
Texas A&M University
2020 State of Diversity Report

June 23, 2020



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Message from the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity

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June 23, 2020

The Office for Diversity quite sincerely wants to make the lives and experiences of Aggies better. We cannot do it alone. Part of what attracted me to Texas A&M when I was hired in 2018 is the university's willingness to work to positively influence inclusion among the Aggie community. There are many students, faculty, and staff who have been doing this work for a long time and are wholly invested in making Texas A&M a place where everyone shares a sense of belonging and everyone is treated equitably. Texas A&M University understands that diversity — in experiences, cultures, and insights — is absolutely central to academic excellence and leadership.

Partnerships are key and the Office for Diversity welcomes collaboration with those who share in advancing our goals of diversity, inclusion, and equity, and holding us all accountable to meet these goals. My role is to work with units to connect their research, creative, pedagogical, and administrative efforts to an understanding of the complexities of culture, to intercultural insight, and to a vision for a diverse and inclusive campus.

The first half of 2020 has seen Texas A&M's President Young issue statements on the murder of George Floyd, protests regarding the presence of the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, former president of A&M and member of the Confederacy, and on racist behaviors seen on our campus. Additionally, 2020 has presented crises of re-opening campus during a pandemic that is marked by health disparities. Systemic racism continues to deprive us of our very lives. My thoughts center on an increasingly diverse Texas A&M student, faculty, and staff. My prayers are for a campus community that leads with respect and belonging. And, I hope that everyone will come to understand that Texas A&M's Core Values — respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service — are synonymous with an ethos of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In some ways, Texas A&M's strengths and challenges are one and the same: What we all want for Texas A&M is for it to always be at the forefront, to be a leader. That means we must learn from our past to cultivate an enlightened, aware, inclusive society for the future. Access to knowledge — historical, theoretical, political, scientific, technological, artistic, cultural, sociological, mathematical, philosophical, and the like — is always a corrective to a lack of progress, leading to growth and success.

As an institution of higher learning, what we do best is work to inform people's thinking. Texas A&M is one of the largest and most respected universities in the world. Our greatest strength is education. Pedagogy is the most powerful and effective form of activism. I cannot do this work alone. We all must be education-activists. One can think of the *2020 State of Diversity Report* as a roadmap for such activism. It tells us how far we have come and pinpoints the work we still have to do. It is my hope that armed with this information we all can continue the good, hard work of elevating Texas A&M's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The change I would like to see is for us to be national leaders in inclusion, anti-racism, and belonging.

Executive Summary

2020 is the 10th anniversary of Texas A&M University's *2010 Diversity Plan*. The *2010 Diversity Plan* established *diversity* as an indispensable component of academic excellence. Texas A&M "cannot achieve academic excellence without paying attention to and drawing from the richness and strength reflected in the diversity in our state and nation" (From the *2010 University Diversity Plan*, p. 1). The purpose of the *2020 State of Diversity Report* is to explore how Texas A&M University is advancing its land-grant mission to welcome and to serve people "of all racial, ethnic and geographic groups as it addresses the needs of an increasingly diverse population and a global economy" (*Texas A&M's Mission Statement*, <https://www.tamu.edu/statements/mission.html>).

While the narrative of the *2020 State of Diversity Report* is optimistic about advancing diversity and inclusion, Texas A&M must identify and dismantle systemic racist and discriminatory practices. Dismantling systemic racism requires an unrelenting dedication to examining practices and policies that impact admissions, hiring, promotion, graduation, resource allocation, budgeting, safety, assessment, accessibility, and expressive activity. Texas A&M's most promising strategy to advance its land-grant mission and to dismantle systemic racism and discrimination is to recognize and reward progress towards diversity and inclusion while ensuring that policies, procedures, and plans are pursued with careful attention to their impact on recruitment, retention, campus climate, and equity.

Texas A&M has been recognized in many different ways for its combination of excellence, affordability, and its ability to develop leaders of character who have an impact on the state, nation, and world. We can point to progress such as increases in the numbers of undergraduate Hispanic/Latinx students and tenured female faculty. However, we struggle to increase the number of Black/African American students, faculty, and staff. Harper and Simmons (2019) provide a statement from their research that the Office for Diversity affirms for the *2020 State of Diversity Report*: "This report should not be misused to reinforce deficit narratives about Black undergraduates. Problematic trends ... are attributable to institutional practices, policies, mindsets, and cultures that persistently disadvantage Black students and sustain inequities" (p. 3). For example, an institutional policy whose effects linger, and we seek to reverse, is that in 1963, barely one generation ago, Texas A&M was an all-white, all-male, military institution that did not admit African Americans, women, or non-cadets.

While our progress in rankings over the past six years shows improvement in some noteworthy areas, years of campus climate assessment data reveal concerns among students, faculty, and staff about safety and belonging at Texas A&M. Too often, the lived reality of students, faculty, and staff from historically underrepresented and excluded groups contrasts starkly with Texas A&M's Core Values. To advance Texas A&M's mission and Core Values, the *2020 State of Diversity Report* provides four major priorities embedded in the *2010 Diversity Plan* goals of *accountability*, *campus climate*, and *equity*:

- 1) *Engage campus leadership (accountability)*: Campus leadership must be committed, in practice and publicly, to promoting and advancing diversity, inclusion, and equity. Engaged leadership, students, faculty, and staff participate in campus forums and seminars; are up-to-date on the relevant literature; promptly and candidly respond to occurrences of discrimination, harassment, and hate; follow-up with actions and updates to the campus and the community; and recognize and reward commitment and progress towards diversity and inclusion. Additionally, engaged leaders ensure that policies, operations, procedures, and plans are pursued with careful attention to their impact on diversity, inclusion, accessibility, campus climate, and equity.

- 2) *Address safety, well-being, and sense of belonging (campus climate):* Texas A&M University's primary concern must be for the physical safety and psychological well-being of current students, faculty, and staff. Enduring racism, bias, discrimination, isolation, and hate takes a toll on mental and physical health. For people from groups who have been historically excluded and marginalized at Texas A&M, a sense of belonging positively impacts achievement, success, and retention (Strayhorn, 2019). By improving campus climate, accessibility, and equity, Texas A&M can provide our students, faculty, and staff with a safe and inclusive environment in which to study and work.
- 3) *Improve structural diversity (equity):* As a land-grant university, Texas A&M's students, faculty, and staff should be representative of the demographic diversity of the State of Texas. To be representative of Texas' population by race/ethnicity, Texas A&M's population would need to be at least 13% Black/African American as opposed to its current 3% Black/African American and 49% Hispanic/Latinx as opposed to its current 24% Hispanic/Latinx. Furthermore, to be designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), Texas A&M must meet and maintain an enrollment of at least 25%, full-time undergraduate students who are Hispanic/Latinx.
- 4) *Improve student success (equity):* In 2019, Provost Carol Fierke increased first-year retention goals from 92% to 95%; four-year graduation rate goals from 56% to 65%; and six-year graduate rate goals from 82% to 85%. To address the disparities in our student success rate so that persistence and graduation are realistic goals for every student, Texas A&M is working to decrease achievement disparities across ethnicity, first-generation college student status, gender, and socioeconomic status.

Texas A&M's *2010 University Diversity Plan* includes everyone in the shared responsibility of creating a culture where people are treated equitably, and a campus climate that fosters success and achievement. Texas A&M University's commitment to diversity and inclusion is attributable to countless current and former students, faculty, and staff, who are engaged in making the campus a community where everyone shares a sense of safety and belonging. The *2020 State of Diversity Report* recognizes many of the people, programs, and strategies that are working to remedy pervasive campus climate issues by engaging campus leadership, addressing safety and belonging, and improving structural diversity and student success.

Introduction

Texas A&M University is committed to enriching the learning and working environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors by promoting a culture that embraces inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability. Diverse perspectives, talents, and identities are vital to advancing our land-grant mission and living our Core Values: respect, excellence, loyalty, leadership, integrity, and selfless service. Diversity and inclusion are embedded in Texas A&M's mission and academic excellence. Advancing Texas A&M's institutional mission and living up to our Core Values depends on improving the campus climate; addressing the safety and belonging concerns of current students, faculty, and staff; and establishing structural diversity in our students, faculty, and staff that is representative of the State of Texas and the communities we serve.

For Texas A&M University, *diversity* and *inclusion* mean welcoming and supporting people from all groups that encompass the various identities and characteristics of people on our campuses and in our communities. These identities and characteristics include but are not limited to: Age, background, citizenship, disability, education, ethnicity, family status, gender, gender identity/expression, geographical location, language, military experience, political views, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and work experience. Broadly, *diversity* means differences in society's opportunities, the shaping of institutions by different social factors, the formation of group and individual identities, and the processes of social change (Anderson & Taylor, 2008). *Inclusion* relates to a sense of belonging, the perception of "social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the campus community or others on campus such as faculty, staff, and peers" (Strayhorn, 2019, p. 4).

The *2020 State of Diversity Report* explores pervasive campus climate issues that jeopardize the sense of safety and belonging for current students, faculty, and staff. *Campus climate* describes how students, faculty, and staff feel and experience the campus environment. Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, Allen and Milem (1998) describe an institution's *campus climate* as the product of the institution's *historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion* of various racial or ethnic groups; the *psychological climate* including perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about diversity and inclusion; the *behavioral climate* describing how people interact on campus; and *structural diversity*, the numerical and proportional representation of diverse groups on campus.

Hurtado et al. (1998) explain that "... one important step toward improving the campus climate for diversity is to increase the representation of people of color on campus" (p. 287). At Texas A&M, many people are frequently one of few or the only one from their identity groups. Improving Texas A&M's structural diversity (e.g., attaining race/ethnic demographics representative of the State of Texas) has the potential to address pervasive safety and belonging issues. Additionally, faculty that reflect the demographics of their students can contribute to well-documented educational benefits such as student retention and sense of belonging (Stewart & Valian, 2018). Improving campus climate has been shown to influence the success of historically underrepresented students and faculty (DeCastro, Sambuco, Ubel, Stewart, & Jagsi, 2013; Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill, & Pitts Bannister, 2009; Helm, Sedlacek, & Priet, 1998; Hurtado et al, 1998; Turner, Gonzalez, & Wood, 2009).

Texas A&M University's commitment to creating diverse and inclusive campus communities is articulated in the *2010 University Diversity Plan*. The *2010 University Diversity Plan* embeds diversity and inclusion in Texas A&M's institutional mission and academic excellence through three goals:

1. *Accountability*: Establish structures, processes, and policies that hold all units accountable, and reward units and individuals for demonstrating their current standing, plans, and progress in creating an environment where individuals are treated equitably in a climate that fosters success and achievement.
2. *Campus climate*: Promote an affirming campus climate by identifying practices across the University, which either foster or impede a working and learning environment that fully recognizes, values, and integrates diversity in the pursuit of academic excellence.
3. *Equity*: Integrate into the mission and goals for the University and units the assurance that students, staff, and faculty are treated fairly and without discrimination.

To advance the goals of *accountability*, *campus climate*, and *equity*, Texas A&M's colleges and administrative units have implemented strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of historically underrepresented groups; to address campus climate issues; and to resolve disparities around resources, rewards, and compensation for students, faculty, and staff. While *accountability*, *campus climate*, and *equity* are distinct goals, progress in any of these goals advances the others.

Additionally, the *2010 University Diversity Plan* established three major expectations grounded in *accountability*. First, everyone in the campus community shares the responsibility of creating a campus climate that fosters success and achievement for all. Second, the colleges and administrative units submit annual *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* to the Office for Diversity and the President's Council on Climate and Diversity (PCCD). The purpose of the accountability reports is to monitor and evaluate progress towards recruiting, retention, campus climate, and equity. And, third, the Office for Diversity is responsible for the implementation of the *2010 University Diversity Plan* and is charged with assessing progress and sharing the results widely.

Since 2010, the Office for Diversity has completed five comprehensive assessment reports that explore Texas A&M's progress and challenges as we work to advance accountability, campus climate, and equity. Progress has been evident in Texas A&M's institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion and its candid, transparent, and ongoing assessment of campus climate and equity. Some substantive examples of progress include:

- Every year, since 2010, all of the colleges and administrative units have participated in the *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports*. In spite of restructuring, outsourcing, and leadership transitions, people from across the university have stayed engaged and committed to assessing and sharing the results of their units' challenges and strategies addressing accountability, campus climate, and equity.
- Two major advisory councils hold the colleges and administrative units accountable for their diversity and inclusion plans and reward units for demonstrating progress: The President's Council on Climate and Diversity (PCCD) and the Diversity Operations Committee (DOC). DOC representatives often lead their units in contributing to the accountability reports that are read and scored by the PCCD.
- Texas A&M has established a culture of ongoing assessment that integrates recruiting, retention, campus climate, and equity in the strategic plans of the colleges, the administrative units, and the university. From annual faculty salary studies to institutional-wide campus climate assessments, Texas A&M has committed resources to develop a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of diversity and inclusion in the campus communities.

- Texas A&M’s essential mission is education. Pedagogy, professional development, coursework, and high-impact learning practices are the most powerful and effective forms of developing people to be responsible leaders and of service to society. Texas A&M has made substantial commitments to student, faculty, and staff development by providing training to reduce implicit bias in hiring, to develop competence in critical dialogues and mediation skills, and to encourage students, faculty, and staff to attend and present at the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE).

Texas A&M has been recognized for its combination of excellence, affordability, and its ability to develop leaders. Specific indicators of institutional progress towards *2010 University Diversity Plan* goals of accountability, campus climate, and equity include:

- 1st in Texas in student 4, 5, and 6-year graduation rates overall and for historically underrepresented students (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, <http://www.tamu.edu/about/at-a-glance.html>)
- 1st among public universities in Texas for best value (*Money*, 2018, https://accountability.tamu.edu/Recognitions?_ga=2.25578171.726429632.1496675846-1008390669)
- 1st among national public universities for a superior education at an affordable cost (*Fisk Guide to Colleges*, 2018, https://accountability.tamu.edu/Recognitions?_ga=2.25578171.726429632.1496675846-1008390669)

While Texas A&M looks similar to and sometimes better than our peer institutions, we need to be cognizant of how we compare and represent the State of Texas and the communities we serve. In spite of increases in the numbers of some historically underrepresented groups, the numbers of others are woefully small, and not representative of the State of Texas. Furthermore, across the United States, institutions of higher education, in general, are not representative of the populations of their communities (Newkirk, 2019).

In 2019, the Office for Diversity applied for and won, on behalf of the institution, the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine. The HEED Award is a national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Not only did Texas A&M receive a 2019 HEED Award, but the reviewers recommended that the university be elevated to Diversity Champion. The designation of Diversity Champion indicates that Texas A&M scored in the top 15 of over 400 institutions that applied for the HEED Award in 2019. Table 1 provides a summary of Texas A&M’s responses to the question from the 2019 HEED Award application: “To what extent have you met your strategic diversity goals for the following?”

While the narrative of the *2020 State of Diversity Report* is optimistic about Texas A&M’s progress in advancing diversity and inclusion, simultaneously, Texas A&M needs to identify and dismantle systemic racist and discriminatory practices. Explicitly stated, dismantling systemic racism and discrimination requires an unrelenting dedication to examine practices and policies that impact admissions, hiring, promotion, graduation, resource allocation, budgeting, safety, course evaluations, and expressive activity. Additionally, innocuous-sounding words and sentiments such as *meritocracy*, *legacy*, *color-blind*, *race-neutral*, *best-qualified*, *good fit*, and *isolated incident* need to be examined, as they have been used to establish and maintain racist and discriminatory practices and sentiments.

For example, Carter-Sowell et al. (2019) explain that “a discourse of meritocracy masks ways in which certain groups have benefited and others have been excluded from access to networks and resources that lead to professional advancement. These inequities need to be acknowledged and interventions implemented” (p. 306). For example, Texas A&M used *legacy* in admissions which privileged White people and discriminated against those belonging to historically-excluded groups until then-President Robert Gates stopped the practice in 2004. *Color-blind*, *race-neutral*, *best-qualified*, and *good-fit* can be problematic for hiring and admissions decisions because they may mask favoritism, bias, and discriminatory practices (Kendi, 2019; Stewart & Valian, 2019). Finally, using the word *incident* to refer to racist performances, hate speech, bigotry, and violence implies that the occurrence is occasional, one-time, or an isolated event as opposed to an indicator of pervasive and systemic racism (King, 2016; Patel, 2019).

For the success, safety, and welfare of our campus community, Texas A&M needs to acknowledge and address racism, discrimination, and hate as current, systemic, societal issues. Left unexamined and unchecked, hate, bigotry, and discrimination permeate our structures, belief systems, and campus climate. The *2020 State of Diversity Report* provides examples of strategies that former and current students, faculty, and staff have implemented to dismantle racist and discriminatory practices. These people are engaged in advancing diversity and inclusion by making the campus a community where everyone shares a sense of safety and belonging.

