several Native students were falling behind, and they were referred to

two programs that were still in use during the publication of Nutter's report, the *Discover Excellence* and *Continuing Excellence* programs.

### **First American Indian Studies graduate**

May 2011 Crystal C'Bearing, a Northern Arapahoe woman, became the first person to graduate with a bachelor's degree from AIS.

### **Native programming & campus cultural climate**

In the 1990s the American Indian Week and Fall Forum guest speakers were extensive to list a few notable speakers Wynona Laduke came to Laramie three times and many other prominent authors, performers, and Native leaders from around the nation. In 2006 a delegation of Native students visited Maori communities in New Zealand, Native professors and students still visit the Maori to this day continuing the universities focus on internationalization. In 2009 Northern Arapahoe elder Jerome Oldman spent time on campus as the *Elder in Residence*, working and visiting with students about culture, traditions, and history of his tribe. AIS brought Native American thought, culture, and accomplishment to campus as well as hosting symposiums in 2013 & 2014. "In 2014 AIS initiated discussions with the UW Department of Political Science about establishing a Masters of Public Administration degree with an emphasis in tribal government" (Nutter, 2016, p.10).

### **Newsletters**

AIS annually published newsletters; *Native Voices* was published from 1993-1996, *Native Notes* from 1997-2001, *Notes from the Circle* from 2007-2009, and the *Ledger* ran from 2009-2014.

### **New programs & the Center**

The latest academic program mentioned in the summary is the Graduate Certificate Program for Teachers of American Indian Children offered to prepare educators with the right attitudes, knowledge, and competence necessary to effectively teach Native children. In 2011 plans for a Heritage Center was added to the universities Capital Facilities Plan. That brings us to the most recent developments.

### **History since reports completion**

Through a conversation with Angela Jaime from the Pit River and Valley Maidu tribes and current director of Native American & Indigenous Studies (NAIS), added the following. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, the AIS program was moved from the college of arts and sciences to the college of Gender & Social Justice. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Angela Jaime moved from the college of education to the college of arts and sciences and became the Director of NAIS. Dec 2016, a Native American student advisor Reinette Tendore from the Northern Arapahoe tribal Nation, was hired and will complete their second year December 2019. Lastly, on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, the Teachers of Native American Children and State Wide Teaching Endorsement will be offered from the college of arts and sciences, moved from the college of education. (A. Jaime, personal communication, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019)

In 2017 the Native American Research and Education Culture Center opened, and in August 2019 the Center will have been open for two years. Also, in the summer of 2017, President Laurie Nichols launched the Native American Summer Institute (NASI), welcoming Native American high school students to campus for a week spent, living in the dorms, visiting different departments, and getting a better idea of what they could expect when heading on to their continuing education. The university currently offers an undergraduate major & minor and

a graduate minor in AIS. A visual representation of this history is represented in (figure 4) and (figure 5).

## **METHODS**

### **Part 1: Eurocentric Methods reporting**

My research question aims to assess the impact university retention efforts have had on Native students. My intention with this research project extends beyond its findings and recommendations, but also offers recognition, reciprocity, and relationship between myself, the Center, and the participants. In accordance with sharing circles, the results are not mine alone but will be shared as a collective common knowledge for the participants to know what I recorded and recommended.

I have interviewed, transcribed, and coded UW students who self-identify as Native American/Alaska Native, during the 2019 spring semester. This assessment uses a confidential open-ended interview method to collect candid responses that embody students' experiences with institutional support and the interpersonal environment between faculty, staff, and peers on campus.

### **Population and research site**

I interviewed nine students that were 18+ and self-identified as affiliated with a tribal community. All interviews were conducted on campus, I had reserved space, but as I asked students if they were willing to participate, they were not interested in moving to the reserved

space and felt comfortable interviewing in the open. All interviews took place in the Center with one taking place in another campus building.

## **Recruitment**

During the academic year, 2018-2019 UW had 13,929 students enrolled, of that number the Spring 2018 count showed 295 students had checked the Native American/Alaska Native box (R. R. Tendore, personal communication, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018). Reinette, the Native American student advisor, emailed those 295-students via a UW list-serv on my behalf once the Institutional Review Board (IRB) cleared my assessment as exempt. Not one student replied to the two emails she sent. All interviews conducted were recruited via word of mouth and by nature of my having a presence at the Center. During one interview, a student mentioned they received the email about my project, and that is how they knew what I was working towards. One of the interviewees made an appointment with me in person, and we meet back at the Center to conduct the interview. Two other students made appointments but due to the nature of a busy academic schedule did not show up; we finally interviewed impromptu during one of the many times I was present at the Center. Six students conducted the interview the moment I asked if they had time to help me with the research.

## **Questions and reasoning:**

In this section, I will write the question as it appeared on my script, followed by the questions reasoning.

<b>Question #1:</b> Tell me the story of your path leading you to the University of Wyoming?
--

Question one was a soft lead-in question to our interview; the answer should have been easy to recall and ground the interviewee in our conversation about the university. It also builds a



foundation for our style of dialogue and reciprocity. In this question, I intended to gauge how my participant preferred sharing and how the rest of the interview would go. Also, it provides a snapshot of the reasoning participants used when considering coming to UW.

**Question #2:** Have you ever considered leaving here? Why/Why not? If yes, describe. (i.e., academic difficulties, social issues, financial issues, personal)

Question two lead straight into the matter of our interview. It is also sourced from Dr. Caplan's questionnaire; I emailed Dr. Caplan and was referred to their website, where Appendix A of their paper has a complete list of questions. I wanted to be most efficient with time, both mine and the interviewee and ask fewer questions rather than more. Also, the time frame of this project-based thesis having a short turnaround, the quicker I got to my central questions, the better.

**Question #3:** Tell me a story about a time when you have felt most supported or felt most connected at the University of Wyoming?

*Follow-up:* What or who, if anything, or anyone, made this possible?

What *could* people or organizations here at UW do to make, feelings of belonging or connection here more likely for NA students?

Question three looked for, people, and programs that describe examples of support, instances of connection and/or evoke a sense of belonging. The use of the three terms: support, connect, and belong all offer the student free range to choose how they experienced the institution's efforts. For example, if I went with just one of those three terms, I run the risk of missing something from the nine students interviewed. I did not want to limit a student's expression of positive encounters in their continuing education experience. Question 3 is the first of two questions that Center on the core of this project, the follow-up questions were seldom needed as students' stories were often rich with detail.

**Question #4:** What has been hardest for you as a student here at the University of Wyoming?

Can you give me an example or tell a story?

*Follow-up:* What, if anything, has people or organizations offered that has been any help with that? Or failed to? What could the people or organizations do to help make that easier for students in your position? Anything else that has been a challenge for you being a student here?

