

CVL+NK Notes: On an Outward-Facing Academic/Activist/Advocacy Center

There is consensus for having an “outward-facing” center. This is consistent with the University’s land grant mission and with more recent developments in the STEM areas, the Social Sciences, and the Humanities. Knowledge of these developments suggest ways in which we might frame a recommendation for a center.

1. The [Center for Applied Mathematics](#) was formed in the early 1960s to foster the development of a new kind of mathematics that could address applications confronting scientists and engineers who work on practical issues outside of academia. The Social Science disciplines have long done this with policy focused institutes and centers, including most recently the [Institute of Politics and Global Affairs](#). Less explored is the relation between the humanities, public policy and the sciences as explored in this 2019 [article](#) in Nature.com. In 2016, when Klarman Hall was dedicated, the Humanities at Cornell kicked off programs on “Big Ideas” and the Digital Humanities. At Cornell, the [Rural Humanities](#) project and [Dark Laboratory](#) are examples that perhaps point to a new and emerging style of scholarship with antiracist connections. More recently, the Mellon Grant allowed various groups within the University to come together around issues of race. ***Might the proposed center bring these outward-facing trends within all disciplines and fields around issues of anti-racism, injustice and inequality?***
2. Cornell Tech was created in part to reduce the time between CIS invention on campus and its practical application in society. This effort has broadened to the extent that [Entrepreneurship At Cornell](#) engages students across the campus setting the stage for careers in the private sector. Another point of connection with communities and nonprofits is through the [Office of Engaged Initiatives](#) that provides students with outward-facing opportunities that complement classroom work. Cornell Career Services pays some attention to opportunities in the [public service sector](#) and points the way to various [internships](#). ***Might the proposed center bring issues and concerns around racism, bias, equity and justice to all the ways in which students engage the outside world whether it is in the private, public or civil society sectors?***
3. The [Professor of the Practice \(PoP\) Title](#) was established in 2014 and enables departments/colleges to hire into the faculty ranks individuals who have accomplished nonacademic careers with experience on the outside. PoPs contribute to our educational offerings by teaching courses that are laced with insights derived from their prior experiences. Their role in career advising can be transformative. PoP additions to the faculty are campus wide. Here are examples from [Arts and Sciences](#), [CALS](#), [AAP](#), and [Engineering](#). ***Might academic programming at the proposed center always include a contingent of permanent and/or visiting PoPs who are drawn from the social justice/equity corner of the private and civil society sectors?*** They would have a teaching and advising role similar to existing PoPs and could help deliver the student educational requirement.