Table 1. 2015-2018 Strategic Diversity Goals from the 2019 HEED Award Application

Goal	Finding
Increase the number of female full-time non-tenured faculty	NO - 2015 (53% female) > 2018 (49% female)
Increase the number of female full-time tenured faculty	YES - 2015 (28% female) < 2018 (33% female)
Increase the racial and ethnic* diversity of full-time non-tenured faculty	YES - 2015 (5% Hispanic/Latinx, 3% Black/African American) < 2018 (6% Hispanic/Latinx, 3% Black)
Increase the racial and ethnic diversity of our leadership	YES - In 2015, Dr. Eli Jones was appointed as Dean of Mays Business School: Dr. Jones is the first African American Dean of Mays.
Increase the number of women in leadership positions	YES - Two of the three deans of the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) colleges, Engineering and Geosciences, are women.
Increase the number of female Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)** faculty members	YES - 2015 (14% female) < 2018 (16% female)
Increase the number of full-time underrepresented students	YES - 2015 (19.4% Hispanic/Latinx, 3.7% Black/African American) < 2018 (21.3% Hispanic/Latinx, 3.4% Black/African American)
Increase the racial and ethnic diversity of full-time tenured faculty	YES - 2015 (6% Hispanic/Latinx, 3.4% Black/African American) < 2018 (7% Hispanic/Latinx, 4% Black)

*Data sources: Faculty data were retrieved on 06/26/19 from Business Objects Warehouse. Student data were retrieved on 06/14/19 from <https://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics>. *International faculty are included in the race/ethnicity demographic categories. **Texas A&M has STEM integrated throughout many departments housed in several colleges across campus. However, only the entirely STEM colleges — Engineering, Science, and Geosciences — are included in these numbers.*

Accountability

Accountability: Establish structures, processes, and policies that hold all units accountable, and reward units and individuals for demonstrating their current standing, plans, and progress in creating an environment where individuals are treated equitably in a climate that fosters success and achievement. (From the 2010 University Diversity Plan, Page 2)

Engaged Leadership

The 2010 University Diversity Plan stated that Texas A&M “must hold ourselves accountable, individually as well as collectively, for the goal of becoming a campus that is welcoming to all” (p. 5). *Accountability* involves leadership at the (1) individual level, (2) interpersonal level, (3) group level, and (4) institutional level. Stewart and Valian (2018) point out:

Leaders are responsible for diversity, and they must solve two puzzles, regardless of the size of the group that they lead. The first is how to overcome the tendency for groups to be homogenous. The second is how to bring out the best efforts of everyone in the group ... A leader may lead a class, a small group of students, a large lab, a committee, a department, a school, or a university. Whatever form leadership takes, leaders will benefit from knowing what makes groups work well ... diversity increases positive outcomes, but only if everyone in the group can contribute [their] best. (p. 41)

Many of Texas A&M’s student, faculty, staff, and administrative leaders have been committed, in practice and publicly, to promoting and advancing diversity, inclusion, and equity. Engaged leadership across the university has been critical for advancing the goals of the 2010 University Diversity Plan (Stanley, Watson, Reyes, & Varela, 2019). Engaged leaders participate in campus forums and seminars; read the cutting-edge diversity literature; promptly and candidly respond to occurrences of racism and hate and then follow-up with actions and updates to the campus community; recognize and reward commitment and progress towards diversity and inclusion; and ensure that policies, operations, procedures, and plans are pursued with careful attention to their impact on diversity, inclusion, campus climate, and equity.

Participating in Campus Forums and Seminars

Since 2011, the Office for Diversity has collaborated with the Division of Student Affairs, Office of the Dean of Faculties, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, and the Division of Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness to present campus climate survey results to the community every four years. The President, Provost, Deans, and Vice Presidents attended the sessions, provided introductions and data, and participated in small group activities.

In 2014, approximately 90 students, faculty, and staff worked in small groups to generate recommendations for challenges from faculty, staff, undergraduate, and LGBTQ assessment data. In 2011, then-Provost Karan Watson provided opening remarks and several deans and vice-presidents participated in the small group discussions.

The third campus-wide, campus climate session was held on April 20, 2017. Then-Provost Watson opened the forum, which was attended by approximately 180 students, faculty, and staff. The campus climate forums provide opportunities for leaders from the Division of Student Affairs, Dean of Faculties, the Division of Academic Affairs, and Human Resources to share climate assessment

data, engage in campus climate improvement, and participate in critical dialogues about diversity and inclusion.

In addition to having campus leaders participate in the campus-wide, campus climate forums, the campus community appreciated seeing leadership engage in conversations about races and racism. For example, on February 29, 2016, the Office for Diversity hosted Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, President Emerita of Spelman College to engage the campus community on the topic, *Can We Talk about Race?* President Michael K. Young joined Dr. Tatum on stage in a conversation moderated by then-Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, Dr. Christine A. Stanley. During this dialogue, topics ranged from racial identity development to leadership in higher education.

Of the participants that completed the session evaluation, 86% agreed that the ensuing conversations addressed an important topic for Texas A&M University. Additionally, the majority of students, faculty, and staff in attendance expressed appreciation for the university leadership engaging in dialogue around diversity and inclusion. For example, some of the respondents noted/pointed out:

- *Having both the president of the university and a leading scholar on issues of diversity sit together and talk was exciting. ... They modeled how the challenges can be met with integrity and scholarship while also demonstrating the passion that is important to the conversations.*
- *This presentation expressed the importance of conversations related to issues of diversity and addressed why they might be difficult conversations to have.*
- *In this racially-divisive climate, any positive opportunity to dialogue and present information is a plus. I also was pleased that our TAMU President was there to present his viewpoints.*

Texas A&M's campus community has been positively impacted by campus leaders engaging in substantive conversations about diversity and inclusion. On March 17, 2020, the Office for Diversity planned to host the forum *Making Texas Better: Racial Profiling and Human Rights* featuring presentations and a panel discussion with Texas A&M President Michael K. Young, Prairie View A&M President Ruth Simmons, Professor Fatma Marouf from Texas A&M's School of Law, moderated by Dr. Robin Means Coleman, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity. While the March 2020 event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, university leadership remains committed to the event and plans are underway to hold the forum.

President's Council on Climate and Diversity (PCCD)

One noteworthy example of engaged leadership is the President's Council on Climate and Diversity (PCCD). The PCCD is composed of current and former students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members who represent different constituencies in the campus and community. The PCCD is charged with providing counsel to the President and the Provost; to strengthen, sustain, and promote diversity efforts; and to identify and assess the efficacy of strategies for attracting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff. The PCCD's duties include advising the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity (VPAPD) in planning the appropriate assessment and evaluation of units. To fulfill the charge to provide counsel and guidance in diversity, equity and inclusion, every year the PCCD members read all of the units' *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* and provide feedback to the leadership of the colleges and administrative units to improve future diversity and inclusion strategies.

Since 2010, on alternating years, university leadership, deans, and vice presidents present summaries of their unit's *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* to the PCCD, the University President, the

Provost, and the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity. In 2017, the Office for Diversity staff used participant observation and identified four themes that emerged from the 2017 PCCD presentations (Reyes & Varela, 2017):

Theme 1 — Interactions between the presenters (Deans & Vice-Presidents) and the unit-level diversity leaders or Diversity Operation Committee (DOC) representatives. Several deans and vice-presidents were accompanied by their unit's diversity-titled leaders or their DOC representatives during their presentations. Frequently, questions asked of presenters were deferred to the units' diversity-titled leaders or to the DOC representatives.

While the presence of diversity-titled leaders and DOC representatives from the colleges and administrative units are indications of institutional progress, the Office for Diversity staff had some reservations about the emotional labor and occupational burdens placed on the diversity-titled leaders and DOC representatives. In some cases, when the unit dean or vice president deferred questions to the DOC representative or diversity-titled leaders, it seemed as if the unit leaders were detached, not familiar with, or not engaged in the diversity and inclusion work of their units. Some examples of the deans and vice-presidents sharing or shifting responsibility included:

- Acknowledging that the graduate student that accompanied them for their presentation is “our mentor on all things diversity.”
- Crediting their diversity-titled unit leader or DOC representative as a major reason for the state of diversity within the college.

In an effort to better understand the invisible and emotional labor involved with the *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* and PCCD presentations, Dr. Robin Means Coleman, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, implemented a question on the annual reports about the process for writing and reviewing them.

Theme 2 — Moving Beyond Racial and Ethnic Diversity. Several presenters demonstrated that they are becoming more sophisticated in their understanding of diversity and inclusion by addressing diversity beyond demographic data. For example:

- Creating prayer and meditation rooms.
- Developing initiatives for students who have disabilities; LGBTQ students; students who are parents; and students who have limited financial resources.
- Demonstrating the integration of diversity and academic excellence by encouraging publishing on topics relating to diversity in their disciplines.
- Acknowledging the financial constraints and hardships many students manage and the effects of finances on retention and graduation.
- Implementing a loan repayment program for students once they graduate.

Theme 3 — Overlooking Staff. While many units went into great detail to explain the state of diversity as it related to students and faculty, staff were often overlooked. Frequently, presentations lacked staff demographics and/or had a limited number of initiatives designed to increase diversity among staff in recruitment, retention, climate, and equity. For example:

- When questioned about staff demographics in the unit, one presenter asserted that he “will know them next year.”
- One presenter stated that they “tend to ignore staff.”
- Another presenter noted that they do have some programs available for staff, but will now promote improving climate for staff.

Theme 4 — Using Peer Comparison Data. The 2010 University Diversity Plan requires units to collect peer comparison data. Some presenters demonstrated that they are knowledgeable about the demographic data at their peer institutions, but it is unclear if they use these data to improve diversity in recruitment, retention, campus climate, and equity within their units. Some presenters noted that they found it difficult to attain peer comparison data due to the uniqueness of their units. Other presenters extensively considered data from their peer institutions and from national, discipline-specific organizations. After reviewing peer comparison data, several presenters noted that they are national leaders in demographic diversity within their fields in the following areas:

- Integrating cultural competence into their curriculum.
- Recruiting and retaining racial/ethnic diversity in students and faculty.
- Developing and graduating professionals from historically underrepresented groups who will practice in their fields.

The review of the 2017 PCCD presentations resulted in the following recommendations:

- Collecting peer-comparison data needs to be more nuanced than simply demographic data: Unit leaders are being asked to discuss student, faculty, and staff recruiting and retention strategies; campus climate survey results; equity studies; and strategies to address climate, equity, and inclusion with their colleagues at other institutions.
- Collecting data AND using data: Expectations for assessing the impact of diversity-related strategies are becoming more explicit and are being addressed in strategic plans, assessment plans, and student learning outcomes.
- Engaging everyone in diversity and inclusion: Accountability for campus climate, equity, and inclusion is *everyone's* responsibility, not just the Office for Diversity, the unit-level diversity leaders, or the representatives on diversity councils and committees. Accountability for diversity, climate, equity, and inclusion should be integrated into annual reviews and performance evaluations.

In 2017, the Office for Diversity implemented all of the recommendations to improve the process and the quality of the *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports*.

In 2018, the PCCD members elevated the idea that the colleges and administrative units need to use the *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* to establish compelling cases for diversity and inclusion for their disciplines. Each of the colleges, their disciplines, and the administrative units have unique recruitment and retention challenges and cultures. The Office for Diversity encourages leadership within colleges and administrative units to identify peer institutions that reflect the unique nature, populations, and challenges that their units face and collect peer-benchmarking data to monitor their individual progress.

In 2019, for the first time, the Office for Diversity held a scoring orientation meeting for the PCCD members: 41% (11 out of 27) of the PCCD members participated in person or by Zoom. Additionally, President Michael K. Young required all senior leaders — deans, vice-presidents, associate provosts — to attend the entire day of presentations as they shared and listened to diversity and inclusion strategies from their colleagues across the university. In a message to the campus community, President Young shared that he “was pleased to attend a day of presentations by college deans and unit leaders from across campus which centered on inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability.” Furthermore, President Young thanked Dr. Jorge A. Vanegas, Dean of the College of Architecture and Chair of the PCCD, and Dr. Robin Means Coleman, Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, “...for their dedication to maintaining this critical dialogue. These efforts are in support of Texas A&M’s *Diversity Plan* and are crucial in creating the type of educational environment in which all of our campus members can thrive” (February 11, 2019, *Dedication to Diversity Makes a Difference*).

Diversity Operations Committee (DOC)

Since the launch of the *2010 University Diversity Plan*, the Diversity Operations Committee (DOC) exemplifies engaged leadership. The DOC is a standing university-wide committee that serves as an advisory group to the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity (VPAPD). The DOC is chaired by the VPAPD and is comprised of representatives from each academic and administrative unit as well as people from key councils and associations. DOC meetings focus on the ways in which the university can coordinate and advance diversity, inclusion, equity, campus climate, and accountability in all parts of its mission. DOC representatives are liaisons between the VPAPD and their units. In short, DOC representatives are the Office for Diversity’s best resource for communicating and coordinating diversity and inclusion activities across the campus and community.

Additionally, the DOC representatives often lead their units in contributing to the annual *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* that are, in turn, read and scored by the PCCD. In 2018, for the first time, the Office for Diversity held Speed Consultations to support the DOC members in writing the accountability reports. The Speed Consultations were “office hours” for DOC members to meet with the Office for Diversity to review PCCD feedback and provide instruction to improve the quality of their annual reports. In 2018, 19 out of 26 units participated in the Speed Consultations. Because of the positive feedback and participation from DOC representatives, the Office for Diversity held Speed Consultations again in 2019: 22 out of 27 units attended the event.

In addition to the DOC, as of 2019, 26 out of 27 colleges and administrative units have formed unit-level and department-level diversity councils. Furthermore, as of 2020, 11 of the 17 academic colleges have appointed diversity-titled deans or directors who have a seat on the college’s leadership team: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; College of Architecture; College of Dentistry; College of Education and Human Development; College of Geosciences; College of Liberal Arts; College of Medicine; College of Science; College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences; Mays Business School; and School of Public Health. Additionally, the following administrative units have committees and councils: The Division of Academic Affairs (Academic Affairs Climate and Diversity Committee), Division of Student Affairs (Diversity Strategies in Action 2.0 Committee), the Division of Finance and Operations, the Division of Information Technology, and the Division of Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness.

One of the challenges facing the Office for Diversity is how to help units share their *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* with their stakeholders and the campus communities. In 2020, for the first time, the Office for Diversity hosted the Diversity Gallery. In collaboration with DOC representatives, the Office for Diversity designed posters describing each unit’s goals and progress

related to diversity and inclusion. On February 11, 2020, DOC representatives, PCCD members, and campus leaders had the opportunity to interact and ask questions while reviewing the posters. The Diversity Gallery was a public-forum open to the campus and community. The Office for Diversity marketed the event to engage students, faculty, staff, and the Bryan/College Station community: over 300 people attended the inaugural event.

Engaged Student Leaders

The examples provided in this section are not intended to be an exhaustive or comprehensive list of the efforts of Texas A&M's student leaders to advance diversity, inclusion, and equity. Only a few examples are included to illustrate some of the compelling work that our student leaders are engaged in to address safety, belonging, and campus climate issues.

In 2018, Texas A&M's Student Senate reviewed a resolution recognizing Native American/Alaskan Heritage Month (https://senate.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/S.R.-71-12-Recognizing-Native-American_Alaskan-Heritage-Month-Resolution.pdf). The resolution officially recognized November to be Native American Heritage Month and extended support to Texas A&M organizations that promote Native American culture and diversity. In 2019, the Student Senate passed a resolution recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month.

In September 2019, the Student Senate unanimously passed the "Religious Inclusion of the Invocation Act, which amends the Student Government Association code to invite different religious groups to offer a prayer during the meeting ... The amendment reads, 'Arrange for individuals from various faiths, religions, or none at all to present the invocation at all General Assembly Meeting'" (Slusher, 2019).

In 2018, Texas A&M's Student Government Association (SGA) Diversity Commission hosted candidates for student body president in a panel discussion about diversity and inclusion. Then-Student Body President, Bobby Brooks, summarized his impressions of the discussion:

To be quite honest, we have a lot of work to do... We always do, we know this. This campus does have a very magical thing about it. We have a really good concept of family, when you're in the family. Sometimes it can be a little difficult to integrate yourself into that family. We're working on it piece by piece. This isn't the last conversation that needs to take place. (Fennell, 2018)

Brooks' comments refer to Texas A&M's "Aggie Family" and acknowledge that finding a sense of belonging can be challenging for some people, particularly those from groups that have been historically excluded from Texas A&M and marginalized in higher education. The student leaders that participated in the campus forum discussed the need for the campus to be welcoming, safe, and inclusive for the campus community.

In 2018, to be more inclusive of current students, student leaders decided to modify Elephant Walk, a Texas A&M tradition where the senior class visits prominent campus locations to reminisce about their time on campus. In the past, one of the prominent locations was the Sul Ross statue. The Sul Ross statue is the oldest statue on campus, dedicated in 1918 in the likeness of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, a former university president, a governor of the State of Texas, a Texas Ranger, and a Confederate general.

Then-Elephant Walk Director and student leader, Julia Tisch, explained the decision was based on concerns and discomfort about Ross being a Confederate general. Tisch stated:

We really just feel like there are a bunch of students here who are about to graduate and who have still yet to feel like A&M is their home just because of certain traditions that they don't feel included in or just the way they've been treated or viewed by their peers or their professors ... This is a small other way that could help some students feel more welcomed here right before they graduate. (Mahler & Garcia, 2018)

On November 20, 2018, Texas A&M's student newspaper, *The Battalion*, published a letter to the editor from the Texas A&M University System's Chancellor John Sharp, former student of Texas A&M and Class of 1972. Chancellor Sharp described past-President Lawrence Sullivan Ross' contributions to Texas A&M University, Prairie View A&M, and the State of Texas (Sharp, 11/20/18). On June 17, 2020, Chancellor Sharp issued a [statement](#) that said, in part, "While my personal opinion has not changed about the importance of Lawrence Sullivan Ross to Texas A&M, we Aggies must stand united against racism and love one another." Continued debate about the presence of the Sul Ross statue on Texas A&M's campus speaks to the great effort many former students, current students, campus leaders, and communities are making to reconcile Confederate memorials and artifacts with institutional missions and values.

Across the state of Texas and the nation, many universities are reconciling the presence of Confederate memorials and artifacts with their institutional missions and values. From the removal of a Confederate plaque in the Texas Capitol to that of statues by many of our Southeastern Conference (SEC) and Association of American Universities (AAU) peers, communities are addressing the impact of racism and symbols of White supremacy on the safety and belonging of Black people, indigenous people, and people of color. For many years, Texas A&M's students have engaged in petitions and dialogue to address the institution's legacy of discrimination and racism.

On February 14, 2019, President Young sent a message to the campus community acknowledging Texas A&M's history: "Years ago in our community and, sadly, on occasion even now, we see the ugly reality of discrimination. When we see it, we do not need to hide from it, but to call it out, to refute it and to stand for respect and love for all" (*Acknowledging Parts of Our Past*, President Michael K. Young, February 14, 2019). On June 17, 2020, President Young announced the [creation of two groups](#): a task force on race relations and a commission on historic representations to make a recommendation on the Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue. With the leadership of our students, faculty, staff, and administration and examples from our SEC and AAU peers, Texas A&M has an opportunity to meet the challenges of our past and emerge as leaders in inclusion, anti-racism, and belonging.

Responding to Racism, Hate, and Sexual Violence

Over the years, Texas A&M has had numerous occurrences of racist, prejudiced, discriminatory, sexist, and hateful behavior among students, former students, faculty, staff, and the community. Perpetrators of hateful, racist, and bigoted performances are frequently perceived to be protected from disciplinary sanctions or punitive actions by campus policies governing free speech and expressive activity.