Question four looked for instances, systems, or relationships that cause cultural discontinuity, or lead to microaggressions or microinvalidations. The follow up offered a real-time space also to add suggestions towards what a better structure or relationship could look like.

**Question #5:** Do you have any other stories or suggestions for the people or organizations here at the University of Wyoming on helping support Native American student's success based on your experience here so far?

Question five offered space to record any ideas or suggestions from students themselves rather than creating recommendations based solely on literature.

### **Procedure**

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, I received an email from the IRB, giving my assessment an exempt status. From February 20<sup>th</sup> to March 28<sup>th</sup>, I interviewed nine native students from the 30 who frequented the Center. With students' permission and after signing a consent form, I set up my iPhone to record. We comfortably went through the interview questions and questionnaire. During the recoding phase, I attached each participant's name to a number so that I could ensure confidentiality; later I assigned those numbers pseudonyms, I detail how I chose new names in the following Ethical review section.

## **Data collection**

Once I had all the recordings I transcribed each, the shortest interview was recorded at 5 minutes and 52 seconds, and the longest interview was 1 hour and 2 minutes. In total, I collected 3 hours, 2 minutes, and 35 seconds of audio. I attempted to run the audio through talk-to-text software but had little success. The transcription method I used was a clean read or business transcription mixed with some verbatim rather than a smooth verbatim transcription, or a strict or true verbatim transcription. I did this to remove false-starts and connecting word phrases like ‘and so,’ ‘and well,’ ‘like ya know.’ From the recorded interview to the transcription method I chose, the stories did not lose their meaning. When compiled on one double spaced document, the 3 hours plus transcription was 38 pages long.

After the interview was complete, I handed each participant an 11-item questionnaire. I collected two forms of information, their current information like age, academic year in school, degree pursuing, and scholarships received, current GPA, on or off campus housing, and with whom they lived, their gender identity and sexual orientation, and lastly what tribe or tribes are they a member of or identify with. The sexual orientation was mentioned in (Tachine et. al., 2017) as in their study; they recorded a Native student who identified as gay did not feel welcome at their Center. The second set of questionnaire questions were in relation to their path, leading them to UW, did they transfer in and if so where from, and what kind of high school qualification did they earn.

## **Data analysis**

I printed each transcription single-sided, double-spaced with a three-inch margin on the left side so I could add notes and accommodate my left-handed writing as opposed to the

recommended right side margin for right-handed writers. I listened to the interviews in one-hour increments and made notes in the margin adding images and shorthand notes to visualize and code the content. After the first pass, I re-read my notes, highlighting sections that indicated common themes, utilizing deductive coding to isolate instances of cultural discontinuity, microaggressions, microinvalidations, and sense of community. I created an excel representation of the collective data, see (figure 6) for the assessment results. See (figure 3) below for an explanation on how the spreadsheet functions. The numbered rows represent interviewees, and the columns are broken into five sections representing the interview questions. Each question/column has a second tier or sub-columns in relation to the individual interviewee's responses. As interviewees had similar responses that coded the same, for example, "close to home" shared by three respondents. I could give, close to home, a sort of numerical frequency rating. I placed a 1 or a 0 in the cell that matched the participant's response to count overlapping responses, I used the summation function in excel and created a cell on the third row from the top and labeled its totals. This method provided a collective inventory of participant's responses.

Figure 3: A hypothetical example:

<b>Question↓</b>	<b>Q1- why attend UW</b>			
<b>Response→</b>	Close to home	Cost efficient	No choice	Legacy-choice
<b>Total→</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1</b>	1	1	1	0
<b>2</b>	1	1	0	1
<b>3</b>	1	0	0	0

I also created a word cloud by entering all nine interviews into one document, then copied and pasted that content into an online word cloud generator called tagcrowd.com, to visualize the content (figure 7). I constrained the maximum number of words to show at 50 and excluded auxiliary verbs, articles, connectives, prepositions, and quantifiers. I also used the

visual grouping feature, so words like learn, learned, and learning would appear in proximity. Lastly, I reviewed the first couple of iterations and in the “do not show these words” function I entered the words: lot, meet, really, something, stuff, things, and ya.

I considered organizing answers to each question into separate documents to create word clouds related to each question. However, due to the nature of open-ended questions and letting interviewees speak freely about anything, a lot of the responses did not organize into each question header. Also, responses to questions were spread out throughout the entire interview. For example, some students wanted to share and would answer question 1-3 before I ever got a chance to ask the questions. The questionnaire data was also recorded on an excel spreadsheet so that I could organize who the participants were as a group and as individuals.

### **Ethical review**

Considering the small population of Native students, I was sure to be mindful of what information I shared and how it might be able to identify specific students throughout my methods, findings & discussion. As the quoted text is shared in findings & discussion, I used a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality. The names I chose came from my cousins, aunts, and uncles.

### **Part 2: Indigenous methodological research approach**

To facilitate an authentic connection between interviewer and interviewee when working within another culture, learning and living the tribal cultural protocol, and petitioning for assistance all help create connection. (Tachine et al, 2017) In Eurocentric research, there is a tendency to remain detached from the research participants. This style difference is also known

as the outsider vs. insider perspective. The Indigenous methodology utilizes an insider approach embedding one's self and creating a shared body of knowledge that is owned by all the people involved.

As a student entering the Center, I unconsciously conducted myself with the type of respect and observation I would when visiting a new country rather than just another student entering another campus building. I meet with students and shared stories and spent time getting to know folks in an authentic way that has led to some deep connections with some students. In hindsight, my conduct at first was not overly lax and comfortable or excessively formal and awkward. I honestly felt very welcome, and at home in the Center, I also made my intentions to conduct research and ask for students to interview with me clear from the start. After conducting the literature review and studying sharing circles, I incorporated the open-structured, conversational methodology in my interviews (Tachine et al, 2017). I re-wrote my interview questions to include the word 'story' and left the time window open as long as people were willing to share.

In my qualitative assessment, I sat with Native students in a state of recognition, reciprocity, and relationship built during the previous semester and maintained after the interviews. As we spoke/storied, I did not limit anyone's example or experience with timekeeping or reminding them to stick to responses directly related to the interview questions.

### **Researchers identity (self-location)**

This brief personal introduction and family history, both geographically and ancestrally place me inside my research. I am a cis-gendered male, able-bodied, American by birth, Mestizo by socio-cultural identity, Chicano by socio-political identity, and Hispanic by census count. Benitez is a Spanish surname from the North of Spain; the name has its origins during the reign

of the Visigothic Kings 476-526 CE, enemies of the Roman Empire. I always knew I had Spanish colonial ties, but this last note about Rome was my favorite fact, the Visigoth, described as a tribe of Goths aided in the sacking of Rome. This matters to me in that I come from a lineage of leaders who will not stand by while large social systems consume individual tribal nations.

My mother Carmelita Lucero de Valerio, the 'de' means 'from,' Valerio is her mother's surname. Lucero means many things; it is a derivative of 'Luz' – meaning light, Lucero refers to Lamplighter, morning, or evening star. Lucero showed up in the 9th Century, also from Northern Spain. I identify with the Lamplighter service, a community member that gave people safety in the evening as they walk home, so they could see and be seen. Just as the Center and indigenous methodology bring to light, an obscured truth. Valerio, another Northern Spanish surname appeared in the 4th Century. Both Spanish and Italian the name ultimately is a Roman surname meaning in Latin, to flourish, to be strong and healthy.

My Father came to the United States when he was 19 years old on a scholarship from Venezuela to study engineering and English. My mother's census trail ends around 1812 with a great-great-great grandfather in Northern New Mexico. Every generation since has been from the four corners area, my grandmother left for the north, and made a home in Aberdeen, Idaho. My mother was born in a trailer, and her umbilical cord was buried by the creek known as Danielson creek, a tributary leading to the Snake River.

In Aztec culture, the umbilical cord was buried in accordance with gender. Baby girls' cords were buried inside, by the hearth and baby boys were buried outside in fields so that as adults when they meet the end of their lives, they would die comfortably where they began. I don't know my grandparents' intentions for my mother, but I do feel a cultural significance and

connection to the high plains of the intermountain west. My parents raised my sister and me on the outside of town next to the reservation, like my mother's family had done for 200+ years. Starting alongside the Ohkay Owingeh in Northern New Mexico, then moving to the Southern Ute reservation in a town called Allison Colorado, and finally alongside the Shoshone and Bannock reservation in a town called Chubbuck Idaho.

My sister and I attended Tahee elementary next to the Shoshone and Bannock reservation; I completed Kindergarten through second grade before moving to Pocatello, Idaho. As a detribalized mestizo, I feel most at home in a tribal community. In my cultural upbringing, the importance of giving to my community is the highest achievement, and as an educator conducting research to support Native retention, I feel confident that I am doing what I am called to do, in a good way. I know the intermountain region west of the Mississippi and southern mountain ranges, basins and high plains as my home.

In the beginning, I approached from a male-centered, Eurocentric academic epistemological framework. With assistance from my sister, mother, other women of color, women affiliated with indigenous communities, and my chair, I was offered feminist and indigenous academic research methods and epistemology. While creating this project and considering the way I wanted to conduct the interviews, I learned not only the Eurocentric introduction to research methods but self-investigated other methods to build an authentic assessment.

My education in academia has supported the individualistic mindset that I began my literature review with and that I applied to Native American students' low enrollment and retention rates from a deficit perspective. My thinking has changed through the process of this project-based thesis.



Personally, my journey from high school to my current master's degree has been filled with much of the cultural discontinuity and facilitation of personal transculturation I have researched for this paper and project. I have followed both sides of Huffman's process of transculturation. I have chosen disillusionment, emotional, and physical rejection from my first undergraduate attempt to another attempt in which I engaged self-discovery and realignment through a technical college and community college experience leading me back to a four-year institution. I know the feeling and have experienced the emotions associated with an institution not seeing me. I have also felt the community and wholeness of my culture embraced at my continuing educational institution. For me, it was through the connection of my Latino-based multicultural fraternity. Through Sigma Lambda Beta, I met other young men with similar lived experiences and was introduced to a statewide cohort of hundreds like myself and later on a national scale, thousands of brothers who saw through my, as Huffman put it, cultural mask and shared a lived experience known by Du Bois as the dual-consciousness.

This research question is the scientific expression of an emotional and lived confusion. Why am I here, and all of my male cousins and high school friend either serving prison sentences, felons, addicts, sanctioned killers in the armed services, or deceased? Why do we have to die and kill while others get to think? I can do a lot of thinking too.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

In this section quoted excerpts from interviews will illustrate students' perceptions of institutional support and interpersonal climate between faculty, staff, and peers. While social

dynamics between students in KOF, at the center, and at home do factor into their overall experience, those intricate personal relationships were not shared with me in any of the following interviews. The following is organized in two formats. The first shares my findings from the first three questions – reasons attending UW, have you ever considered leaving UW, and most connected – these responses are illustrated in bullet format followed by quotes from the interviews and then followed by any reference to the literature. After the first three questions are shared, I will use the first, second, and fourth sections of my Literature review to loosely structure the rest of the findings & discussion section. Those titles are; general: college student retention; social emotional learning with an added look into micraggressions & microinvalidations, and racism; and lastly cultural discontinuity; resistance theory; and transcultural hypothesis. Similarly, I will introduce the section in relation to interview findings in the form of quotes, followed by a discussion paragraph relating the interview content to relevant literature. I have given all interviewees pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality; names chosen at random sourced from my cousins, aunts, and uncles.

Before launching into this results & discussion section, I offer a description of the sample population I interviewed.

### **Demographic Data**

The following demographic data, specific to this study identifies the tribal affiliations represented, gender, year in college, age range, living arrangements, and scholarships represented.

Students represented tribes located in the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountain region. Some students identified with more than one indigenous community. (I left tribal affiliations

vague for the explicit purpose of protecting participant's identity). Students self-identified as a mix of men and women, with an age range from over 18 to under 50 years young. The academic years represented were both undergrad and graduate students. Some students transferred in from community colleges and a couple from Midwest Universities. Some participants completed high school degrees and others earned a GED. While I recorded the specific numbers of students in each of the above categories, the number related to each category is not necessary to report my findings and risk identifying several students individually violating the confidentiality agreement.

Participants lived on and off campus, some with family, friends, roommates and some lived alone. The majority received scholarships from a variety of Wyoming and National Native American scholarships, as well as nonnative organizations.

### **Reason attending UW**

In the lead-in question for the nine participants interviewed responses covered a few categories, some overlapping and others specific and unique to their reasoning. Of the nine students interviewed:

- Five students cited the affordable tuition
- Four students mentioned that the proximity to home was their reasoning
  - Three students mentioned affordable tuition and proximity
- Two students said the scholarship opportunities leant to their decision making
- Five students had a reason only they mentioned
  - Of the above five students one overlapped with affordable and one with proximity

In Juniors interview he shared: “I didn’t like being 16 hours away, it’s a journey, Wind River out to Haskell, which is in Lawrence, Kansas. It is a beautiful place, but it’s just too far.”

Also, Yolanda shared:

so I came to Laramie because of distance it was only 3.5 hours away from my reservation, and otherwise, I would have gone back to Kansas, but, I knew I could be close to grandma, grandpa, aunties, uncles, I knew being in Laramie would help me reach my higher ed goal.

The proximity to home is something (Tachine, et al., 2017) refers to in their use of the Peoplehood model and the Gates Millennium Scholarship data showing an overwhelming number of Native students favoring universities closer to home.