Patricia Williams, Professor of Law Emerita at Columbia Law School, has acknowledged the "paradoxical pitting of the first amendment against speaking about other forms of injury – so that the specter of legal censorship actually blocks further discussion of moral censure" (Williams, 1991, p. 112). In 2019, Executive Vice President and Provost Lauren Robel of Indiana University demonstrated balancing First Amendment rights with moral censure. Eric Rasmusen, Professor of Business Economics & Public Policy at Indiana University, expressed virulently racist and sexist sentiments on his private social media account. Provost Robel determined that:

Students who are women, gay, or of color could reasonably be concerned that someone with Professor Rasmusen's expressed prejudices and biases would not give them a fair shake in his classes, and that his expressed biases would infect his perceptions of their work. Given the strength and longstanding nature of his views, these concerns are reasonable.

Therefore, the Kelley School is taking a number of steps to ensure that students not add the baggage of bigotry to their learning experience:

- *No student will be forced to take a class from Professor Rasmusen. The Kelley School will provide alternatives to Professor Rasmusen's classes;*
- *Professor Rasmusen will use double-blind grading on assignments; if there are components of grading that cannot be subject to a double-blind procedure, the Kelley School will have another faculty member ensure that the grades are not subject to Professor Rasmusen's prejudices.*

If other steps are needed to protect our students or colleagues from bigoted actions, Indiana University will take them. (On the First Amendment, November 20, 2019, <https://provost.indiana.edu/statements/index.html>)

Provost Robel's statement and actions acknowledge the right to free speech while taking measures to mitigate the impact of a professor's bigotry on student success and the campus community. By limiting the authority and influence that perpetrators of hate and bias have over others, upholding the right to free speech, and protecting the campus community, Provost Robel's demonstration of moral censure may generalize to student leaders, staff, and administrators.

In 2018, several current and former Texas A&M students used social media to express frustration and demand that Texas A&M revisit Title IX policies and procedures for handling sexual abuse cases. In June 2018, President Young ordered internal and external reviews to "test every step of our processes for safety, support, sensitivity, timeliness, and fairness to all involved that meets the highest standards" (*Message to the Aggie Community*, June 15, 2018, <https://president.tamu.edu/messages/message-to-the-aggie-community.html>).

The reviews included interviews with students, staff, faculty, administrators, and members of the Aggie-led group advocating for improvements at the university. The internal review navigated the steps of filing a complaint which helped the committee understand the strengths and weaknesses of the process. Committee co-chairs Dr. Robin Means Coleman, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity and Professor of Communication, and Mr. Kevin McGinnis, Chief Risk, Ethics, and Compliance Officer, conducted a mock process of the steps that a student might go through when considering and/or filing a complaint for sexual misconduct (https://www.tamu.edu/statements/Title_IX_Internal_Review_Report_August_2018.pdf?_ga=2.89055955.950874811.1561312815-1534201453.1544799639).

The external review included benchmarking key components of Texas A&M's policies in comparison to 14 peer institutions: University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, Purdue University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Texas at Austin, Indiana University, University of Illinois, University of Maryland, University of California Los Angeles, University of Washington, Arizona State University, and University of Virginia (https://www.tamu.edu/statements/HB-TAMU-Title-IX-Report.pdf?_ga=2.77531997.950874811.1561312815-1534201453.1544799639).

University leadership from across the institution were engaged in the internal and external reviews and were responsive and transparent in their communication with the public and the campus community. Many of the recommendations from reviews have resulted in Texas A&M emerging as a national leader for establishing policies and procedures that bring fairness for both the respondents and complainants. For example, a Title IX sanctioning matrix has been developed and implemented and is publicly available on the website of Texas A&M's Department of Civil Rights & Equity Investigations (<https://titleix.tamu.edu/sanctioning-matrix/>).

One common thread across racist performances, hate speech, and the Title IX investigations is the perception that there is little accountability from university leadership to the campus community. For example, because of confidentiality and federal laws, many times the message “not consistent with Aggie Core Values and not welcome in our community” can be perceived as a disproportionate, underwhelming response to hate, racism, and sexual violence. Many in the campus community have been dissatisfied and disillusioned with Texas A&M's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Additionally, when leadership addresses hate, discrimination, and racism as isolated incidents, as opposed to trends and patterns in the campus community, administrative responses seem reactive as opposed to intentional, coordinated, and strategic. Additionally, some in the student body and the campus community perceive a lack of transparency in administrative responses.

Texas A&M's students have responded to racist performances in the campus community by petitioning the administration for support and resources. A 2019 student-led petition called for: all students to sign the Aggie Honor Code; a sanctions matrix for racist behavior similar to the Title IX matrix; a campaign for bystander intervention to teach people how to interrupt bigotry, racism, and hate; and transparency regarding how the administration handles incidents (Allen, 2019). In 2020, the calls for these interventions continued. Additionally, in 2020, Texas A&M students petitioned to create a Latinx Center to alleviate some of the safety, belonging, and isolation Latinx students experience on campus (Flores, 2020).

Texas A&M's leadership needs to “engage in a much more direct and frank dialogue, including with all campus members, about the underlying historical and social contexts that give rise to what are likely numerous (known and unrecognized) racist incidents on their campuses” (Chun & Feagin, 2020). Since 2008, Texas A&M's colleges and administrative units have made a commitment to developing the capacity for students, faculty, and staff to engage in critical dialogues about racism and discrimination such as mediation training and discussions about campus race relations. To assess the influence of difficult dialogues and mediation training, the staff in the Office for Diversity administered a web-based survey to 48 people who completed the training from 2008 to 2014: 28 people returned the survey. The majority of respondents reported that they had developed and applied skills such as active listening and guiding others through strategies for discussing conflict; and disclosed increased self-awareness, personal growth, and self-confidence in the workplace and in their personal lives (Stanley, Reyes, & Varela, 2015).

In 2016, Dr. Srividya Ramasubramanian, Professor of Communication and Director of the Difficult Dialogues on Campus Race Relations at Texas A&M University, co-founded *Difficult Dialogues on Campus Race Relations*. The program provides students with an opportunity to discuss race-related issues and brainstorm ideas and solutions to make the campus more welcoming for all. In 2016, 60 students attended the inaugural session and another 50 were wait-listed (Palacios, 2016). In 2019, the 19th session of *Difficult Dialogues and Campus Race Relations*, 70 students attended with 15 people on the waitlist (Estrada, 2019), which indicates the campus community's interest in participating in conversations about race-related issues and solutions at Texas A&M.

Preliminary findings from Dr. Ramasubramanian's research on the impact of *Difficult Dialogues on Campus Race Relations* reveal that participants shared that they were confronted with issues of campus racism. Additionally, participants reported that after attending the sessions, they were more confident in the resources available to combat racism. Some of the students of color who attended the seminars shared that while they were not surprised with the content, they wanted to know what more could be done to stop racism. In 2018, the Office for Diversity awarded Dr. Ramasubramanian a Diversity Matters Seed Grant to support continued assessment and research on the impact of *Difficult Dialogues in Campus Race Relations*.

Recognizing and Rewarding Commitment & Progress

One of the defining characteristics of Texas A&M's *2010 University Diversity Plan* is the commitment to "reward units and individuals for demonstrating their current standing, plans, and progress in creating an environment where individuals are treated equitably in a climate that fosters success and achievement" (From the *2010 University Diversity Plan*, p. 2). Recognizing and rewarding progress for diversity and inclusion at Texas A&M requires candidness and transparency. While we celebrate commitment, we have to acknowledge our history of exclusion and discrimination; our slow progress towards structural diversity representative of the State of Texas; and a campus climate that has pervasive safety and belonging challenges.

In 2018, Texas A&M's Office of Sustainability launched the institution's [*Sustainability Master Plan*](#). The comprehensive plan integrated diversity, inclusion, campus climate, and social justice throughout topic areas and goals embedded in social sustainability. *Social sustainability* encompasses four topics: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Health and Wellness; Voice and Influence; and External Engagement. With the leadership of the Office for Sustainability, from 2017-2019, Texas A&M University received a Gold rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). Additionally, from 2016-2019, the Office of Sustainability has recognized the Office for Diversity as a STARS Overall Top Performer for earning the highest percentage of available points for stakeholders with multiple credits on the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) application.

Stewart and Valian (2018) explain that sometimes the "implication is that the slow rate of change is the result of deficiencies in those most subject to exclusion rather than due to institutional features that discourage and devalue those individuals. As such, talk of 'slow progress' can demoralize the very people who already feel marginal at the institution" (p. 19). Allies and antagonists alike are critical of progress — allies because progress has taken too long and is not enough, while antagonists express undemocratic and demonstrably untrue sentiments about diversity and inclusion damaging the university's reputation and compromising the quality of education. Texas A&M University's commitment to diversity and inclusion is the product of countless current and former students, faculty, and staff who have been engaged in making the campus a community where everyone shares a sense of safety and belonging. We celebrate Texas A&M's commitment to diversity and inclusion and recognize students, faculty, and staff, past and present, who have advanced Texas A&M's mission and Core Values through their unrelenting optimism and commitment.

The primary method for recognizing and rewarding the colleges and administrative units is the annual *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports*. The *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* are reviewed and scored by the President's Council on Climate and Diversity (PCCD). In 2019, the Office for Diversity and the Office of the Provost used the PCCD feedback and scores to distribute an all-time high of 1.5 million dollars to 27 units. In summary, PCCD feedback and scores guide campus leadership to ensure that policies, operations, procedures, and plans are pursued with careful attention to their impact on our diversity, inclusion, campus climate, and equity.

In 2019, for the third consecutive year, Texas A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (CVM) received a Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award. In 2019, the Office for Diversity applied on behalf of Texas A&M, and won, the HEED Award. To celebrate the HEED Awards and recognize the CVM and the campus community, the Office for Diversity hosted a reception for the DOC, PCCD, and our campus and community partners on December 5, 2019. Holly Mendelsohn, co-owner and co-publisher of *INSIGHT into Diversity*, presented the awards to Texas A&M leadership. Texas A&M's President Michael K. Young and Provost Carol Fierke made remarks recognizing the significance of diversity and inclusion for the campus and community. Additionally, to recognize the work of the DOC and our campus partners, the Office for Diversity provided certificates of the HEED Award and Diversity Champion designation to all of our DOC representatives.

In 2018-2019, Dr. Robin Means Coleman, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, led the Office for Diversity in pursuing awards and recognition on behalf of Texas A&M students, faculty, and staff who have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and institutional excellence. For example, Dr. Means Coleman nominated Dr. Christine Stanley, Vice President and Associate Provost Emerita, for the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) Frank W. Hale Jr. Award. Dr. Stanley received the NADOHE Award at the national conference in Philadelphia in March, 2019. Additionally, two current Office for Diversity staff received awards from Texas A&M and served on the award review committees in the Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Finance and Operations. In 2020, the Office for Diversity nominated a student employee for Texas A&M's Student Employee of the Year award.

In summary, campus leadership must continue to be committed, in practice and publicly, to proactively promoting and advancing diversity, inclusion, and equity. Engaged leaders are accountable to the campus community, as evidenced by their participation in campus forums and seminars; engaging the relevant scholarly literature; promptly and candidly responding to occurrences of racism and intolerance and following-up with the campus community; recognizing and rewarding commitment and progress towards diversity and inclusion; and ensuring that policies, operations, procedures, and plans are pursued with careful attention to their impact on diversity, inclusion, campus climate, and equity.

Campus Climate

***Campus Climate:** Promote a positive and supportive climate by identifying aspects in the climate of individual units and the University, which foster and/or impede a working and learning environment that fully recognizes, values, and integrates diversity in the pursuit of academic excellence. (From the 2010 University Diversity Plan, Page 2)*

Campus climate is how students, faculty, and staff feel and experience the campus environment. After nearly 20 years of campus climate assessment of students, faculty, and staff, Texas A&M's longitudinal campus climate results consistently find that many people from historically underrepresented groups, particularly students, faculty, and staff who are African American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and Asian, have sharply different experiences with the overall campus climate than do majority group members. Texas A&M University's primary concern must be the physical and psychological well-being of current students, faculty, and staff. Enduring racism, bias, discrimination, isolation, and hate takes a toll on mental and physical health. Through the improvement of campus climate, accessibility, and equity, Texas A&M can provide our students, faculty and staff with a safe, inclusive, and diverse environment in which to study and work.

Campus Climate Assessment

Hurtado et al. (1998) describe an institution's campus climate as the product of the institution's *historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion* of various racial or ethnic groups, the *psychological climate* including perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about diversity, the *behavioral climate* describing how different groups interact on campus, and *structural diversity*, the numerical and proportional representation of diverse groups on campus. In 1998, Texas A&M adopted Hurtado et al. (1998) as the model to assess campus climate. Over the last 20 years, the institution has developed a commitment to campus climate assessment which has provided a foundation for many of the strategic plans, assessment practices, and diversity and inclusion strategies that are in effect in 2020.

In 2010, the *University Diversity Plan* called for university-wide campus climate assessments to be repeated in three-year cycles. Additionally, from the *Diversity Plan*, units were expected "to implement programs and interventions informed by data from recent university-level climate assessments and/or climate assessments that were designed at the unit level" (p. 8). To clarify, units could use the university-wide campus climate surveys to inform planning; however, "when the University data [could not] be disaggregated to reflect the specific unit, they [were] advised to probe carefully to ensure the unit's climate [was] well understood" (p. 8). As a result, many units, and even departments, began implementing their own campus climate surveys.

In 2018, the Office for Diversity, in collaboration with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS), Dean of Faculties (DOF), Office of Institutional Evaluation and Effectiveness (OIE&E), the Department of Student Life Studies (SLS), and Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness (HROE), determined that the three-year survey cycle had not permitted sufficient time for the units or the institution to implement strategies, assess effectiveness, and reflect on progress. With the support of Provost Fierke, Texas A&M thus transitioned to a four-year cycle for the institutional-wide campus climate surveys for students, faculty, and staff.

In 2021, the plan is to administer the campus-wide, campus climate surveys through a collaboration with the OIE&E, SLS, and the Office for Diversity. For the first time, the surveys will be

coordinated with the undergraduate, graduate, and professional student SERUs. To facilitate marketing and subsequently increase response rates, the student, faculty, and staff surveys will run simultaneously. To a great extent, a common set of items is being used across the faculty and staff surveys and these are closely aligned with the items and scales of the SERUs for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. The Diversity Operations Committee (DOC) has been extremely involved in developing and reviewing items to ensure that the survey results will be meaningful and useful to the colleges and administrative units.

Collecting data that are meaningful and useful is critical to sustaining Texas A&M's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Advisory groups such as the DOC, PCCD, and campus leadership have become more sophisticated about measuring progress and change, and the ways in which they use and collect data have become more nuanced. For example, in the early years of the *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports*, peer-comparison data were limited to tables of demographic data. Since 2017, unit leaders have contacted their colleagues at other institutions to collect information about student, faculty, and staff recruiting and retention strategies; campus climate survey results; and equity studies.

In 2020, the Office for Diversity plans to contact Texas A&M's Southeastern Conference (SEC) peers and selected Association of American Universities (AAU) peers to collect peer-comparison data about the prevalence and nature of campus incidents reports on their campuses, analogous to Texas A&M's *Stop Hate* reports. *Stop Hate* is Texas A&M's online reporting system to provide the campus community with the opportunity to report hate/bias occurrences. *Stop Hate* reports may be submitted anonymously or with as much information as the individual wishes to provide. Once a report is submitted, it is disseminated for review and action to a team of staff and administrators from the Division of Student Affairs, the Division of Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness, the Office of the Dean of Faculties, and the Office for Diversity. Collecting incident-report data from peer institutions will provide a deeper understanding of Texas A&M's campus climate and inform decisions and strategies to improve safety and belonging.

Analyzing peer-comparison data provided the foundation for Provost Carol Fierke's 2018 Student Success Initiative. In 2017, Dr. Kenneth Meier, then-Director of the Carlos Cantu Hispanic Education and Opportunity Endowment and distinguished professor in Political Science, analyzed graduation rates for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx undergraduates from universities across the country. Dr. Meier's analyses identified six institutions that were similar to Texas A&M in terms of student body and function and doing an exceptional job in terms of student success: Florida State University, The Ohio State University, University of Georgia, University of Florida, The University of California – Los Angeles, and University of Michigan.

Dr. Meier proposed that Texas A&M host a conference to bring together faculty, staff, and administrators working on retention and graduation rates. On February 20, 2018, administrators, chief diversity officers, and institutional researchers from The Ohio State University, the University of California – Los Angeles, University of Florida, and Texas A&M participated in the one-day conference: 161 faculty and staff from Texas A&M attended the session. In addition to exploring practices and strategies for student success, the goals of the conference included engaging the campus community in small group work and providing participants with networking opportunities.

After the conference, an evaluation was sent to participants, and 65 out of 161 (40%) attendants completed it. Over 90% of the respondents agreed that the small group work had resulted in identifying opportunities to support student success and that they had engaged with colleagues from across the institutions. One of the respondents explained, "The Ohio State said it best, 'no one owns success, it has to be institutional.' TAMU is doing a much better job of bringing the right people to the table in terms of helping students succeed, but there is always room for improvement." The

strategies generated from the small group work were later used to develop the [Student Success Initiative](#) which, in part, seeks to close the gap as it pertains to achievement disparities..

It is important to note that depending entirely on institutional data and trends may limit opportunities to address campus climate issues. For example, in 2018, Dr. Means Coleman, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, framed *neurodiversity* in the context of accessibility and equity and elevated *neurodiversity* to a strategic priority for the Office for Diversity. *Neurodiversity* is the recognition of neurological differences in human behavior and brain functionality that is the result of natural human variation. These differences include, but are not limited to, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia, and Tourette Syndrome. This movement challenges the pathological view of learning differences by considering diverse learners an asset, rather than a deficit. *Neurodiversity* recognizes that neurological differences are normal and natural variations in the human functioning and are not a deficit or disadvantage, but an asset to the individual (Elliott, 2018).

Several departments and student organizations have been leading the neurodiversity initiative on campus to make Texas A&M more accessible to students with neurological differences. For example, the Spectrum Living Learning Community (LLC) is an inclusive, accessible, and neurodiverse environment that welcomes all students with a connection to the Autism community. Students in the LLC participate in academic and social programming that facilitate their success through engagement with staff mentors and like-minded peers with and without autism. Aggie ACHIEVE (Academic Courses in Higher Inclusive Education and Vocational Experiences) is a four-year inclusive and immersive post-secondary education for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Students in this program participate in coursework and extracurricular activities designed to prepare them for employment in the community. Texas A&M's neurodiversity strategies are intended to make the campus and community more accessible to and equitable for students with neurological differences.

2015-2016 Campus Climate Findings

The 2015 undergraduate campus climate assessment used Student Experience in Research University (SERU) survey data collected in Spring 2015 by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation. The SERU items related to campus climate were analyzed and presented by the Department of Student Life Studies in the Division of Student Affairs.