### **Ever consider leaving UW**

This question is borrowed from the Caplan & Ford interviews and with my interviewees was a great second question to get students gut reaction to their experience at UW. Of the nine students:

- Six students said no
  - Three of the ‘no’ responses cited the campus support as their reason for staying
  - One mentioned along with campus support, also the scholarship opportunities
  - The remaining three students said no, without an explanation.
- Three students said yes
  - All three students said the lack of support
  - Two said the distance from home was a motivation
  - One student cited the pay in Wyoming being less than if they returned home

The students who considered leaving for home were all graduate students, and two of the three attended UW years ago before there was as much of a culture of campus support for Native students. All the students who responded as saying no were undergraduate students and five were younger than the students who said yes. One student who said no to leaving is the same age as a student who said yes, but as an undergraduate student they have only been on campus for the last four years were the same aged student, who said yes had been on campus for much longer.

### **Most connected experiences**

To clarify the use of three terms packed into this question — supported, connected, and belonging — I intentionally asked in this way so that I was sure not to miss any positive experience in response to the institution’s efforts. All nine students mentioned the Center, Native faculty, or staff by name as a reason they felt most connected to the University. Of the nine students, they felt most connected as follows: (See figure 6)

- Seven students said student support
- Six students said Reinette
- Six students said the Center
- Four said KOF
- Four said AISA

Anthony shared the following about the community at the Center and Reinette:

So, I had a death in my family last semester, and almost instantly I was able to get help started getting home with the dean of student’s excuse, and all that, letting all my professors know, being able to quickly and easily, ya know, go back home and be with my family. Also, everyone just coming together and being like, yeah, its ok and

understanding. Reinette was the biggest help because obviously she was the one with all the connections and knew what to do and knew how to get there. She was the main go-to. Other than that, just my professors were really kind and understanding.

Yolanda shared about Deborah Littleton:

“Just having a native person who grew up on a reservation and just instantly we connected and she could answer any question for me.”

Monica shared:

“also the Native faculty that we had here on campus also. contributed to those meetings and made sure we had the right student support that we needed.”

All the students interviewed were connected to the Center in one way or another, I was not able to interview anyone who did not frequent the center. Anecdotes praising the Center, Reinette and the Native community were dispersed throughout all nine of the interviews.

### **General: College experiences**

My first two interviews, Anthony and Sophie, went fast and made me question the effectiveness of my questions because the student’s responses felt generic. Respecting any experience as a valid data point, I decided to continue through to four interviewees before considering altering anything. By the third and fourth interview, I realized the first two students shared a similar experience, being first-year students and had begun college right after high school. They have only known UW as an institution with a Center, Native faculty, Native staff, and a growing Native community. Their interviews, along with Melissa’s, a senior

undergraduate, would represent the high school to college trajectory, and they all knew UW to have a strong Native community. These students all answered no when asked if they had ever considered leaving the university. Further, the three mentioned the Center, keepers of The Fire (KOF), and two mention the Native American Advisor as the key source of their most positive experiences on campus.

Melissa shared:

I will have to think about that, hmm so most connected, I would have to say, being with Keepers Of the Fire (KOF) and the Center, because this helps just bring all of us, KOF, the rest of Native students that aren't in KOF together, so now we have this small community, and because we have this small community everyone is close, and it just gives that support.

Sophie shared:

It's so hard to answer because I have a lot of people who provide support. Help from Reinette, helps a lot, just coming here to UW and her helping me out with FAFSA and all the little things that need to be done.

For these three students, their hardest challenges shared in our interview were the amount of reading & homework, time management, affordable parking options, and cold weather. Reading, homework, and time management are all issues that stem from the first factor, that Aydin mentioned. Academic achievement a student brings with them from high school is a key factor to their achievement in continuing education. (2017)

Concerning parking, Anthony shared:

So, when I got here, I got a parking pass for half a semester because it was cheaper. Then when I got back, the first day I was back I went over to get another parking pass it, but it was sold out. So, I could not physically purchase another parking pass for like two weeks, where-in my car sat on some street for two weeks. So, that was a little difficult, ya know, getting to and from the car.

Being able to afford parking semester to semester instead of being able to purchase a year all at once stems from Aydin's second factor, Socio-economic support from home. (2017)

Concerning weather, Melissa shared:

I think the hardest thing is definitely the winters, its hard getting to campus, especially when its either really cold in the negatives or if there is a foot of snow. Like you saw the blizzard, and we still had classes, I think that is the hardest thing. Other than that, I think the ice and everything makes it difficult; there is a potential injury risk right there.

The issue with weather is a campus wide, high prairie, Wyoming issues that the student turned into a positive by evaluating their professors and the institutions response, wherein classes were canceled for a day.

As illustrated in their interviews, these younger Native students are having essentially a general campus experience. All three students did not share any, microaggressions, microinvalidations, racist encounters, or discrimination, at least that they were willing to share at the time of this interview.



## **Social Emotional Learning, Microaggressions & Microinvalidations and racism**

Five of the nine students offered examples of experiencing cultural discomfort from an advisor, professor, classmate, or general unease from being on campus at a PWI. In the following examples, a native student expends social, and emotional resources due to the social emotional deficit of a Eurocentric<sup>4</sup> classmate.

John shared this interaction with a peer:

... especially being surrounded by young minds who are just barely away from their parents, they don't understand what racism is, and they say something racist. I'm like, dude, I put them in check, and I'm like, no. They're like, that's the way my grandma told me; I'm like yeah that was a different era, a different time. Like, I don't know what they call it, its subconscious racism, they don't intend to be racist. A lot of people don't intend to be racist, but it's there – and I am coming from an area where people are racist at you because they want to be racist at you. When I hear something like that, it's like, a thing in my head, where I automatically gotta put someone in check. And that hasn't really been the best way to handle it because they don't understand what they said was wrong, I mean, I am better at it now from when I first got here, that, ya'know, yeah, getting through that was...

The interviewee paused at this point and asked to move on. The social, emotional cost for native and non-native students is not equal. When holding peers and faculty accountable for inappropriate comments, Native students forfeit cognitive energy navigating how to direct feedback with non-native folks.

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<sup>4</sup> Rather than say White, this distinction matters to remind us that even people of color, Latino/as, African American/Black and Asian/Pacific Islander etc. folks can also enact micraggressive, micrinvalidating, and racist things

This student is describing what Arlie Hochschild coined as *emotional labor*. (Hochschild,1983) When this student had to explain why something was inappropriate and still meet with a sense of entitlement to the racist remark, leaning on ignorance rather than apologizing and asking how to move forward, the Native student had to remain patient and humble to cater to the classmate's feelings, cautions to not ostracize himself by coming off too upset, hence emotional labor. The cultural discontinuity associated with white blindness and white estrangement (Gusa, 2010) becomes the Native students burden having to learn how to navigate a new form of unintentional racism, versus the intentional racism they navigated during their lived experience in Riverton, Lander, and the Wind River Reservation.

In the next example, Sandra has returned to academia after a few years working in her career surrounded by other professionals offering each other feedback on their performance and conducting personal evaluations. She approaches a professor about inappropriate and offensive Indigenous content used in class.

Sandra shared:

...like I said, when stuff like that happens it gets me upset, and then I can't focus on anything else because I am focused on that one thing, he just pissed me off about. And then when I addressed it to him, he just kind of laughed and shrugged it off, and I'm like, ok. He was like, it was funny, everybody laughed. I'm like, no! so [a native faculty member] helped me with that professor. After that, he was a little, like, stand offish from me. When I would have a question about it, he was like, leery on what he should say. So, I was like, o, cool, ok. That's kind of like, how I felt, like, fuck is he going to retaliate with my grade.

Sandra is describing a microinvalidation following a microaggression after offering feedback to the professor. The pissed off and loss of focus is the cost the student pays for the professor's lack of professional training. It takes another faculty to intervene and invest their emotional labor to correct the inappropriate and offensive content. It is apparent that for a Native American students, due to their constant navigation of an Indigenous home culture and Eurocentric culture, their SEL & EI would be better developed, compared to the typical UW student who is from either an in-state or an out-of-state rural community with far less interactions with people from different cultural upbringing.

Monica shared this conversation with an advisor during her first year at UW; parts have been left out, denoted by an ellipsis to maintain confidentiality:

I have had a pretty good time here at the University of Wyoming; however, there are a few times where I have encountered a few discriminations and not having the right support from a specific person. When I first came to the University of Wyoming, I was a [STEM] ... major and so I had a [STEM] advisor, and I struggled, and I... was in a really abusive environment... that made it hard to concentrate at school because I didn't have a roof over my head... I was also very vulnerable at the time, and my focus was not school. Given those situations, I still managed to make it to as many classes I could and get the work that I needed done. However, my advisor, even being well-aware of what was going on, he had mentioned I should switch my major. I explained that I enjoyed what I was doing and did not want to branch off from science and he recommended me switching my major to something like women's studies or Native American studies ... totally opposite of what my field of study is.

In this example, the advisors lack of support for Monica during her difficult time resulted in her seeking a new advisor twice, before finding the support she needed. When I hear this student being recommended to leave a STEM field as a first-year student juxtaposed to the constant institutional and national initiatives to increase students of color and Native students in STEM, it can only be described as overt discrimination, especially when there are so many programs in place to assist students both in her particular situation and academic support. Advising Monica to switch majors should be a very last resort recommendation.

### **Cultural Discontinuity**

The following two interviews are from students who cited cultural discontinuity as the main reason for wanting to leave UW. Both students started at UW a few years ago and have been to either CWC or another institution.

Yolanda shared:

We didn't have a center here or anything like this level of support. I had many times that I did quite because of the culture shock. Being on a predominantly white campus, and being a Native American was a struggle, I had to leave my culture, my community, my family, we were very tight knit.

Tino shared:

Yeah, there's been a couple times when everything has gotten to me. It wasn't just the institution; it was like a lot of stuff that had played out in my life, but specifically, there have been times when I just wanted to quit. I just didn't want to be here anymore. I didn't

really have another choice, but now I do, but back then I couldn't see any other way, and it goes along with learning ...

Tino, Yolanda, and Sandra all answered yes to if they had ever considered leaving UW and explicitly name a lack of student support and cultural differences between their home and the university.

### **Resistance practice**

In the next example, Tino described *Imposter syndrome*, a term describing an internal experience where one questions the validity of their success. (Clauce & Imes 1978)

Tino shared:

...I got to a point where I am getting such good grades, ya know, I thought these teachers are just giving me good grades because they feel sorry for me. That's what was going through my head, and so this is what I actually did for one test, I didn't study. I didn't study at all, and I got a 39 on that test. So, when I talked to my councilor, I told her, ya know, what I was feeling and everything and she said they got a name for this, she said: "it's called imposter syndrome." So, I'm like wow, she explained to me; it's for people that are conditioned like society tells them they're not ever going to get good grades. They're not ever going to reach higher education, there not ever going to shoot for two master's degrees and ya know all this other stuff. Ya know, and I couldn't believe I was actually doing it, ya know, achieving these grades, and ya know, it was just an eye opener, like, hey I am smart enough to do this. So, I joined the McNair program, ya know, and I start concentrating.

Tinos actions align with resistance theory (Erickson, 1987) his action to intentionally perform poorly to assess the teacher's ability to remain fair and valid in grading his work.

Another example of resistance theory that was shared by a Native student during a person of color support group held on campus through multicultural affairs. Unfortunately, our schedules never aligned to formally interview, but his story is summarized as follows. Jesse shared an experience with a teaching assistant (TA) who was grading his papers and always found fault in his work, especially after he questioned the lectures in class. So, during a final assignment to assess the TAs commitment to fair and valid grading, he wrote the assigned paper, had it checked with the writing center and had three professors who he trusted and that were intimately aware of the papers content check his work. He wanted to make sure he answered each part of the essay in depth and correctly before he turned the paper in. The TA graded his paper and said he failed to cover all the essay required content without specific feedback as to which part. He shared this experience in group to illustrate feelings of discrimination and what I would categorize as using a form of resistance theory by questioning and testing the TAs grading.

### **Transcultural practice**

Yolanda and John share two distinct examples where they were in a stage of transculturation.

Yolanda shared this:

Because to me whatever tribe you are involved in, whatever your home is that's first before you come to school because you have to be familiar with your culture, your identity, be proud of who you are as Native to be able to come out here and succeed.

Because if not you have identity issues and there were times I did, I remember there were times when I was an undergrad, I didn't even tell people I was Native. I didn't tell them I was from Wind River, because I was just like, everybody hated us and that they looked at us like... so, the best thing I would say was, I'm from Lander. Now I am like I am from the Wind River reservation, and they're like, where is that, Lander Riverton area? Now they know, so most people know. At the time, I was so scared or afraid to even say I was Native, and that just sucks.

Yolanda is describing the first stage of transculturation, as Huffman defined an initial alienation with the choice of either self-discovery or disillusionment followed by stage two of realignment or emotional rejection. Applying Yolanda's example to Huffman's framework illustrates how Huffman's four stages don't always happen so linearly, it took time, and many attempts before Yolanda was able to release the fear around identifying as Native in a PWI.