The 2015 SERU quantitative and qualitative data revealed that students from historically underrepresented groups did not think the campus climate was inclusive and welcoming for people like them. For example, results from the 2015 SERU revealed that students from historically underrepresented groups valued diversity more than students from majority groups. In response to the item, "Diversity is important to me," 60% of the White respondents agreed-strongly agreed, compared to 86% of the African American/Black respondents, 71% of the Hispanic/Latinx respondents, and 75% of the Asian respondents.

In the 2016 graduate and professional student campus climate assessment, graduate students shared that a diverse student body, open communication among faculty and students, and welcoming colleges/departments contributed to a positive campus climate. Historically underrepresented graduate students reported experiencing the campus climate as less welcoming than other groups. Graduate students also reported experiencing or observing inappropriate comments or behaviors related to race/ethnicity/nationality, language proficiency, political/religious beliefs, and sexual orientation, mostly from fellow students.

In the 2015 faculty campus climate assessment, 69% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their jobs, whereas 15% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Female faculty

members no longer reported systematically lower levels of overall job satisfaction than did male faculty members; however, female faculty members did report higher levels of burnout and lower levels of career satisfaction than their male colleagues.

The 2016 staff campus climate assessment revealed that overall job satisfaction had declined for Texas A&M staff. Additionally, intentions to resign or move to another department were higher for African American/Black and Asian respondents than they were for White or Hispanic/Latinx respondents.

History of Inclusion and Exclusion

To understand Texas A&M's current campus climate and challenges, it is imperative that we continuously assess Texas A&M's historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion of groups of people based on their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other minoritized identities. Texas A&M's history of inclusion and exclusion is framed by the willingness and ability of many people who have dismantled racist and discriminatory practices. For example, in 1963, then-President General James Earl Rudder eliminated some racist and sexist admissions policies and admitted African-Americans and women to Texas A&M.

In 2004, then-President Robert Gates eliminated the use of legacy in admissions. Using legacy in admissions provided preferential treatment for children, grandchildren, or siblings of alumni. Because Texas A&M excluded African Americans from admission until 1963, using legacy in admissions privileged White people for many years. For example, in 2004, the institution's undergraduate student body was 2.3% African American/Black, 3.3% Asian-American, 9% Hispanic/Latinx, and 81.7% White. Fifteen years later, in 2019, Texas A&M's undergraduate students are 3.2% African American/Black, 8.7% Asian-American, 24.8% Hispanic/Latinx, and 58.8% White.

In 1977, Texas A&M's Gay Student Services filed a lawsuit to be recognized as a student organization. In 2008, Texas A&M renamed their Gender Issues and Education Center the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Resource Center. In 2013, student senators brought a proposal to the Student Senate, and called on the Texas A&M administration, to allow students "who object, for religious purposes, to the use of their student fees and tuition to fund this center to opt out of paying an amount equal to their share of the Center's funding from their fee and tuition bills." Student Senate passed the bill, but it was later vetoed by the student body president. Four years later, in 2017, Texas A&M's student body elected Bobby Brooks, their first openly-gay student body president. In 2020, Texas A&M's GLBT Resource Center was renamed the LGBTQ+ Pride Center.

In 2011, Texas A&M hired Kevin Sumlin as the head football coach. Coach Sumlin, Texas A&M's first African American head football coach, led the football team's successful transition to the nation's premier conference, the Southeastern Conference (SEC), and achieved Texas A&M's "most successful five-year span in nearly two decades" (<https://12thman.com/sports/football/roster/coaches/kevin-sumlin/406>).

From 2011 to 2017, Dr. Karan Watson served as the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs becoming Texas A&M's first female provost at A&M. In 2012, Dr. M. Katherine Banks was named Dean of the College of Engineering, the first woman to hold this position. She also serves as vice chancellor for engineering for The Texas A&M University System. In 2016, all of the deans of the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) colleges—Engineering, Sciences, and Geosciences—were women: Dr. M. Katherine Banks, Dr. Meigan Aronson, and Dr. Debbie Thomas, respectively. Additionally, in 2016, Dr. Carrie Byington was hired as Vice Chancellor for Health Services, Dean of the College of Medicine, and Senior Vice President of the Health Science Center. Dr. Byington was the first Mexican-American woman to serve as the dean and senior vice

president for an academic medical center in the United States. In 2020, white women comprise seven of the seventeen deans of the academic colleges of Texas A&M.

In 2015, Dr. Eli Jones was appointed as Dean of Mays Business School: Dr. Jones is the first African American Dean of Mays. In May, 2019, Dr. Mackenzie Alston was the first African American woman to receive a doctorate from the Department of Economics at Texas A&M University. Reflecting on her academic experience, Dr. Alston explained, “I never had a Black economics professor, so if I can get one student of color—or a female—to go into economics, then it will have all been worth it” (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/blog/2019/05/09/first-african-american-woman-to-receive-ph-d-in-economics-this-may/>). Even today, African American students, faculty, staff, and administrators are frequently “firsts” on Texas A&M’s campus, integrating spaces where they are the only one or one of a few.

Safety and Belonging

One of Texas A&M’s deepest traditions are its Aggie Core Values of respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service. Aggies want to be known for their commitment to the success of each other and their strong desire to serve. In 2016, President Michael K. Young explicitly defined the relationship between Texas A&M’s Core Values and diversity and inclusion:

Our Core Values—especially those of respect and leadership—ask of us to rise above our differences, allow for a variety of voices in the conversation, and recognize that genuine respect for one another is essential not just for our personal lives but for our ability to work together effectively. No one in our university community should ever feel disrespected. Let us be the model for active and constructive dialogue. Aggies must lead the way. Teamwork, no matter the size of the team, is hard work. Though the path to cooperation may not always be smooth, we must listen to each other, value each other’s perspectives, and above all respect each other with dignity and honor. (Living Our Core Values, November 10, 2016, <http://president.tamu.edu/messages/living-our-core-values.html>)

In 2017, in response to one of the federal executive order travel bans, President Young acknowledged the concerns of the campus community regarding how the ban impacted students, faculty, and staff from around the world and provided university resources and support. In closing, President Young said:

Finally, and most importantly, we are Aggies united—inclusive of nationality, cultural identity, age, gender identity or expression, physical ability, political ideology, racial and ethnic identity, religious and spiritual identity, sexual orientation, and social and economic status—so please respect each other, stay informed, and support each other as Aggies do! (Response to White House Executive Order Travel Ban, January 30, 2017, <https://president.tamu.edu/messages/response-to-white-house-executive-order-travel-ban.html>)

However, too often, the lived reality of students, faculty, and staff from historically underrepresented groups contrasts starkly with Texas A&M’s Core Values. Hate, bigotry, and sexism can permeate our campus community and damage the sense of safety and belonging for historically excluded and underrepresented people at Texas A&M.

For example, the 2017-2019 *Graduating Senior Survey* results from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Evaluation revealed that 55% of Black/African American respondents, 76% of Hispanic/Latinx respondents, and 83% of White respondents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement: “I feel like I belong at Texas A&M.” For the statement, “Texas A&M is a safe and secure

campus” 47% Black/African American respondents, 65% of Hispanic/Latinx respondents, and 74% of White respondents agreed/strongly agreed. The marked differences by race/ethnicity in the student responses are consistent with trends across faculty and staff responses over many years of campus climate assessments.

Additionally, the Office for Diversity completed an analysis of Texas A&M’s *Stop Hate* reports to develop a comprehensive understanding of the campus occurrences that impact safety and belonging. In 2016, 34 distinct reports were submitted. The most common types of occurrences reported were related to campus speakers and racism. In 2018, 29 distinct reports were filed addressing: white supremacy such as flyers on campus and a swastika mark in a men’s restroom (10 reports); racism (8 reports); homophobia (6 reports); sexual misconduct such as non-consensual touching and comments on a banner (3 reports); and religious intolerance such as anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic sentiment (2 reports). Throughout the *Stop Hate* reports, Texas A&M’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, and Core Values was referenced when incidents at odds with the Texas A&M’s goals and Core Values were reported. In recent years, several highly publicized examples illustrate how racism and hate impact the safety and belonging of students, faculty, and staff in the campus community. (Note: The highly publicized examples were selected to protect the confidentiality of current students, faculty, and staff.)

In 2016, Texas A&M’s NAACP Chapter created the hashtag, #RacismAtTAMUFeelsLike. The hashtag garnered thousands of responses expressing safety concerns, challenges to belonging at A&M, and managing racial slurs, stereotypes, and hateful comments. In 2016, then-Vice-President and Associate Provost for Diversity, Dr. Christine Stanley, responded:

We value and welcome student dialogue about their experiences on campus, and the student NAACP campaign this week is a reminder that we have work to do, to make Texas A&M a place where all Aggies can fully thrive. ... Our president, provost and campus community take seriously our commitment to diversity and inclusion, and we will continue our Diversity Plan efforts to be more accountable, so we can model a campus environment that is welcoming and richer from the diversity among our student body. (Kuhlman, 2016)

Another campus leader, Dr. Daniel Pugh, Vice President for Student Affairs, encouraged students to report any occurrences of discrimination on campus using *Stop Hate*, and stated that he appreciated the leadership of the A&M chapter of the NAACP (Pryce, 2016). Regarding the content of #RacismAtTAMUFeelsLike, Dr. Pugh said, “There’s always an initial shock, and there’s a bit of a gut punch because one has different expectations and higher expectations for our students here. But then the reality sets in ... There’s part of me that’s tremendously saddened by it. It certainly impacts me professionally speaking as well” (Pryce, 2016).

As recently as this year (2020), the social media discussion was still active with some sharing daily occurrences and experiences with racism while others dismissed, criticized, or denied the stories about racism and discrimination occurring in the campus community. In reading the social media posts about racist experiences, Chancellor Sharp issued a statement that read, in part, “I have spent the last few nights reading on social media about the experiences of minority students and their families with racism in our community. It is heartbreaking – and unacceptable.” (Sharp, 2020) Relatedly, on [June 15, 2020](#), President Young announced a 10-point action plan to address campus climate.

In 2017, Bobby Brooks was elected Texas A&M’s first openly-gay student body president. His election came after the disqualification of his competitor, Robert McIntosh, for failure to disclose financial information. Rick Perry, ’72, the 14th Secretary of Energy and former Texas governor,

wrote a lengthy commentary to the *Houston Chronicle* expressing his disdain over Brooks' victory. In his letter, Perry pressed the university to explain why Texas A&M remained "passive while equal treatment was mocked in the name of diversity" (Perry, 2017). Many people, both inside and outside of Texas A&M, found Perry's commentary astounding. Mark Jones, a Rice University political science professor, remarked that College Station campus politics "is certainly not something you expect a cabinet secretary to weigh in on — actually, probably not even a governor" (Ellis & Ward, 2017).

In 2017, Charlene Sumlin, the wife of former football coach Keven Sumlin, posted on Twitter the racist hate mail and death threats that had been sent to their family home. One letter threatened Coach Sumlin to "Please get lost! or else" (Franco, 2017). In a later response, Sumlin revealed that he received "all kinds of mail," causing his family to feel unsafe in their own home (Franco, 2017). Coach Sumlin, Texas A&M's first African American head football coach, and his family left the campus community in 2017.

In 2017, Dr. Tommy Curry, then-Associate Professor of Philosophy at Texas A&M, an African American, and "one of the nation's most prolific philosophers of race, whose research focuses on the Black male experience" (Watson, 2019) received death threats and hate mail after misconstrued comments about interracial violence were taken out of context and reproduced in a conservative news outlet. President Young, in his communication to the campus community, accepted the misconstrued comments and criticized Dr. Curry.

Many Texas A&M students and faculty supported and defended Dr. Curry and criticized President Young and Texas A&M for failing to support Dr. Curry and defend academic freedom (Flaherty, 2017). In 2019, Dr. Curry left Texas A&M. He is the Chair of Africana Philosophy and Black Male Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Dr. Curry explained, "The political climate in the United States has made the study of racism a dangerous option for Black scholars. ... Identifying the violence of White supremacy has now become equated to anti-Whiteness" (Watson, 2019).

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators in Texas A&M's campus community have endured hate-filled videos featuring Texas A&M students, racist performances, homophobic remarks, and social media posts, emails, and letters threatening violence and death. Dr. Joe Feagin, Distinguished Professor in Sociology at Texas A&M, explained why people from majority groups sometimes dismiss, deny, or minimize the intent and impact of hate and racist performances:

Such actions tend to be viewed as harmless and 'no big deal,' indeed often just good interactive 'fun.' This no-big-deal viewpoint prevents most from perceiving how such racialized performances cause substantial harm, and it also links to a common defensiveness. ... When challenged, most [white people] will feel defensive and assert their virtuousness. ... For most [white people], at least some white-racist commentaries and performance are just part of the normality of U.S. society. For that reason, most people do not reflect much on them. (Feagin, 2010, p. 129)

At a predominantly and historically white institution like Texas A&M, the reluctance of some students, faculty, and staff to acknowledge and address racism, discrimination, prejudice, and bigotry perpetuates a campus climate where many people experience isolation, alienation, invisibility, tokenization, silence, and marginalization.

Educational Mission

As an institution of higher learning, what Texas A&M does best is work to inform people's thinking. In this context, pedagogy is one of the most powerful and effective forms of activism. To better prepare our students, faculty, and staff to assume roles of leadership and service, we need to do

better to ensure that everyone in the campus community acquires the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence. Baldwin, Means Coleman, Gonzalez, and Shenoy (2014) explained that “a culturally competent person is able to grasp, identify, and understand the cultural nuances, values, attitudes, and behaviors that a person embodies and is thereby able to make more informed cross-cultural communication choices based on their understanding of those cultural subtleties” (p. 317). To encourage everyone in our campus community to develop *cultural competency*, Texas A&M has made a substantial commitment to providing trainings, seminars, and courses to students, faculty, and staff.

For example, Green Dot bystander intervention training teaches skills for interrupting and preventing personal violence. Additionally, in 2020, the Office for Diversity is introducing anti-discrimination centered bystander intervention training. When this bystander training is available, announcements will be sent to the campus community.

Required training for all Texas A&M employees and student workers includes: Creating a Discrimination Free Workplace/Equal Employment Opportunity (every two years); Ethics (every two years); Reporting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (every four years), and Information Security Awareness (every year). Additionally, for staff and faculty, Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness (HROE) provides certification in the “Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace Program” and “Constructive Communication in the Workplace.” To advance diversity and inclusion, HROE provides instructor-led training, online training, and special request training about developing cultural competence, interpersonal communication skills, preventing sexual harassment, and reducing stereotype threat.

Since 2017, Texas A&M University has been a major sponsor of the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE) and plans to continue to provide substantive support to this important venue. NCORE constitutes the leading, and most comprehensive, national forum on issues of race and ethnicity in American higher education. The conference focuses on the complex task of creating and sustaining comprehensive institutional change designed to improve racial and ethnic relations on campus and to expand opportunities for educational access and success by culturally diverse, traditionally underrepresented populations. At NCORE 2017, over 120 Texas A&M student leaders, faculty, and administrators attended the conference with several leading conference and poster sessions on topics related to accountability, campus climate, and equity. Beginning with NCORE 2017, the Office for Diversity and the Academic Affairs Climate and Diversity Committee (AACDC) implemented a series of campus sessions to bring NCORE presentations back to campus.

In 2019, the Office for Diversity participated in the NCORE 2020 Program Planning Retreat and reviewed conference proposals as well.

The 2019 Enhancing Diversity Seminar Series was designed to engage the campus community in dialogue around topics and issues related to diversity, campus climate, equity, and inclusion. The Office for Diversity invited Texas A&M students, faculty, and staff to present their research to the campus community. Presentations were structured to encourage participants to engage in self-reflection and to interact with peers and the presenter(s). Participants were encouraged to check with their supervisor to determine whether any presentations counted towards specific training and professional development requirements.

The First-Year seminars were piloted in Fall 2019 and are being implemented as zero-credit hour courses that meet weekly with a designated leader who is staff or faculty and a peer mentor. For first-time college students, first-year university-wide experiences are intended to improve retention by increasing each student’s sense of belonging on campus. For Texas A&M students, as a result of participating in First Year Seminars, students will: (1) have an increased awareness of campus

resources; (2) develop the skills to achieve personal and academic goals; and (3) contribute to a diverse and inclusive environment.

To create a university-wide experience, all seminars address eight themes: physical and mental well-being; alcohol and other drugs; academic success strategies and resources; healthy relationships and bystander interventions; diversity/cultural competence; social and financial well-being; self-awareness/resilience/goal-setting; and career/major exploration. Faculty, staff, and peer mentors deliver the content after being trained by the content development teams and the Office for Student Success.

The College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (CVM) provides examples of how training is integrated in student learning. Education and training in inclusion, diversity, and professionalism happens in the undergraduate biomedical sciences program (BIMS) and graduate level new student orientations. The BIMS program also offers an International Certificate in Cultural Competency and Communication in Spanish.

The College of Liberal Arts, College of Architecture and Department of Multicultural Services created a Diversity Certificate Program for Texas A&M University. Drawing from existing courses, programs and associations within the university, the Diversity Certificate Program enables its students to create, synthesize, and integrate academic coursework, co-curricular experience, and service-learning engagement in order to demonstrate their preparedness for participation in the modern global economy.

In 2018, the Department of Multicultural Services in the Division of Student Affairs hosted the first TAMU Race, Identity & Social Equity Conference (TAMU RISE). Modeled after the Iowa State Conference on Race & Ethnicity (ISCORE), the Texas A&M's Race, Identity & Social Equity (RISE) Initiative is a year-long program that provides students with a better understanding of race, identity, and social equity in higher education. RISE includes an annual conference, and a fellowship opportunity which allows selected student leaders to attend the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE), conduct research during the fall semester, and present findings to the campus community at the RISE Conference.

In summary, Texas A&M University's primary concern must be for the physical and psychological well-being of current students, faculty, and staff. Dealing with bias, discrimination, isolation, and hate takes a toll on mental, emotional, and physical health. Especially in recent times, the State of Texas and the nation have experienced mass shootings spurred on by racism, police violence (resulting in a global social movement for change) hate, and white supremacy, and many members of our community have felt concern for their well-being. Through the improvement of campus climate, accessibility, and equity, Texas A&M can provide our students, faculty, and staff with an inclusive, equitable, and diverse environment in which to study and work. It is imperative for the safety and welfare of our campus community that Texas A&M recognize that racism and hate are current, systemic issues and not isolated incidents attributable to a few individuals.