John shares the following:

Like I said, the main thing that helped me is understanding the difference of back home and here and how to react to situations and not react the same way back home to here, because its two different environments two different society situations. That you know, what is acceptable in our culture ain't quite acceptable here. Or ya know, like I smoke a prayer, cigarette ya know, in the morning or at night. Well like both, but it's usually in the morning because I wake up like eight or nine, I go outside an 'smoke a cigarette, and there's people going to class, whatever, and like I said, I was blessing myself with that cigarette. Just wash yourself with that smoke and people are looking at me real weird and sometimes I don't want to do that because I don't want to be judged less by someone. But

ya know, on that particular day, I needed that blessing, and I didn't care what their thought was about it.

John lives on campus, so when he says people are going to class, he is standing outside of the dorms having his cigarette and blessing. John is living transculturation as described by (Lewin, 1948) in which John is using his spiritual practice as an emotional anchor and engaging his ability to occupy two cultural settings. Also, as described by Huffman, John is navigating a social-psychological maze by holding a spiritual moment on campus in the statement: not wanting to be judged less by someone and not caring what their thought was about it.

### **Student Recommendations**

In the final question, students offered a variety of recommendations of the nine students:

- Three students offered the advice to incoming students to get more involved on campus.
- Two students recommended the Center stay active
- Two students asked for more Native spirituality be allowed
  - One student specifically asked for a sweat lodge near campus and allow cedar burning in the dorms
- Two students asked for more transparency-they wanted staff to be able to share why rules exist.
- One student suggested more funding for students and programming
- One student called for professors to have culturally relevant training



- One student called for the continued excellence from professors and RSOs who are culturally responsive, respectful, and aware

Monica shared the following:

I guess just continue to have the same amount of support we have now. I know like in Reinette's position she is networking with a bunch of different multicultural groups on campus to get us more acclimated on campus and the events going on campus and to network with a bunch of different students so that we can build more and different relationships with other students and be more involved on the campus.

During the UW people of color support group, a Native student shared a story that resonates with this quote. They said that when they stop by to see Reinette, she will often tell them about an event on campus, urging them to attend the event, get food, and report back to her on what it's like, what orgs attended and how was the keynote, etc. The student said affectionately they know Reinette offers these 'fake missions' as an incentive to go and participate.

Melissa suggested the following, continued cautions-and-conscious communication:

The only thing I can think of is like, classes they do well when being cautious or conscious either-or, of native students. I know I had a few non-native classes that have said stuff about Native history, and they said it with so much respect, and I think they need to keep doing that and be aware, especially if they have a Native student in class, or just overall in general, just to get that right education there. Same with RSOs and organizations, that like, say they see a Native student is part of their organization, they can think of ways to be respectful to that student or respectfully ask them questions. Just kind of be more cautious and conscious, I guess.

Anthony requested more transparency from people in positions of authority and power:

Transparency is always important; ya know when people don't know why certain things are, it makes us uneasy as Native people. So, like say, I ask somebody about this, and I was like well why is that, and they don't know, then, ya know, some trust is lost there with your competency and your ability to do your job ... A lot of the things, like, residence housing, the dorms have all these rules that you can infer why those rules are there, but a lot of other rules don't make sense, and it's easy to then break those rules. The RAs don't always know either, for example, the outlets, like the strip is ok, but the four-in-one outlet is not fine. Nobody knows why something to do with the circuitry obviously, but it is not explicitly stated that is why.

Tino offered the following on furthering support outside of the university:

You know, look at like places like AZ state university, and they work directly with the Pueblo tribes and the Native people in their community. There are these people who have these institutionalized native programs that are effective and to learn from them and not just create a resource center for Natives but to create a whole community center, if you have that power, do it, if you have the power to reach out to Native communities think about how you can do it, not why you shouldn't.

Overall, the students advised incoming students to explore more and give the university campus environment a chance, go to cultural events, sports events, study abroad opportunities, alternative spring break, and whatever else the university offers. For the university, they recommended to continue the Center, support Native students, and programs with more financial backing, and encourage professional development among Faculty and staff.

## SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of Wyoming has 0.5% Native students as part of its fall 2018 student body. (S. Koller, personal communication, May 14, 2019) Native students in the U.S. undergraduate population comprise 1% and in the graduate population less than 1% (Postsecondary, 2018). The intention of this assessment is to benchmark the university's current and past student experiences. Found through my literature review there is a call for more qualitative study. My assessment asked students their perception of institutional support from the university and their perception of the campus climate with faculty, staff, and peers.

After looking at all nine students' responses, two-thirds of the students wanted to stay at UW and never considered leaving. Three cited proximity to family and affordable tuition, three others did not cite a specific reason. All nine students mentioned the Center, or a Native faculty by name as a reason they felt most connected to the University, see (figure 6). Lastly when discussing difficulties at UW, four students pointed to institutional issues, three of those cited the difficulty adjusting to a WIP and the fourth said that daycare was an issue. Five students had a story or instance of a specific interaction with either a professor, advisor, or classmate; of these five, three shared regarding a professor creating the discomfort. And three students described general issues indicative of any students first time away from home attending university.

### **Limitations**

The 295 students who checked the box identifying themselves as Native American or Alaska Native have varying levels of indigenous ancestry. Also, in those 295 could be coming from an unsubstantiated family story about a Native American grandmother in their family tree. This stems from what is called: “*Settler nativism*, or what Vine Deloria Jr. calls the *Indian-grandmother complex*, which is a settler move towards innocence because it is an attempt to deflect a settler identity, while continuing to enjoy settler privilege and occupying stolen land.” (Tuck & Yang 2012, p. 11) Sue Koller in the office of institutional analysis shared that 66 students have checked the Native box and no other identity. Reinette has meet with and spoken to 30 Native students who have engaged the Center in one way or another. Reinette sent the email on my behalf and we only had one student mention reading the email. With everyone’s busy schedules, word of mouth, flyers in the Center, and multicultural offices were the best tools for recruiting participants. However, I did not get the opportunity to interview a Native student who did not use the Center. It would be extremely valuable to hear from a Native student who does not frequent Native services on their perceived institutional support and the interpersonal climate on campus.

Considering the short time frame of this assessment I created a short 5 question format with a couple of follow up questions. A longer set of questions with more focus towards the second tiered reasons they gave would yield more precise data. Also, depending on the time of semester that I interview students could create limitations. There are the campus situations and stories that have happened since my interview that I did not capture. I would have potentially interviewed all 30 students and or interviewed students three times during the semester. An interview in the first few weeks, mid semester and another during the last couple weeks to assess

when things are best and worst. Targeted data throughout the semester would offer insight as to the best time to train University staff.

## **Recommendations**

Future assessments similar to the one I conducted could be reproduced in the form of a questionnaire or continued interviews. The language students used to describe their perception of institutional support should be included in any future questionnaire or assessment, conducted each semester or annually. Another dimension that could be assessed is the social dynamics inside the Center. Based on other research from other institutions some Native students did not feel welcome in their own center. To what extent does this exist here at UW? A couple additional questions could suffice to assess if students identify internal tensions between social subgroups within the Center and how those might affect student's sense of belonging. This also calls back to question 3 in which supported, connected, and belonging were all terms offered to assess sense of belonging and to identify positive experiences with the institution. In a continued assessment it would be interesting to see how students perceive each of those independently.

“None of the excerpts provided above reveals evidence of a breakthrough in thinking. In fact, one could easily dismiss the insights gained by these faculty members as elementary knowledge that should be familiar to anyone who has read the literature on the importance of student-faculty relationships, stereotype threat, or white privilege.” (Pena, Bensimon & Coylar, 2006, p 55)

This quote really spoke to me for two reasons. First, the use of the term “breakthrough in thinking” subtly sets up the adage, actions speak louder than words. Secondly, all of this information is known, in fact it is why the Center has been opened and a Native advisor has been

hired to create a home away from home and sense of belonging for Native students. The contradiction (Tachine et. al. 2017) offered between the Center representing the totality of the institutions inability to validate Native American students' culture and the Centers function as a remedy for said inability is the balance that institutions and historically marginalized communities face. The center is important and a great addition to campus, but functions in its strength in relation to those who provide the sense of belonging service on the inside. The shared lived experience between faculty staff and students creates a sense of belonging inside the Center located inside the institution. There is a duality in having and needing a center to realizing the Center represents how the institution alone, without a Center, is not enough to welcome and retain Native American students without greater difficulty and effort from the students themselves. Which is to say, it is not impossible for a Native student to succeed without a center, but it does become more difficult than need be.

Future studies should consider widening the target audience to interview Native faculty and staff to help triangulate areas of improvement for UW. This is in addition to continuing an assessment with students, and offering ongoing student support through sharing circles and support groups. These strategies have proven effective at other institutions for capturing areas of growth & improvement and offering space for reflection & healing.

The following four recommendations are intended for the institution as a whole. The first recommendation is for continued positive Native and Institutional work, second, training for faculty and staff, third, an official public facing statement, and forth is for targeted programming aimed at the campus student body as a whole.

1. As an institution, it is important to continue positive and productive Native and University relations. As seen in the 40-year history presented by Nutter, this institution has sometimes forgotten how we got to a place with strong relationships or become relaxed and neglected the legacy of previous efforts. For example, a Dean implemented a different advising model which divided minority students evenly among the Multicultural Affairs staff. This disregarded advisors' lived experience in relation to the students they advised and alienated Native students. Another example is in 2007, when the Multicultural Affairs Manager position reopened but due to a non-competitive salary the position remained vacant.
  
2. For faculty, staff and students in positions of leadership, professional Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI) training should be instituted, including — microaggression, racial bias, and creating & maintaining a positive learning environment.
  
3. UW could issue an official statement, a commitment to begin university events with a Land acknowledgment. Colorado State University has, for example, adopted this as policy:

For the last two years, students and staff in our Native American Cultural Center (NACC) and Native American community members have worked to develop a statement of land acknowledgment – an official statement that honors the ties that Indigenous people have to the land on which our University operates. Last spring, I gladly accepted a recommendation from Native American and Indigenous

students that we adopt the practice of land acknowledgment at university events as a statement of truth, gratitude, and respect at Colorado State University. (Frank, 2018)

4. Finally, the success of continued Native student and institutional relations will depend on the students that embody the university.

In other research, a common recommendation is that white students be included in these conversations from the perspective of curricular and co-curricular activities encouraging them to unpack their misconceptions about (race) ethnicity and understand the social power structures that create a complex racial America where white privilege exists, and how it functions. Further classroom curricula should pedagogy should be balanced with indigenous and other non-white epistemology. (Gusa, 2010)

For any student enrolled in continuing education it is a difficult place & time for them as they develop, and prepare themselves for the world; the difficulty should never be at the expense of their cultural identity, skin color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, body type, or physical ability.