Equity

Equity: *Articulate procedures to ensure that students, staff, and faculty, regardless of identity, are treated equitably.* (From the 2010 University Diversity Plan, Page 2)

The 2010 University Diversity Plan charged the Office for Diversity to collaborate with Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness, the Office of the Dean of Faculties, the Division of Student Affairs, and the colleges and administrative units to identify and eliminate evidence-supported patterns of inequity. Specifically, units were asked to identify processes, policies, and procedures that may prevent achievement for certain groups with special attention to the retention, compensation, award and reward trends, performance measures, and advancement of women and ethnic/racial minorities.

One persistent challenge in assessing equity has been in expanding the scope of equity beyond faculty and staff salaries. The annual *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* prompted units to address a range of equity issues, including *advancement, promotion, professional development, salary, access to training and development, student leadership development, start-up packages, leadership succession planning, and professional visibility*. For example, Vaid and Geraci (2016) undertook a detailed analysis of women’s professional visibility in psychology and found that inequity in markers of visibility were evident, particularly in the senior faculty ranks. Similarly, Bazner, Vaid, and Stanley (2017) have examined how race is marked in the social construction of named awards of professional societies in higher education. Specifically, in the field of education, most of the named awards across four major professional societies are named after white men, with only a handful named after minoritized individuals (Bazner et al., 2017).

Improving the structural diversity of Texas A&M is imperative to addressing equity issues and advancing our institutional mission. As a land-grant university, Texas A&M’s students, faculty, and staff should be representative of the demographic diversity of the State of Texas. To be representative of Texas’ population by race/ethnicity, Texas A&M’s population would need to be at least 13% Black/African American as opposed to its current 3% Black/African American and 49% Hispanic/Latinx as opposed to its current 24% Hispanic/Latinx. Furthermore, to be designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), Texas A&M must meet and maintain an enrollment of at least 25%, full-time undergraduate students who are Hispanic/Latinx.

In 2019, Provost Carol Fierke increased first-year retention goals from 92% to 95%; four-year graduation rate goals from 56% to 65%; and six-year graduate rate goals from 82% to 85%. To address the disparities in our student success rate so that persistence and graduation are realistic goals for every student, Texas A&M is working to decrease achievement disparities across ethnicity, first-generation college student status, gender, and socioeconomic status.

Structural Diversity

Texas A&M University’s mission is to welcome and serve people “of all racial, ethnic and geographic groups as it addresses the needs of an increasingly diverse population and a global economy” (<http://www.tamu.edu/statements/mission.html>). As a land-grant university, Texas A&M’s students, faculty, and staff should be representative of the demographic diversity of the State of Texas.

Table 2 illustrates that, over the years, there have been increases in the numbers of students from some historically underrepresented groups. However, Table 3 shows that, in 2018, the numbers of historically underrepresented students and faculty continued to be small and not representative of high school graduates of the State of Texas. Note: The columns in Tables 2 and 3 do not equal 100% due to missing data.

Table 2. Fall 2015-2019 Demographics for Graduate, Undergraduate, and Professional Students

Race/ethnicity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Asian	6%	6%	7%	8%	8%
Black, African American, Multi-racial with Black	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%
Hispanic or Latinx	19%	20%	21%	21%	22%
White	59%	58%	57%	56%	55%
International	9%	9%	9%	9%	8%
Total	64,436	66,323	68,603	69,367	69,465

Data sources: Texas A&M student data were retrieved on 01/11/20 from the Accountability website (accountability.tamu.edu).

Using Texas A&M's institutional demographic data for international students, faculty, and staff in a meaningful way proves to be complicated. For example, international faculty are reported in the race/ethnicity categories: Asian, Black, Hispanic, White, etc. For students, all international students are included in the single category 'International,' thereby making it challenging to interpret data about their experiences at Texas A&M. To better understand the experiences of international students, faculty, and staff, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation (OIE&E), the Department of Student Life Studies, and the Office for Diversity are experimenting with using variables such as country of origin on the 2020 campus climate assessments.

Table 3. Fall 2018 Demographics by Ethnicity/Race for Faculty and Students Compared to 2017 Texas High School Graduates

Race/ethnicity	Faculty	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students	Professional Students	Texas High School Graduates
Asian	19%	8%	4%	21%	4%
Black or African American	3%	3%	4%	5%	13%
Hispanic or Latinx	7%	24%	10%	19%	49%
White	70%	60%	40%	51%	32%
Total	3,235	54,369	12,364	2,537	323,373

Data sources: Texas A&M student data were retrieved on 05/19/19 from the Accountability website (accountability.tamu.edu). Faculty data were retrieved on 04/14/19 from Business Objects Warehouse. The Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity for Texas Public Schools, Class of 2017, was retrieved on 05/19/19 from the Texas Education Agency website (https://rptsrv1.tea.texas.gov/acctres/completion/2017/state_demo.html).

Additionally, Texas A&M's colleges and administrative units have reported persistent challenges and disparities in recruiting and retaining historically underrepresented student groups. Table 4 illustrates the gaps in our student success rate. Texas A&M is committed to closing the gaps in our student success rate so that academic success and graduation are realistic goals for every student.

Table 4. University-wide Retention and Graduation Data for Undergraduate Students

Race/ethnicity	Retention	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Asian	Headcount	664	893	868	969	1,170
	1st year retention	89%	90%	91%	94%	94%
	4-year graduation	54%	57%			
Black, African American, Multi-racial with Black	Headcount	459	517	530	528	490
	1st year retention	84%	90%	87%	87%	83%
	4-year graduation	48%	50%			
Hispanic or Latinx	Headcount	2,873	3,804	3,246	3,176	3,117
	1st year retention	86%	86%	87%	90%	89%
	4-year graduation	54%	55%			
White	Headcount	9,276	8,595	8,300	8,652	8,367
	1st year retention	94%	94%	92%	92%	92%
	4-year graduation	64%	63%			

Data source: Texas A&M student retention and graduation data were retrieved on 05/19/19 from the Accountability website (accountability.tamu.edu).

Texas A&M's disparities in student success and representation of historically underrepresented groups of students, faculty, and staff may be attributable to systemic, racist, and discriminatory practices in higher education and society. Harper and Simmons (2019) posit:

Inequities are not fully explained by forces external to a college campus. There are numerous factors and conditions within it that determine who gets admitted, how they are treated once they matriculate, the inclusiveness of their learning environments, the cultural relevance of what they are taught, the racial diversity of their professors, and their likelihood for personal wellness and academic success. ... faculty members and leaders on too many campuses are bad stewards of the public good, at least as it pertains to Black students. Instead of asking, 'why are Black undergraduates doing so poorly at public institutions,' we encourage readers to question why public colleges and universities do so poorly at enrolling and graduating Black students; ensuring gender equity among them; and affording them greater, more reasonable access to same-race faculty members. (p. 6)

Campus climate, safety, and belonging impact student, faculty, and staff recruiting, retention, and success. Existing literature demonstrates that increasing the demographic diversity of predominantly white universities is an important step toward improving the overall campus climate. Increasing diversity is a tangible representation of the level of institutional commitment to diversity and directly influences a sense of belonging among historically underrepresented students and faculty (Hernandez & Lopez, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007).

Student Recruitment and Retention

To recruit students, examples of national strategic partnerships and economic-conscious scholarships include Texas A&M University's partnership with the Gates and Gates Millennium Scholars. Texas A&M has a pool of scholarships. For example, the Century Scholars Program is a partnership between Texas A&M University and 110 Texas high schools to enroll and retain top students from each school. This program provides both scholarship funds and access to a four-year learning community which strives to help students develop during their time in college. Each scholarship includes a one-time \$1000 scholarship to be used for a Texas A&M approved study abroad experience. In 2019, Texas A&M discontinued the partnership with POSSE Atlanta and launched a partnership with POSSE Houston. POSSE is a highly competitive national scholarship that facilitates individual and community development through faculty mentoring and small group interactions.

Many of the colleges have memoranda of understanding (MOU) with partner system institutions with underrepresented and/or first-generation student populations with geographic diversity. For example, the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (CVM) is one of only two Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) programs in the country offering undergraduate, graduate, and professional (DVM) degrees. The Biomedical Sciences (BIMS) undergraduate program is the largest degree-granting undergraduate program at the university. BIMS added new 2+2 community college agreements in 2018 (current total of 15) to increase the pipeline of URM and first-generation students, as well as two more agreements in 2019.

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (COALS) has three full-time undergraduate recruiters covering the cities yielding most of our students: Houston/College Station, Dallas/Ft. Worth, and San Antonio/Austin. The objective behind the selection of these metropolitan areas and the facilitation of strategic recruiting programs is to show urban high school students that the College offers majors that serve more than just rural students who have been active in traditional agricultural programs such as 4-H and Future Farmers of American (FFA). Innovative recruiting programs for high school students like Summer Training in Agriculture and Related Sciences (STARS), Hunger Summits, and World Food Prize Youth Institute are purposely held at high schools that are not thought of as traditional pipelines for the College. Additionally, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences increased scholarship funding by 23% in FY18 and 12% in FY19 (over FY17 levels) for undergraduate students and is expected to allow more first-generation students and students of low socio-economic status to receive funding through degree completion.

The College of Architecture's Office of Student Services houses academic advisors, recruiting staff, and administrative staff. Recruiting staff has visited the Rio Grande Valley, major Texas cities, Baltimore-MD, Atlanta-GA, and Washington-DC. Recruiting staff also work with A&M Prospective Students Centers and are joined by staff and/or faculty from the College's departments. For example, the Department of Construction Science (COSC) has hosted a series of six five-day Construction Management Academy Career Exploration Programs for high school students from five strategically chosen Texas locations. The COSC Industry Advisory Council has offered first-generation students a scholarship as a recruitment incentive. The Department of Visualization (VIZ) also hosts summer camps with scholarships for historically underrepresented people to attract qualified high school students.

The College of Medicine (COM), the College of Nursing, and the College of Pharmacy all use holistic review in admissions to increase the number of underrepresented in medicine (URM) students. COM also has multiple pipeline programs that serve students from historically underrepresented backgrounds. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board recently funded a \$150,000 grant to establish a program called the Aggie Doctor Initiative which creates two new pipeline programs for African American/Black and Hispanic/Latinx students from Texas A&M to become part of COM.

The College of Geosciences flagship program for recruiting undergraduates is GeoX. GeoX is an intensive, on-campus experience intended to build awareness and interest in the geosciences. In 2018, Geosciences doubled the number of participants from 30 to 60, something they plan to continue in 2019. Over the past two years, at least a quarter of the students have self-identify as underrepresented minorities (URM) and half are women. The success of this program is evinced by the high rates of application to Geosciences.

The College of Liberal Arts is offering 100% need-based scholarships to undergraduate students to support those from lower income groups who would like to attend college.

The College of Engineering is actively working towards its goals through significant investments in student support programs such as Women in Engineering and First-Generation Student Mentors, Engineering Honors, and the Engineering Village Living Learning Community. Academic services that include supplemental instruction, peer tutoring, and peer teachers have also been expanded. Furthermore, first year engineering students reside in the Engineering Living and Learning Community (ELLC). The students in the ELLC program have obtained 81% first year retention overall, including 76% for women and 78% for Hispanic/Latinx and African American students. Undergraduate retention continues to be a high priority for the College of Engineering. The college is working towards retention and graduation goals of 90% of the students retained in engineering after year one, and 82% of students retained in engineering after year two. Based on analyses of retention data for entry cohorts between 2007 and 2017 disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and first-generation status, progress is being made; first-year retention is 84%, up from 73%, and second-year retention is 71%, up from 64%.

The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) offers Graduate Diversity Fellowships to prepare students from historically underrepresented groups for careers as faculty members. OGAPS supports the development of high-achieving scholars who show promise for distinguished careers; whose life, research experiences, and/or employment background will significantly contribute to academic excellence at Texas A&M; and who will maximize the educational benefits of diversity for all students. The evaluation criteria for receiving a fellowship include, but are not limited to the following: “A nominee may be from minority groups that historically have been underrepresented at Texas A&M and/or in their profession; may be first generation college graduates (neither parent earned a bachelor’s degree); or may be persons with disabilities or veterans. This list is not meant to be exhaustive” (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu/Buttons/Funding-opportunities/Graduate-Diversity-Fellowships.aspx>).

Student Success Initiative

Texas A&M recognizes the need to close the gaps in our student success rate so that persistence and graduation are realistic goals for every student. In 2019, Provost Carol Fierke increased first-year retention goals from 92% to 95%; four-year graduation rate goals from 56% to 65%; and six-year graduate rate goals from 82% to 85%. Additionally, Texas A&M is working to decrease achievement disparities across ethnicity, first-generation college student status, gender, and socioeconomic status.

Preliminary results for the Student Success Initiative are promising. In an email message on November 13, 2019, Provost Fierke shared that “four-year graduation rate for first-generation students grew by more than four percentage points, from 50.3% to 54.5%, and first-year retention increased from 86% to 88%. The first-year retention rate for students from families earning less than \$60,000 annually grew from 86% to 89%, while the four-year graduation rate increased by more than four percentage points, from 50.2% to 54.4%” (Fierke, 2019).

Faculty Recruitment and Retention

One way to decrease achievement disparities and increase student success is to recruit and retain faculty that represent our current and future students. Faculty play a crucial role in academic and personal student success. The positive impacts of consistent student-faculty interactions and faculty mentorship have been well-documented, and can result in higher likelihood of graduation, and higher levels of academic achievement and involvement in campus groups and activities. These impacts are particularly pronounced among demographically similar faculty and students—i.e. racial and ethnic minority faculty and students and female faculty and students (Hernandez & Lopez, 2004).

Carter-Sowell et al. (2019) recognized the impact of student demands for representative faculty and curriculum:

A lack of racial diversity in the professoriate is not new. What is new is that there is increasing pressure on universities to do something about it. College students are increasingly from racially diverse backgrounds and want to see a more representative curriculum and a professoriate that looks more like them. Partly in response to student demands, universities are beginning to institute practices aimed at developing a more diverse pool of faculty applicants. (p. 306)

In 2017, a student-led group called TAMU Anti-Racism asked the institution to offer anti-racism classes. Texas A&M developed 3-hour Cultural Discourse (CD) classes to be implemented in the Fall of 2019 (Snell, 2017). The goals of these classes included: holding respectful discussions on difficult topics; understanding self, including personal bias and prejudices; and understanding how to function effectively in a multicultural and global society.

Additionally, Texas A&M has an International and Cultural Diversity (ICD) course requirement. The learning outcomes of the ICD courses are: Live and work effectively in a diverse and global society; articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective; and recognize diverse opinions and practices and consider different points of view. The CD and ICD classes satisfy a graduation requirement established by Texas A&M's Faculty Senate. Classes about race, ethnicity, and anti-racism can contribute to a representative and inclusive curriculum, improve the campus climate, help with recruiting and retaining historically underrepresented students and faculty.

In 2018, the Office for Diversity, in partnership with the College of Liberal Arts, launched the Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program. In recognition of Texas A&M University's *Diversity Plan*, the ACES Fellows Program promotes the research, teaching, and scholarship of early career scholars with strength in, and evidence of, respect for diversity and inclusion. The ACES Fellows are hired for a two-year period as Visiting Assistant Professors with the expectation that they will transition seamlessly into tenure-track positions.

In the Fall of 2018, the pilot year of the program, over 130 applications were submitted by candidates advancing outstanding scholarship with relevant disciplinary units in the College of Liberal Arts. After a rigorous review of the applications by the Office for Diversity and the departments in the College of Liberal Arts, four applicants were selected for campus interviews and offers were extended to all four. All the finalists were hired, and joined the departments of Anthropology, Communication, English, and Sociology in Fall 2019.

In 2019, ACES was expanded to include the College of Education and Human Development, as well as the College of Liberal Arts. Improvements implemented in the second year of the program included the increase of the stipends for the ACES Fellows from \$56,000 a year to \$60,000, and the opening of the application process in May, to be competitive with other post-doctoral programs at

other institutions. As of December 2019, 435 applications had been submitted to the ACES program proving that Texas A&M can attract promising, diverse early career faculty.

Plans for expanding the ACES Fellows program are being implemented strategically. In 2020, the College of Geosciences and the Bush School of Government and Public Service joined the ACES Program alongside the College of Education and Human Development and the College of Liberal Arts. Hiring scholars for disciplines such as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) where start-up and laboratory funding could reasonably exceed the entire budget currently allocated for ACES, is being carefully assessed. Additionally, the program could be expanded to Galveston, Qatar, Kingsville, Dallas, and Ft. Worth; however, the decision was made to initially prioritize the College Station campus to better understand the challenges and implications of the ACES Fellows program.

One notable example of a commitment to addressing equity through developing and retaining faculty was the establishment of Texas A&M's ADVANCE Center. In 2010, Texas A&M University received a \$3.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to establish the ADVANCE Center. Since then, this Center has been dedicated to developing systemic approaches to increase the representation and advancement of women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields.

From the beginning, the ADVANCE Center has been an interdisciplinary collaboration spanning the colleges of Science, Engineering, Geosciences, Liberal Arts, and the Bush School of Government and Public Service. The goals of the ADVANCE Center have been to double the percentage of tenured women faculty in STEM disciplines at Texas A&M by 2015 and to increase the number and diversity of women STEM faculty at all levels across the university. In 2017, Texas A&M University initiated the process of institutionalizing ADVANCE. From 2017-2019, several programs and activities were continued at Texas A&M, primarily under the direction of the Office of the Dean of Faculties. In 2019, Texas A&M appointed Dr. Cynthia Werner as the Director of ADVANCE. Under her leadership, ADVANCE will remain in the Office for the Dean of Faculties in partnership with the Office for Diversity.

The Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence (STRIDE) Program provides search committee members with specific strategies intended to reduce implicit bias during faculty searches. STRIDE was developed as a joint effort between the Dean of Faculties Office and ADVANCE. Beginning in 2019, STRIDE workshops are required for all faculty search committee members (with the exception of those individuals who have completed any search committee training program within the past two years). Additionally, ADVANCE has assembled the 2019-2021 STRIDE Committee comprised of 14 faculty representing a wide range of disciplines in colleges.

Since 2012, the Office of the Dean of Faculties and the ADVANCE Center have sponsored annual faculty salary studies. The purpose of these studies is to determine salary differences between male and female tenured and tenure-track faculty. Variables such as rank/title, age, race/ethnicity, and years of service are included. The salary equity studies have been used to determine "whether or not there were any systematic differences by race/ethnicity or national origin, and to identify individuals whose actual salaries were unusually high or unusually low, given the predictions of the salary model" (Taylor & Froyd, 2015). In the annual *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports*, several colleges and departments reported making salary equity adjustments.

In 2018, the Office for Diversity, Dean of Faculties, and Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President collaborated to secure an institutional subscription to the National Center on Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD) (<https://www.facultydiversity.org/institutions/tamu>). The NCFDD is a service dedicated to faculty reaching their career milestones, and it is designed to help

improve the retention of diverse faculty by providing professional development such as writing support, mediation, and conflict management. Participation in NCFDD is available to Texas A&M graduate students and faculty.

The ADVANCE Scholars Program is a faculty mentoring program designed to promote and advance the success of tenure-track faculty who have been historically underrepresented at Texas A&M University and in higher education. The mentoring team for the ADVANCE Scholars Program is comprised of three members: the ADVANCE Scholar themselves, an Internal Advocate, and an External Mentor.

This Program is anchored in Texas A&M's Aggie Core Values that continuously challenge the university community to embrace, value, and integrate diversity and inclusion as the roadmap to achieving academic and institutional excellence. As such, the ADVANCE Scholars Program is a key component of the institution's efforts to support the recruitment, retention, and professional success of its faculty. Through systemic approaches to increasing their professional advancement, this Program contributes to the development of an exceptional and more diverse faculty.

The origins of the ADVANCE Scholars program date back to 2011. In 2011, the purpose of the ADVANCE Scholars Program was to promote and advance the success of Texas A&M University's women faculty of color in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). In 2015, the program expanded to include women from non-STEM fields. Since the first cohort in 2011, 40 women faculty of color at Texas A&M have participated in the program. Carter-Sowell, et al. (2019) completed a comprehensive evaluation of the 2011-2017 ADVANCE Scholars Program and concluded that it "was beneficial for early career women faculty of color at the university, providing invaluable support professionally and personally that contributed to a strong record that led to promotion and greater professional visibility" (p. 321).

In 2019, the Office for Diversity re-launched the ADVANCE Scholars Program and included faculty who are in years 1-3 (i.e., prior to third-year review) of their tenure-track position and self-identify as first-generation college graduates and/or early career tenure-track faculty from historically underrepresented groups in academia at Texas A&M University. ADVANCE Scholars have personal access to one-on-one executive coaching with a focus on developing strategies for career success, leadership skills, and the exploration of individual/professional needs for growth in the academic environment. To build a professional network, ADVANCE Scholars engage with their internal advocate and an external eminent scholar mentor

Staff Recruiting and Retention

Since 2016, the Office for Diversity has identified a concerning trend regarding how often Texas A&M staff are excluded or overlooked from recruiting and retention strategies. Frequently, *Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* and presentations are missing staff demographics and/or provide a limited number of initiatives designed to increase diversity among staff in recruitment, retention, climate, and equity. This pattern is particularly troubling considering Texas A&M's staff are frequently the first people in the Texas A&M community to intervene during crisis, investigate and determine sanctions for student conduct violations, advise students academically and in their student organizations, and supervise students employed on campus.

The Office for Diversity provides one example of how integral staff are to Texas A&M's academic mission and student success. The staff in the Office for Diversity have taken very seriously the Provost's remarks that staff are central to student success and have established the Office for Diversity Learning Community (ODLC). The ODLC consists of a cohort of five diverse undergraduate and graduate students. The students' professional development and undergraduate

research projects are supervised by staff working very closely with the student employees to develop their written and oral communication skills, comportment, work ethic, and networking skills.

Demonstrations of staff recruiting and retention efforts were collected from the *2018 Diversity Plan Accountability Reports* from the Division of Finance and Operations (DFO), the Division of Academic Affairs (DAA), the Division of Student Affairs (DSA), and Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness (HROE). The examples of staff recruiting and retention strategies provided are not intended to be an exhaustive or comprehensive list of the Texas A&M University's efforts. Only a few examples are included to illustrate some of the compelling work that staff and administrators are engaged in across our campuses, departments, colleges, and administrative units.

For example, the Division of Finance and Operations (DFO) identified two major challenges to staff recruiting and retention:

- Many of our staff have competitive local job markets (police, environmental health and safety, and utilities technicians) that allow them to change employment without relocation.
- In some areas within DFO, the lack of well-defined promotion and career ladders has led to some dissatisfaction and lack of upward mobility. In many areas where these opportunities exist, neither central nor departmental funds are available for monetary recognition.

Additionally, Utilities & Energy Services, one of DFO's large departments with 209 employees, collaborated with HROE and conducted "Stay Interviews" as a method of identifying favorable aspects of their workplace as well as opportunities for improvement.

The Division of Academic Affairs (DAA) reviewed hiring files from 2013 and determined that 43% of DAA's notice of vacancies (NOVs) were open for two weeks or less (suggesting internal candidate preference). Hiring supervisors did not regularly identify diversity-focused skills in NOVs or hiring matrices nor ask about such skills/experience in interview/reference check questions. After interventions with supervisors, a second hiring process review using 2016 data noted improvements, and, as a result, the Provost approved centralized screening of future vacancy postings for inclusion of these components and hiring supervisor outreach on these and related issues.

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) advertises vacant positions in diverse outlets and publications. Funding has been provided to assist departments with advertisement in spaces not traditionally utilized for recruiting diverse applicant pools. To better aid in the recruitment of potential candidates, DSA units adopted new business practices to assist with consistency and intentionality in recruiting diverse applicant pools. In 2018, pre- and post-hiring forms and diversity, equity, and inclusion questions were integrated into the hiring process. Finally, the DSA 2.0 committee is researching the utility of the Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence (STRIDE) Program and Oregon State's Search Advocate program for training DSA search committees.

The Division of Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness (HROE) plays a vital role in acquiring and developing diverse talent across Texas A&M University. In 2018, HROE planned to form an internal task force to research and recommend effective and inclusive hiring practices with the goal of piloting recommendations within HROE. Based on the outcome of the pilot, recommended practices will be shared with the broader University community. In addition, HROE

leadership has been participating in *Workshops for Faculty Recruitment for Diversity and Excellence* offered by the STRIDE Committee as well as the Dean of Faculties Search Committee Workshops in an effort to align staff recruitment information and guidance with that being provided for faculty hiring, as applicable.

HROE depends on the Culture, Awareness, Respect, and Equity (C.A.R.E.) Council to provide educational opportunities to advance the goal of inclusive recruitment. In 2018, HROE identified implicit bias as a potential barrier to diverse and inclusive recruitment outcomes. The group committed to implementing a foundational focus to help Division employees understand what implicit bias is and how it may play a role in decision-making. As a result, the C.A.R.E Council hosted two viewings of a webinar titled, "*Identifying and Removing Microaggressions*," offering it at various times/dates to maximize employee participation. They are also evaluating the trainings using pre- and post-event surveys to assess the effectiveness of the trainings.

HROE strives to retain employees within the Division and minimize voluntary departures. In reviewing turnover data for 2017 and 2018, the total number of departures were higher than in the two prior years. The data indicate that 7 of the 11 terminations in 2017 were retirements, likely influenced by the voluntary staff separation program. In 2018, 4 of 9 terminations were retirements. Turnover is not uncommon in the year following a leadership change; however, HROE leadership is cognizant of the turnover totals and is conducting additional analysis of the data by demographics and exploring retention strategies.

We Can Do Better

2020 has emerged as a year of reflection and planning for Texas A&M University. The *2010 Diversity Plan* is 10 years old and *Vision 2020*, Texas A&M's strategic plan launched in 1999, has matured. *Vision 2020* provided Texas A&M with a clear direction for diversity and inclusion. Specifically, *Vision 2020* stated that Texas A&M "must be a leader in promoting diversity in its student body, faculty, staff, and intellectual viewpoints. Affording opportunity to all racial and ethnic groups is critical to the future of Texas" (*Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence*, p. 43). In 2019, the Office of the Provost held public forums providing students, faculty, and staff the opportunity to contribute to and inform Texas A&M's next vision statement and strategic plan (Gafford-Gaby, 2019). In academic year 2020-21, with the guidance of the university and community, the Office for Diversity will update the *2010 Diversity Plan* and launch Texas A&M's *2020 University Diversity Plan*.

Receiving a 2019 HEED Award holds Texas A&M to a still higher standard of accountability to our campus communities. Completing the HEED Award application provides the institution with an opportunity to further reflect on challenges, identify new goals, and celebrate the institution's ongoing progress towards diversity and inclusion. While there are measurable benefits when diversity and inclusion advance an institution's mission and values, there are real consequences for getting diversity and inclusion "wrong," as it might hurt people and damage enrollment, donor-giving, recruitment, and retention.

Many universities can provide cautionary tales about the consequences of superficial, disproportionate responses to racism, discrimination, and hate. For example, in 2015, University of Missouri student protests citing "official inaction in the face of racial bigotry ... forced the university system president and the campus chancellor to resign" (Hartocollis, 2017). Cohen (2015) explained that for students, faculty, and staff at that institution:

The issues of racism are not simply the overt racists who scrawl things on walls in the dead of night or shout epithets from the anonymous safety of a passing car, but the layers of inequities that constitute the hidden, covert, and institutional racism that pile up and get institutionalized in systems and reflected in the clueless reactions and behavior of university administrators like those at Missouri.

Two years after the protests, in 2017, University of Missouri's freshman enrollment decreased by more than 35%. University leadership attributes the decline in enrollments to the events of 2015.

In November 2019, Syracuse University administrators were criticized for their responses to hate and racism on their campus and the governor of New York stepped in to intervene (Brown, 2019). Current students faulted administration for describing racist graffiti and racial slurs as "bias incidents" as opposed to being explicit that the events were racist and anti-Semitic (Patel, 2019). Syracuse University's administrators "have simply lost credibility for giving regular lip service about valuing diversity and inclusion while doing little to put those words into tangible action" (Anderson, 2019). Syracuse University's communications with the campus community have raised concerns about safety and belonging for prospective students and their parents (Patel, 2019).

Additionally, Syracuse University recently scaled back its involvement in POSSE Leadership Scholarship programs, recruiting and retention programs for high-achieving minority students. Reducing engagement with POSSE "left some people with the impression that the university is not

dedicated to recruiting students from diverse backgrounds” (Anderson, 2019). Between failing to communicate candidly during a crisis and reducing the institution’s commitment to well-known, established programs for minority students such as the Posse Foundation, some of Syracuse’s donors are deciding to suspend their giving to the university (Anderson, 2019).

Texas A&M shares some similarities with the University of Missouri and Syracuse University. Specifically, in 2019, Texas A&M downsized its partnership with the POSSE Foundation. And, in 2016, historically underrepresented students addressed the Student Senate urging student leadership to engage in resolving racism and campus climate issues (King, 2016). Furthermore, students criticized Texas A&M’s administration for referring to racist acts as *incidents*. The word *incidents* is problematic because, as King (2016) explains, “*incident* implies occasional, it implies the defense of ‘A few bad apples’ mentality. The thing is, the ‘incident’ is really an everyday living reality, social reality for many students of color on campus. These ‘incidents’ happen every day” (King, 2016). Indeed, in 2020, the university was again embroiled in controversy as hate speech offered up by some members of our community surged on social media. Racism, hate speech, safety, and belonging issues are evidence of systemic, cultural problems that are enduring trends at Texas A&M.

Communicating Texas A&M’s commitment to diversity and inclusion needs to be candid, authentic, and action-oriented. In 2018, the institution’s commitment to diversity and inclusion was evident in 48% (13 out of 27) of President Young’s messages to the campus community. The content of the President’s messages included updates on procedures for reporting sexual assault on campus; recognition of student, faculty, and staff accomplishments; and addressing campus occurrences that were racist, sexist, or discriminatory. In 2019, President Young recorded a video for New Student Conferences addressing how diversity and inclusion are embedded in Texas A&M’s Core Values and reinforcing civility and respect in the campus discourse. The first half of 2020 has seen President Young issue statements on the murder of George Floyd, protests regarding the presence of the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, former president of A&M and member of the Confederacy, and on racist behaviors seen on our campus. Authentic, candid, and timely communication, especially during crises, is characterized by the provision of action plans and resources to support the campus community and by the explicitly acknowledgment of the nature of events that are racist and discriminatory.

As a public land-grant university, we have the responsibility to be good stewards of resources. Allocating funding, space, and people to address the following issues has the potential to advance Texas A&M’s 2010 Diversity Plan goals of *accountability*, *campus climate*, and *equity* goals:

1. *Engage campus leadership (accountability)*: Campus leadership must be committed, in practice and publicly, to promoting and advancing diversity, inclusion, and equity. Engaged leadership participate in campus forums and seminars; keep abreast of the latest diversity literature; promptly and candidly respond to occurrences of discrimination, harassment, and hate; follow-up with actions and updates to the campus and the community; and recognize and reward commitment and progress towards diversity and inclusion. Additionally, engaged leaders ensure that policies, operations, procedures, and plans are pursued with careful attention to their impact on diversity, inclusion, accessibility, campus climate, and equity.
2. *Address safety, well-being, and sense of belonging (campus climate)*: Texas A&M University’s primary concern must be for the physical safety and psychological well-being of current students, faculty, and staff. Enduring racism, bias, discrimination, isolation, and hate takes a toll on mental and physical health. For people from groups who have been historically excluded and marginalized at Texas A&M, a sense of belonging positively impacts achievement, success, and retention (Strayhorn, 2019). By

improving campus climate, accessibility, and equity, Texas A&M can provide our students, faculty and staff with a safe and inclusive environment in which to work and study.

3. *Improve structural diversity (equity)*: As a land-grant university, Texas A&M's students, faculty, and staff should be representative of the demographic diversity of the State of Texas. To be representative of Texas' population by race/ethnicity, Texas A&M's population would need to be at least 13% Black/African American as opposed to its current 3% Black/African American and 49% Hispanic/Latinx as opposed to its current 24% Hispanic/Latinx. Furthermore, to be designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), Texas A&M must meet and maintain an enrollment of at least 25%, full-time undergraduate students who are Hispanic/Latinx.
4. *Improve student success (equity)*: In 2019, Provost Carol Fierke increased first-year retention goals from 92% to 95%; four-year graduation rate goals from 56% to 65%; and six-year graduate rate goals from 82% to 85%. To address the disparities in our student success rate so that persistence and graduation are realistic goals for every student, Texas A&M is working to decrease achievement disparities across ethnicity, first-generation college student status, gender, and socioeconomic status.

While we advance our diversity and inclusion goals, we need to dismantle systemic racism to advance Texas A&M's land-grant mission. DiAngelo (2018) explains:

The default of the current system is the reproduction of racial inequality, our institutions were designed to reproduce racial inequality and they do so with efficiency. Our schools are particularly effective at this task. To continue reproducing racial inequality, the system only needs white people to be really nice and carry on, smile at people of color, be friendly across race, and go to lunch together on occasion. I am not saying that you shouldn't be nice. I suppose it's better than being mean. But niceness is not courageous. Niceness will not get racism on the table and will not keep it on the table when everyone wants it off. In fact, bringing racism to white people's attention is often seen as not nice.... Interrupting racism takes courage and intentionality; the interruption is by definition not passive or complacent. (p. iv)

The Office for Diversity is here to help. On our website, diversity.tamu.edu, we provide programs and resources about how to develop the knowledge and skills to be an effective advocate for diversity and inclusion while resisting racism, discrimination, and hate. Texas A&M's [2010 University Diversity Plan](#) includes everyone in the shared responsibility of creating a culture where people are treated equitably in a campus climate that fosters success and achievement. By providing students, faculty, and staff with the knowledge and skills to interrupt racism, bigotry, and discrimination, perhaps we can live up to our Core Values of respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service. As we value respect, we must be certain that our behaviors exemplify respect in every way, all of the time.

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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

JOHN L. JUNKINS
Interim President

May 27, 2021

Dear Faculty, Staff, Students and the Aggie Network:

The attached status report was submitted to Chancellor Sharp, and to The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents (BoR) via Chancellor Sharp. The briefing summarizes progress to date on BoR-approved actions on January 25, 2021 to establish a four-year plan to increase diversity of our student body, faculty, and staff, as well as to address a number of other important issues.

The Chancellor has approved release of this document with the understanding that the designs recommended for Academic Plaza and other campus sites are preliminary conceptual designs only, a starting point for final architectural designs that we anticipate will be underway in the near future.

I am excited to report that the six teams (consisting of 56 faculty, staff, students and advisors) have worked tirelessly this spring. As I complete my tenure as interim president on May 31, I am confident that the four-year project they have initiated this spring will lead to very substantial and important enhancements of this university we love so much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'John L. Junkins'.

John L. Junkins



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

JOHN L. JUNKINS
Interim President

May 26, 2021

TO: John Sharp, Chancellor of the Texas A&M University System

SUBJECT: Executive Brief: Actions since January 25, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

As I complete my tenure as interim president on May 31, 2021 and return to my role as a member of faculty and director of the Hagler Institute for Advanced Study, I would like to take this opportunity to update you on activities to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion at Texas A&M following the January 25, 2021 approval by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents of a four-year initiative.

I met with co-leads on actions underway since the announcement, asking them to succinctly address the following questions:

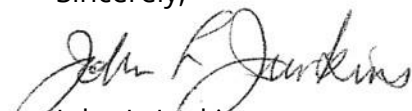
1. *What is their group's challenge or problem to address associated with the charge?*
2. *What actions to date since the announcement this year are they taking to address?*
3. *How will they measure real progress?*
4. *What are the next steps to achieving their mission?*

This executive brief to follow provides embedded slides and descriptions. Campus designs included herein are preliminary concepts only.

I am pleased with progress. My recommendation is for these status briefings to continue along the four-year initiative.

I thank the co-leads and their teams as well as the Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion whose report informed the opportunities addressed herein. I am grateful for Aggies everywhere who live our core values in welcoming and supporting each other.