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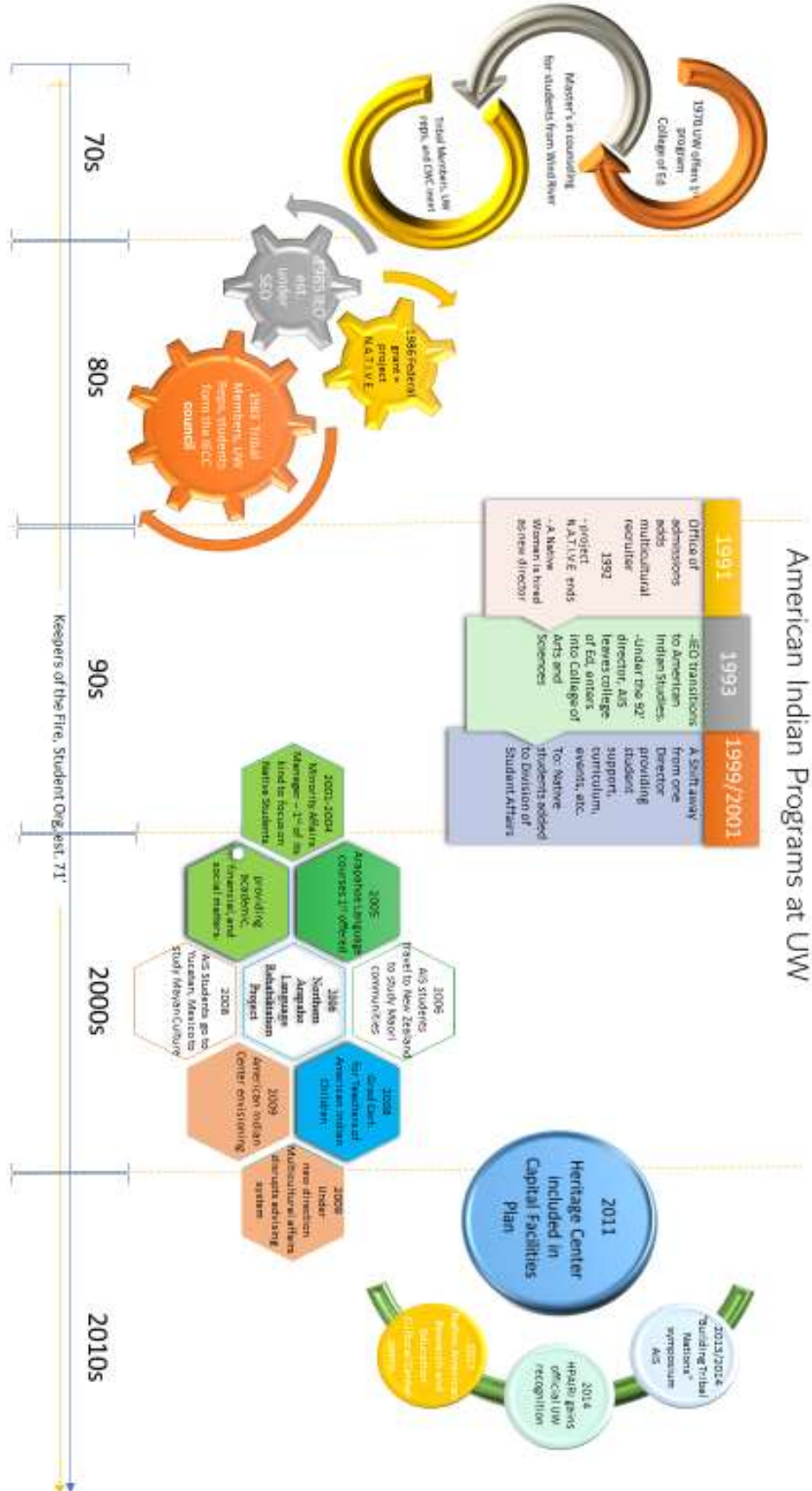
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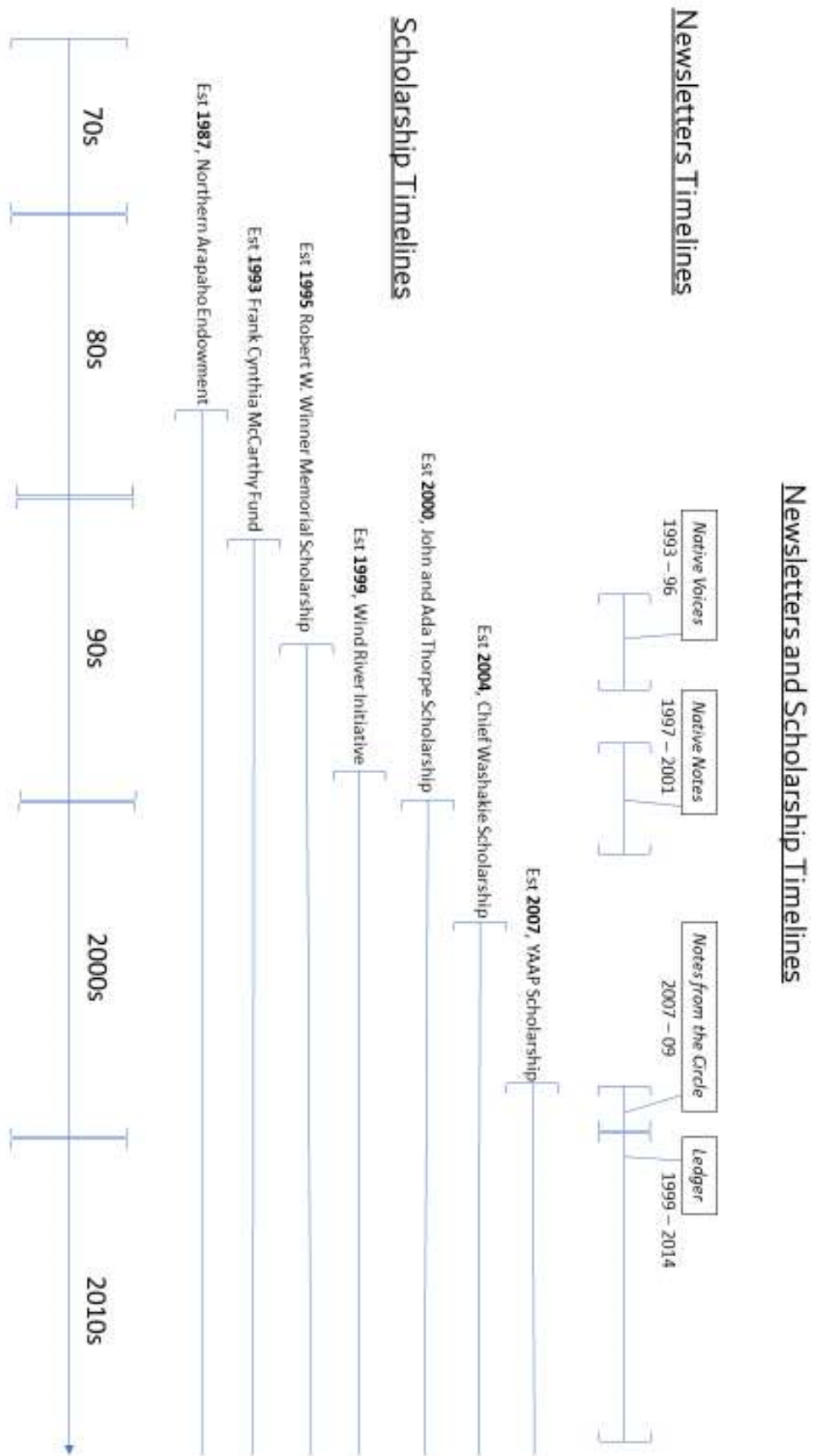
# APPENDICES

figure 4



Summary written in March 2016 by John P. Nutter, titled *American Indian Programs at the University of Wyoming 1975-2015*. Graphic representation by Arnoldo Barrios May, 2019. This is a birds eye view of some but not all programs on campus.

Figure 5



Summary written in March 2016 by John F. Nutter, titled *American Indian Programs at the University of Wyoming 1975-2015*.  
 Graphic representation by Arnoldo Benitez May, 2019

Figure 6

REASON ATTENDING UW												EVER CONSIDER LEAVING																							
												Yes												No											
Cost	close to home/fam	Scholarship opportunities	always wanted too	following family	App deadline	SRAE program	Campus Support	Prison or College	YES	support / community	distance	Payed better elsewhere	financial	support / community	Financial opportunities	distance	financial																		
5	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	1	0	6	3	1	0																		

MOST CONNECTED												Helpful Programs											
Institutional RSOs, etc												Person											
SUPPORT	NA Advisor Refrette	NARECC	KOF	AISA	Other RSO's	Dorm activities	going to class	Angela Jaime	Deb Littlelan	Russell Caskey	Laurie Nichols	Judith Antell	James Strausburg	Robyn Lopez	Christine M Porter	S.S.S.	Assistance with FAFSA	McNair					
7	6	6	4	4	1	1	1	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1					

LEAST CONNECTED												GENERAL DIFFICULTIES												SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT											
Institution						Individual						Other																							
CAMPUS CULTURE	diverse	professor	advisor	classmates	time mgmt	social life	classwork	overloaded	sleeping	NA students encourage mt to explore	Continue Native Center	spirituality	transparency	more \$ programs	more \$ person	professor cultural awareness list	professor cultural awareness mardian	BOY cultural awareness mardian																	
3	1	3	1	1	3	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1																	