Sincerely,


John L. Junkins

INTRODUCTION

On January 25, 2021, The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents [approved](#) recommended actions and \$24.75 million investment over four years in response to needs and recommendations identified in a [report](#) by the Commission on Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

ITEM	AMOUNT
1. Expand the Student Pipeline (Fall 2021 and Fall 2022)	\$1.5M
2. Increase the Regents' Scholars Program by 93 students per year for four years	\$7.8M
3. Increase National Recognition Scholarships by 89 students per year for four years	\$7.5M
4. Establish Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships for 10 students per year for four years	\$1.6M
5. Grow the ACES (Accountability, Climate, Equity and Scholarship Fellows) Faculty Program by 10 faculty per year for four years	\$5.25M
6. Recognize More Outstanding Aggies Leading by Example	\$100K
7. Establish an action-oriented task force to accurately and fully tell the story of Texas A&M's history through displays and iconography	\$1M
8. Document and communicate the success of our many former students of color	
TOTAL	\$24.75M

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University co-leads and activities were mapped to approved actions:

Board of Regents-Approved Actions	Activities and Leaders
1. Expand the Student Pipeline (Fall 2021 and Fall 2022)	Communications Outreach and Engagement (Actions 1,8) Leads: Annie McGowan and Amy B. Smith
2. Increase the Regents' Scholars Program by 93 students per year for four years	
3. Increase National Recognition Scholarships by 89 students per year for four years	Student Scholarships and Recruitment (Actions 2,3) Leads: Joe Pettibon and Lisa Blazer
4. Establish Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships for 10 students per year for four years	Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships (Action 4) Leads: Karen Butler-Purry and Mark Barbeau
5. Grow the ACES (Accountability, Climate, Equity and Scholarship Fellows) Faculty Program by nine faculty per year for four years	Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition (Actions 5, 6) Leads: Blanca Lupiani and Jeff Risinger
6. Recognize More Outstanding Aggies Leading by Example	
7. Establish an action-oriented task force to accurately and fully tell the story of Texas A&M's history through displays and iconography	Campus Experience (Across all actions) Leads: Eric Mendoza, Annie McGowan, Danny Pugh
8. Document and communicate the success of our many former students of color	Campus Historical Displays (Action 7) Leads: Jorge Vanegas and Lilia Gonzales

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Small teams (8-10 members) were recruited to work adeptly, with input from our community and subject matter expert advisors.

STATUS UPDATE: COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Co-Leads:

- **Annie McGowan**, Interim Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Gina and William Flores Endowed Professor in Business
- **Amy B. Smith**, Senior Vice President, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

Membership (in alphabetical order)

- **Crystal S. Carter**, Communications Specialist, Office for Diversity
- **Shantera Chatman '98**, former student, President PowHer Consulting
- **Lindsay Gasek '99**, Director, Office of the Provost, Enrollment & Academic Services
- **Quentyn Seamster '96**, former student, Principal at International Leadership of Texas – Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex
- **Akshaya Sreenivasan**, Clinical Assistant Professor of Marketing, Mays Business School
- **Eric Watson '99**, Associate Director for Diversity Initiatives & Inclusion, Office of Admissions

Advisors: **Rodney Pennywell '86**, **Ken Robinson '93**, **Sherman Wright '92**, **Henry Cadena** and **Ms. Alexis Bailey '18**.

The Challenge and Charge

While the total number of underrepresented students has grown since the beginning of the century, the percentage compared to total student population remains flat. As identified in the CDEI report, it is incumbent upon Texas A&M to reach out to, welcome and engage underrepresented students.

Communications Outreach and Engagement Committee Charge Review and Update

Board-Approved Actions 1 & 8

- Expand the student pipeline.
- Document and communicate the success of many former students of color.

President's Committee Charge

- Develop a communications outreach plan to increase engagement of prospective students from underrepresented groups and their families and to create a sustainable pipeline for recruiting them.
- Create an innovative platform for documenting and sharing the stories of successful current and former students of color with the goal of enhancing the ability of others to project themselves as successful Aggies.

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Actions to Date – Committee on Outreach and Engagement

The following actions were initiated to address the charge:

- Research: Collection and analysis of three years of data;
- Outreach: Immediate pilot project ahead of May 1 deadline for fall 2021; and
- Creative development.

Research

in March, the team collected and analyzed the last three years of survey results, focusing upon students who were accepted but who did not commit to or ever attend the university. Data collection and regression analysis showed which communications channels are most effective in reaching this group, with particular focus at this time on Black American (BA) students and future additional models for other underrepresented groups.

Items Studied	Preferred/Most Impactful According to Surveyed Underrepresented Students	Key Takeaways
Channels Mail / Email / TAMU campus visit / Recruitment staff visit to their high school / TAMU Website / Social media / TAMU publication / Phone / College Fair	1. Campus Visit 2. Recruitment staff visit to their high school 3. Website	<i>When students visit our campus, they fall in love with it and rank TAMU higher. Similarly, when our recruitment staff visit students first hand in their high schools, they feel more attached to TAMU and rank the school higher. Interestingly, TAMU website ranks higher than social media. Emails approach significance and can be used for omnichannel outreach.</i>
People Sr. leaders, students, faculty, campus staff, regional recruitment staff	Faculty and Regional Staff	<i>The more efforts are drawn towards regional recruitment staff or TAMU faculty talking to prospective students, better the student's perception of TAMU.</i>
Funding Offers Scholarships and Aid	\$ is important but not all	<i>For last three years of non matriculation, there was no significant relationship between how much TAMU was willing to offer in aid and its impact on TAMU ranking among Black American and Multi Black American prospective students.</i>

* Analysis of survey results from non matriculating Black American (BA) or Multi Black American (MX) for last three years

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Data showed that campus visits are the number one most impactful way to attract students. Post-COVID, resources should be dedicated to campus events and provision of travel where required to help students who may not otherwise experience the campus ahead of deciding to do so. Recruitment visits to high schools should be increased, a factor which students themselves identified as significant.

Interestingly, social media was not identified as a top means for reaching students. This will need to continue to be monitored. Also, scholarships are important but were not always the deciding factor for students who did not choose to attend.

Students want to hear from faculty and regional staff as trusted sources of information and we should feature as such.

Pilot Program Conducted – “Quest for the Ring”

While research continues, the team wanted to act now to help influence fall 2021 matriculation of underrepresented students. The team coordinated with the Office of Admissions to derive a list of underrepresented students who had been admitted to Texas A&M for fall 2021 but who had not yet committed to attend.

The team created a pilot program, called *Quest for the Ring*, in honor of the iconic Aggie ring which represents the symbol of scholarship and achievement and is worn by thousands upon thousands of Aggies everywhere.

Working in collaboration with the Office of Admissions to avoid overlapping outreach, the team invited admitted Black American (BA) students and their families to a series of virtual outreach events each Sunday afternoon in April. The virtual event featured current and former Aggie students of color and staff to provide their experiences and expertise in an informal manner.

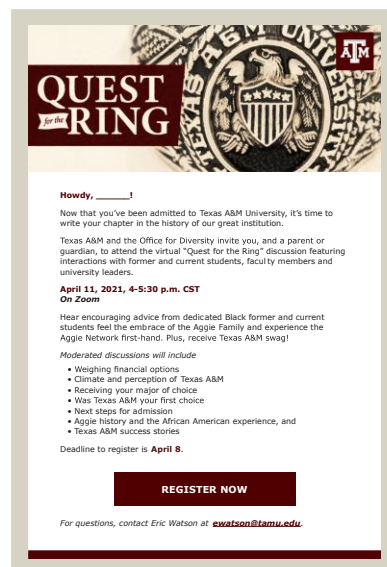
More than 90 percent of students who attended *Quest for the Ring* committed to attend Texas A&M in advance of the May 1 deadline.

Undoubtedly some were on their way to doing so, and some changed their minds to do so. A portion of a commitment email is included here.

Results to date:

We set a conversion goal to exceed Fall 2020 (289 students) and to match Fall 2019 (328 students) pre-COVID commitments.

Progress at the time of this briefing is 324 students.



“As I navigated through the process of letters, tours, visits, I yearned for a place that I felt I belonged. I had started thinking about just accepting one of the offers from another school that offered a scholarship(s) and just call it done. But then, I received the email to sign up for the “Quest for the Ring” and I thought it looked interesting. So, I signed up. But it was not ‘t until I actually attended the event and saw how many people were on there that I thought, “This is so amazing! Therefore, in conclusion, I am writing to inform you that, thanks to you and the “Quest for the Ring” team, I will be attending Texas A&M in the fall. I am humbled and honored to become a ‘fighting’ member of class 2025.” – INCOMING STUDENT, FALL 2021

Celebrating the Black Student Journey

While research continues (see next steps) to hone messaging and outreach, we must not delay ongoing focus to welcome more students of color. The division of Marketing Communications is producing videos in alignment with the charge.




Current student video: Click [here](#)



Former student video: Click [here](#)

Key Performance Indicators

Throughout the four-year initiative, we will continually measure progress through benchmark and tracking research on perceptions among students about A&M, coupled with actual numbers year-to-year in the pipeline, including commitment and matriculation.

 Key Performance Indicators Outreach and Engagement	
KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KPI
Fall 2021 Commitments of Admitted Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceed Fall 2020 (289 commits) • Match Fall 2019 (328 commits) • Current progress (not final): 324 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quest for the Ring</i> events through April • Increased outreach by team members • Provost/Admissions customized videos by person's name • Aggie Conversations engagement • MarCom aligning videos (to hone by continued research)
Benchmark and Tracking Awareness and Reputation Surveys Among Underrepresented Prospective Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary research to measure awareness and reputation • Content creation, message testing • One year on measurement
Pipeline and Fall 2022 Admits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Applications Fall 2022 • # of Admitted Students • # Matriculating Students • Exceed Fall 21 applications • Exceed Fall 22 commits 5/1/2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop ineffective channels per survey findings • Continue effective channels per survey findings • Enhance creative: Content, creative, outreach

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Next Steps

First, the *Quest for the Ring* pilot proved successful and will continue. The team will focus on outreach to boost fall matriculation and continue efforts for fall 2022.

Second, primary research fielded this summer will help us understand more about priorities for students who choose to attend A&M as well as “exit” surveys for those who do not and why. This can be annual informative input to help us be more effective throughout the four-year initiative and beyond.

Third, a communications campaign with support from experts in outreach to underrepresented groups will support A&M efforts on a campaign to reach prospective students.

STATUS UPDATE: STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECRUITMENT

Co-Leads:

- **Joe Pettibon** '93, Vice President for Enrollment and Academic Services
- **Lisa Blazer**, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services

Membership (in alphabetical order)

- **Delisa Falks**, Assistant VP, Scholarships & Financial Aid
- **Peter Luong** '21, President of Regents Scholars Organization, Student Rep
- **Monica Menzel** '94, Hispanic Network, Former Student Rep & CDEI Rep
- **Kasandra Phillips** '92, Associate Director of Recruitment
- **Tim Scott** '89, '96, Associate Provost, Faculty Rep
- **Patrick Williams** '92 Texas A&M Foundation

The Challenge and Charge

As Texas A&M University continues to focus on increasing underrepresented students on campus, this team was charged with assisting the university to increase the number of underrepresented prospective students applying and enrolling each year through the enhancement of two targeted scholarships programs, removing potential financial barriers and recognizing academic achievements of our incoming class.

ATM

Student Scholarships and Recruitment Charge Review and Update

Board-Approved Actions 2 & 3

- Increase the Regents' Scholars Program
- Increase National Recognition Scholarships.

President's Committee Charge

Charge: Assist Texas A&M University to significantly increase the number of underrepresented prospective students applying and enrolling each year through the enhancement of two targeted scholarship programs: *Increase Regents Scholarships and Expand National Scholars through College Board Recognition Program.*

Scholarship	Original Offer	Confirmed to date	% Yield to date
Regents Scholarship	2319	1000	43.1%
Hispanic Natl Recognition	548	239	43.6%
African American Natl Recognition	100	35	35.0%
Indigenous Natl Recognition	18	5	27.8%
Rural/Small Town Natl Recognition	282	127	45.0%
Multiple Designation Natl Recognition	89	34	38.2%
Total Natl Recognition	1037	440	42.4%

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Actions to Date – Committee on Scholarship and Recruitment

The following actions were initiated to address this charge:

- Increased new freshmen Regents Scholars to 1000.
- Increased National Recognition Scholars by 150 new freshmen.
- Collaboration Across Committees – enhancing programming, connections and relationships across committees and the university community
- Communication and Outreach – developing new avenues for celebrating scholars
- Student Success – collaborating with partners to create programming

Increased Scholarships

The committee reviewed historical information, current recruitment efforts and scholarship awards for the Regents Scholars and the National Scholars program. For Fall 2021, we have awarded more than 2300 students the Regents Scholarship with an expected yield of 1000.

Texas A&M has awarded the National Hispanic Scholarship for several years. With the expansion of the College Board’s national recognition program to include three new groups of underrepresented students (National African American, National Indigenous, National Small Town/Rural), we have confirmed an additional 201 new scholars from these three new categories for the 2021-22 academic year.

ATM

Action & Deliverables

- Scholarships – Fall 2021**
 - Regents Scholars - Offered \$11.7 million - \$6000 per year – expecting 1000 total new freshmen
 - National Recognition Scholars – increasing by 150 new students – 3 new College Board Categories
- Collaboration Across Committees**
 - Coordinate activities with other CDEI committees
 - Former Students – help with events and outreach
 - Work with University Marketing & Communication to increase stories of scholars and of new recipients
- Communication and Outreach**
 - Develop stories and celebrate current scholars
 - Visits to homes and celebration ceremonies
 - Social Media Boards and other communication
 - Provide swag to students and parents
- Student Success**
 - * Programming to encourage retention
 - * Develop extended orientation programming

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Collaboration Across Committees and Taskforces

As we continue to build out initiatives, we have an opportunity to coordinate across committees and task forces to strengthen our efforts in increasing the number of underrepresented prospects and applicants. This will include incorporating scholarship awarding and communication efforts into the Strategic Enrollment Plan (currently in development), leveraging all of our existing financial aid programs, collaborating with CDEI committees and university taskforces to enhance Enrollment Marketing and Communication, building connections for prospective students to student organizations and campus-wide events (ex. Aggie Impact Gala), utilizing recruitment materials to highlight success of former students, expanding and coordinating peer recruiters, Aggie Recruitment Committee, Howdy Crew and other student organizations and mentors, and connecting parent and family engagement activities.

Communication and Outreach

The committee conversation focused on celebrating and sharing our story through our scholarship recipients. As we look to differentiate ourselves through multiple communication channels and develop stories on our current scholars, we can utilize our current and former students for outreach beyond what the admissions team is able to provide. Ideas include visits to homes with swag and big checks, celebration ceremonies we publicize and highlight, working with our former students to help underwrite and support so future students will see us as an opportunity, utilizing social media boards and creating bi-lingual messaging for parents. Further, we will work to ensure that every student receiving one of these scholarships has an opportunity to visit campus and is directly contacted by our recruiters at their high school.

Student Success

In addition to increasing underrepresented student prospects and applicants, the committee proposed programming to ensure students are retained once they are enrolled at Texas A&M. Initiatives include developing extended orientation programming for scholars, creating small summer programs as part of their scholarship and incorporating programming into proposed strategic enrollment initiatives (in development).

Key Performance Indicators – Scholarships & Recruitment

Throughout the four-year initiative, we will measure our progress of increasing the number of underrepresented prospective students and applicants through increased scholarship awards, enhanced marketing and communication, celebration events and scholars programming.


Success is ultimately measured through increased numbers of Black/African American students who enroll, are retained, succeed, and thrive at Texas A&M University and ultimately encourage others to do so as well due to their experience here.

Next Steps

Both the Regents and the National Recognition Scholarships have been awarded for the Fall 2021 semester. Over the summer months, the committee will work with Admissions to ensure the students who have accepted the offer of admissions and these scholarships actually enroll for the fall semester (avoiding what is called summer melt) through outreach and personalized communication.

The committee will work with Enrollment Marketing and Communication to develop unique current and former student scholar stories. These stories will be used in digital advertising, outreach to students and in celebration events throughout the next academic year as we look to bring in the Fall 2022 class.

Prior to the start of the next recruitment cycle, which begins in August 2021 for students that will enroll in Fall 2022, an action plan will be developed to create new celebration events and increased media opportunities to highlight scholars. In



**Key Performance Indicators
Scholarships & Recruitment**

KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KP
Increase underrepresented student enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award additional Regents and National Recognition Scholarships Create stories of current scholars to share with prospective students Develop marketing, communication and outreach plan to encourage acceptance of scholarships and enrollment Create celebration events (ceremonies, home visits, etc.) - highlight, share in news stories and in high schools
Increase the number of scholarship recipients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regents Scholars - gradually increase income level to \$60,000 to award more students National Recognition - utilize purchased lists to initially award and for generating interest in the scholarship and TAMU. Create stories of current scholars to share with prospective students
Increase retention rate of scholars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and enhance Scholars programming Develop extended orientation programming for scholars - provide information in offer letter

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addition, further research is being conducted on our admitted students to identify additional targeted efforts to recruit and enroll students receiving scholarship funding.

STATUS UPDATE: PATHWAYS-TO-DOCTORATE FELLOWSHIPS

Co-Leads:

- **Karen Butler-Purry**, Associate Provost and Dean, Graduate and Professional School
- **Mark Barteau**, Vice President for Research, Professor, Chemical Engineering

Membership (in alphabetical order):

- **Sandra Acosta**, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology, Faculty Rep
- **Chante Anderson '20**, PhD student, Communications, Student Rep
- **Benika Dixon '20**, former student, Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Texas A&M Health Science Center
- **Felipe Hinojosa**, Associate Professor, History, Faculty Rep
- **Michelle Meyer**, Associate Professor, Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, Faculty Rep
- **Karen Wooley**, Distinguished Professor, Chemistry, Faculty Rep

The Challenge and Charge

As noted in the CDEI report findings, Hispanic and Latinx graduate student enrollment and Black and African American graduate student enrollment percentages are underrepresented when compared to the state's demographics. To address this, more purposeful effort is needed to identify and build sustainable pathways to increase the enrollment of students from underrepresented populations in TAMU graduate programs.

Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships Charge Review and Update

Board-Approved Actions 4

- Establish Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships

President's Committee Charge

The Pathways-to-Doctorate (PTD) committee is charged with helping boost application and enrollment of students from underrepresented populations in Texas A&M University graduate and professional programs, by:

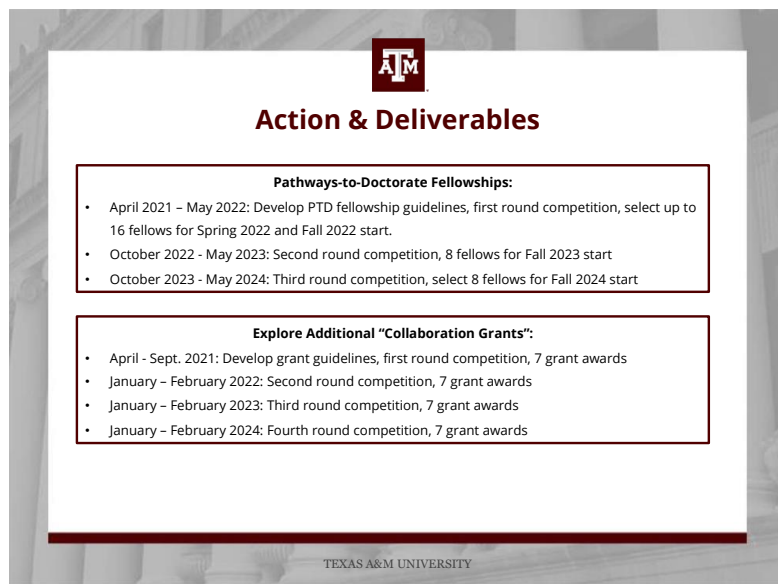
- Expanding doctoral pathway partnerships with Texas A&M University System institutions and Minority Serving Institutions which are complementary to their existing graduate programs. This will be accomplished by: Supporting collaboration grants and Pathways to Doctorate fellowships
- Enhancing programmatic efforts of the TAMU Pathways to Doctorate program which build community and support timely graduation

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Actions to Date – Committee on Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships

The following actions were taken to address the charge:

- Analyzed the last 12 years of TAMU Pathways-to-Doctorate fellowship data.
- Collected best practices on successful pathway partnerships.
- Generated ideas for implementation of the Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships



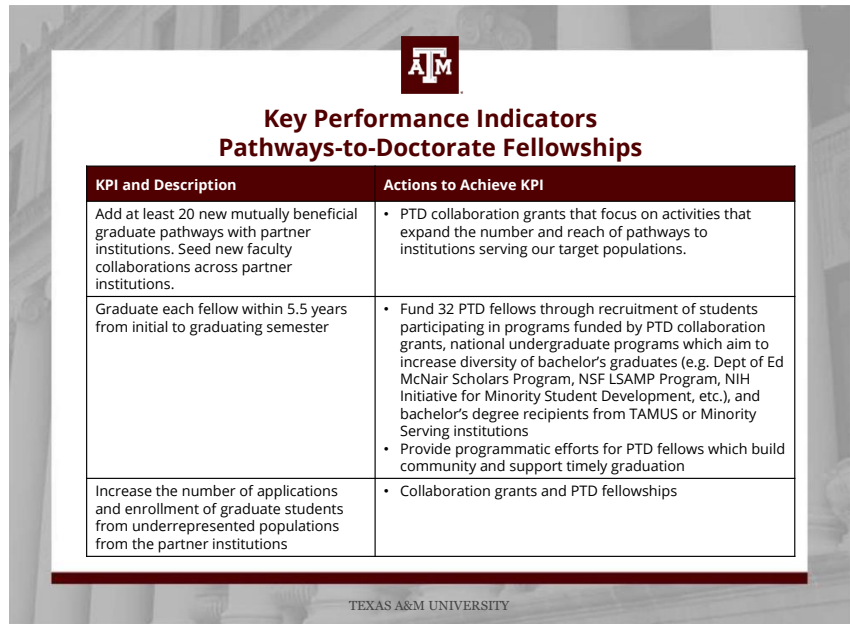
In Spring 2021, the Pathways-to-Doctorate committee analyzed the last 12 years of TAMU Pathways-to-Doctorate focusing on details of funding packages, bachelor's institutions (pathways) of fellows, student outcomes (attrition and graduation rates), and programmatic activities. Further the committee collected best practices and

models of successful pathway partnerships from peer institutions. The TAMU Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowship data showed that graduation rates improved when funding packages were shifted to multi-year commitments and recruitment was conducted by department or interdisciplinary (cross department) faculty teams, and that generally no ongoing pathways/pipelines existed and minimal programmatic efforts were in place to support retention and graduation. Further the best practices show that sustainable pathways result from mutually beneficial educational partnerships between faculty and staff across universities and that systemic changes in inequitable institutional practices are needed to improve retention.

As a result, the committee conceived a four-year Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowship package which includes a combination of one-year funding from the TAMUS funds and three years of collaborative funding from academic units, the Graduate and Professional School, and the Division of Research to support assistantship salary and tuition and fees. Further the committee proposes the addition of collaborative grants to incentivize and support innovative TAMU faculty and staff approaches for initiating and expanding educational pathway partnerships.

Key Performance Indicators – Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships

During the four years of the initiative, we will annually measure the progress to degree completion and identify barriers to success of the Pathways-to-Doctorate fellows.



KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KPI
Add at least 20 new mutually beneficial graduate pathways with partner institutions. Seed new faculty collaborations across partner institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTD collaboration grants that focus on activities that expand the number and reach of pathways to institutions serving our target populations.
Graduate each fellow within 5.5 years from initial to graduating semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund 32 PTD fellows through recruitment of students participating in programs funded by PTD collaboration grants, national undergraduate programs which aim to increase diversity of bachelor's graduates (e.g. Dept of Ed McNair Scholars Program, NSF LSAMP Program, NIH Initiative for Minority Student Development, etc.), and bachelor's degree recipients from TAMUS or Minority Serving institutions Provide programmatic efforts for PTD fellows which build community and support timely graduation
Increase the number of applications and enrollment of graduate students from underrepresented populations from the partner institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration grants and PTD fellowships

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Next Steps

First, materials and an application process will be developed in early Fall 2021 to allow promotion and selection of the Pathways-to-Doctorate fellowships during the 2021-2022 recruiting cycle.

Second, the first group of TAMU faculty and staff will be identified to initiate new or expand upon existing pathway partnerships.

Third, programmatic activities will be developed to transition the first group of Pathways-to-Doctorate fellows.

STATUS UPDATE: FACULTY AND STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RECOGNITION

Co-Leads:

- **Blanca Lupiani**, Dean of Faculties and Associate Provost
- **Annie McGowan**, Interim Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Gina and William Flores Endowed Professor in Business
- **Jeff Risinger '02**, Vice President, Human Resources and Organizational Development

Membership (in alphabetical order):

- **Kristina Ballard**, University Staff Council
- **Scott Bauer '85, '87**, Director of Talent Management
- **Dale Rice**, Faculty Senate, Speaker Elect
- **Christine Stanley '85, '90**, Professor of Higher Education
- **Cynthia Werner**, Director of ADVANCE

Challenge and Charge

Based upon the Board approved actions and the President's charge, the Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition Team took a holistic approach to the faculty and staff employment lifecycle. Recruitment alone may be perceived by some as the initial process of beginning work at Texas A&M. However,

when applying the philosophy of being recruited for a career and not just a job, the focus of this charge becomes more significant and is a longer-term commitment. One of the early challenges revealed by the data that this team explored was the fact that because a holistic approach has not historically been taken, much of the progress that is made in traditional recruiting has to be repeated over and over due to a lack of retention. As will be reported, this team has built action plans designed

Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition Charge Review and Update

Board-Approved Actions 5 & 6

- Grow the ACES program by ten faculty per year for the next four years
- Recognize more outstanding Aggies of color leading by example

President's Committee Charge

- Develop an actionable plan to strategically increase and diversify faculty – at all ranks – who elevate the national and international recognition of the university.
- Develop a plan for the recruitment and support of frontline staff from underrepresented groups.
- Develop an actionable plan to foster a climate of respect and inclusivity for all faculty and staff and address campus climate and equity issues proactively.
- Design a new award or leverage existing reward structures to recognize faculty and staff who contribute to improving campus climate, equity, and inclusion.

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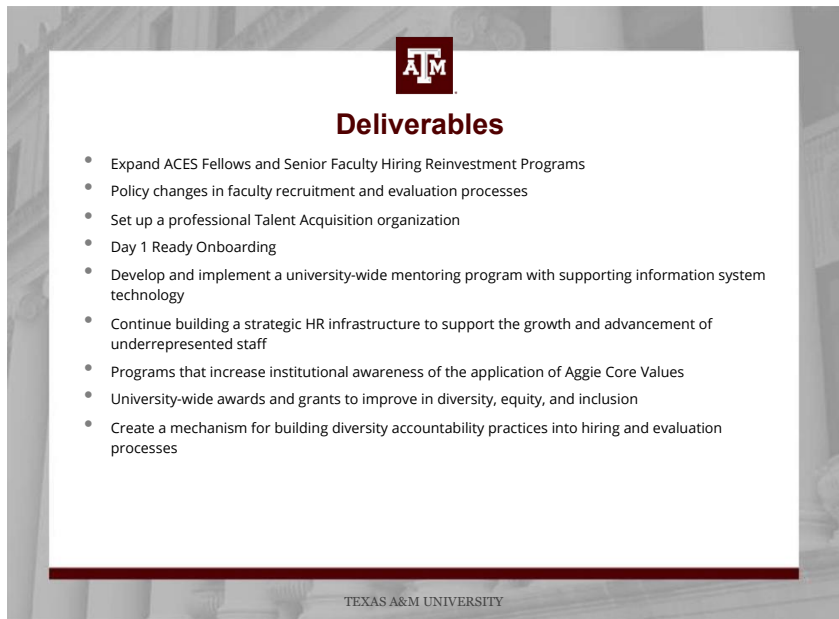
to both significantly improve the initial recruitment of under-represented faculty and staff and to bring them into an environment of growth, trust, and respect so that their contributions may be felt for years to come.

Actions to Date: Committee on Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition

The Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition Team spent a significant amount of time in discovery, searching for the underlying drivers inhibiting growth in the careers of under-

represented faculty and staff. Growing the ACES program was a given as a result of the Board of Regents financial commitment to this program. However, it was discovered that a number of policy changes are necessary to ensure these new investments offer sustaining value for Texas A&M University. These

changes include improving practices for faculty recruitment and modernizing the HR infrastructure to more effectively advance our staff via a professional Talent Acquisition organization. The Talent Acquisition organization would be charged with working directly with hiring managers to actively recruit, screen, and present top candidates to hiring managers to ensure diversity of the applicant pools. Our university and community would be further served through an integrated infrastructure that emphasizes a culture of development. As such, the committee proposes the development and implementation of a university-wide mentoring program with supporting information system technology to promote a climate of respect and inclusivity. Finally, there is an opportunity to move beyond the traditional reward structures to recognize faculty and staff contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion through application of Aggie Core Values. We recommend the creation of a faculty/staff grant program in addition to a university-wide awards program that recognizes measurable climate-enhancing contributions.




Key Performance Indicators – Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition

Throughout the four-year plan, we will assess progress on perceptions among faculty and staff about Texas A&M, and the corresponding impact on faculty and staff recruitment and retention. Indicators of success will include change in the compositional diversity of faculty and staff to more closely align with the state of Texas and our student body.

We will assess how units, at all levels, recognize faculty and staff contributions to diversity equity and inclusion by investing in their ideas and contributing to the achievement of university goals related to faculty and staff recruitment and retention and student success.

Next Steps


Engage with faculty and department and college leadership in the implementation of policy changes and creation of a mechanism for building diversity accountability



Key Performance Indicators

KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KPI
Increase faculty diversity by 100% to better reflect the diversity of our student body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACES Fellows and Faculty Investment Programs • STRIDE training for search committees • Accountability in the hiring process • Policy changes in faculty recruitment and evaluation processes
Increase by 50% the retention of women and URM faculty on the tenure track to better reflect the diversity of our student body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy changes in the evaluation process • STRIDE training • Improve climate and inclusion at department level • Accountability in the evaluation process
Increase proportion of tenure track faculty to 65%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACES Fellows and Faculty Investment Programs • STRIDE and STRIPE training • Accountability in the hiring and evaluation process
Develop a leadership quality index, benchmark our employees, and raise 10% per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Engagement Survey Process • Build Leadership Quality Index Based Upon Leadership Performance and Succession Planning
Employees with a written learning and development plan in place will reach 80%, and 95% of employees with managerial duties will have a leadership component in their plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Learning and Development Plans into the Performance Management Process

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Key Performance Indicators

KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KPI
Job categories with defined competency maps will reach 50%, resulting in at least a 10% increase in internal promotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Competency Maps for all Job Categories
Improve staff applicant pools to more closely reflect URM availability, providing more opportunity for URM selection and placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent Acquisition Team actively monitor URM applicant pools and adjust outreach in real time.
Remove all bias in the hiring decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent Acquisition Team experience, awareness and professionalism in leading the recruiting & selection process
All new hire onboarding (faculty, staff, student) is 100% fully compliant, complete and seamless to create welcoming, stress-free entry into TAMU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1 Ready onboarding team advance communication and preparation for new hire arrival.
Design a Comprehensive Awards Program that Aligns Existing Award and Recognition Programs Focused on Aggie Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate Existing Award Programs and Align College and Division Programs to University-wide Programs
Procure and Implement a university-wide Mentoring Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet With All University Stakeholders and Design a Mentoring System that Meets all Developmental Needs

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practices into the hiring and evaluation processes to reach our goals of diversifying the faculty.

Expand the ACES Fellows Program to include the College of Medicine, the College of Dentistry and the School of Law (Up to 20 Fellows).

Set up a professional talent acquisition organization and day 1 ready onboarding to ensure that we have a professional and consistent approach to searching for and attracting the very best talent to Texas A&M University.

Develop and implement a university-wide mentoring program with supporting information technology systems to ensure that the vast knowledge that exists within our faculty and staff can be shared through mentoring and developmental programs available to everyone.

Continue building a strategic HR infrastructure to support the growth and advancement of underrepresented staff. This infrastructure will include clearly defined career paths that are competency based so that employees can chart their careers and receive the learning and development opportunities that will lead to career success. This infrastructure will also include intentional succession planning for all university leadership positions to ensure that we are building the leadership talent we need and that reflects the society that we serve.

Develop and invest in programs that increase institutional awareness of the application of Aggie Core Values as well as university-wide awards and grants to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion across campus.

We are confident that these actions will dramatically improve our diversity, equity, and inclusion performance for faculty and staff and will lead to Texas A&M being more widely recognized as a great place to work!

STATUS UPDATE: CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Co-Leads:

- **Eric Mendoza '21**, Student Body President
- **Annie McGowan**, Interim Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Gina and William Flores Endowed Professor in Business
- **Danny Pugh**, Vice President for Student Affairs

Membership (in alphabetical order):

- **Chante Anderson '20**, Ph.D. Candidate, Graduate School
- **Risa Bierman**, Campus Ministry Association
- **Kristie Orr '91, '03**, Director, Disability Resources
- **Jennifer Reyes '10**, Office for Diversity
- **Stephen Ruth '92**, Former Student Body President/Cadet
- **Shariq Yosufzai '74**, Former Student

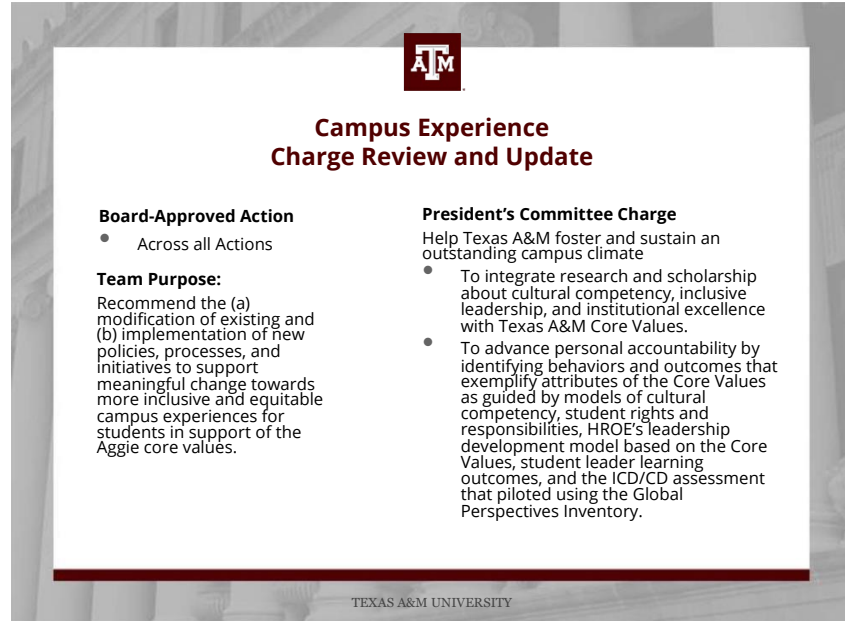
Advisors: Student leaders representing the [Student Leader Communication Group](#).

Challenge and Charge: Campus Experience

In response to the approved actions by the Board of Regents, the Campus Experience Team was charged with looking across all of the eight (8) action items.

In responding to the charge to “foster and sustain an outstanding campus climate,” the team focused on the critical importance of the Aggie Core Values as the unifying feature of an Aggie experience for students, faculty, and staff. To that end, we primarily focused on learning outcomes and marketable skills. In

particular the team embraced a focus on the undergraduate student learning outcome of “social, cultural, and global competency” and the development of Aggie Core Values aligned attributes. While our purpose centered on a “more inclusive and equitable campus experience,” we envisioned similar Aggie Core Values




attributes could be developed in association with the remaining six undergraduate student learning outcomes as well as other outcomes and skills at the university, college, division, and department levels of the institution and independent student organizations.

While the breadth of the charge presented an expansive landscape from which to focus, the Campus Experience Team embraced the challenges associated with accountability and transparency to existing policies, processes, and initiatives. In particular, we were attentive to the existing criticisms of current practices and policies associated with reporting through the Stop Hate portal.

Additionally, the Campus Experience Team embraced the purpose and charge associated with integration of Aggie Core Values in all facets of life within the institution. As we researched existing practices and current efforts, we were excited to learn about an SGA initiative, Traditions Enrichment, that appears to have the best chance to educate and extrapolate Aggie Traditions while working with numerous student and campus partners, including SGA, Traditions Council, Association of Former Students, and Division of Student Affairs to name a select few.

Actions to Date: Campus Experience

Using the Division of Human Resources model as a foundation, the members of the Campus Experience Team were instrumental in developing attributes of a culturally competent leader through the lens of each Aggie Core Value. Each attribute reflects a “marketable skill” that, when developed, would allow for professional advancement and organizational impact. Recognizing that each student enters Texas A&M with varying competencies and will progress through their undergraduate experience at a



Action & Deliverables - Attributes of the Core Values

	CORE VALUE ATTRIBUTES	CORE VALUE ATTRIBUTES
R E S P E C T	We treat all with courtesy and value them as individuals - those in the Aggie Network and those within the broader community. We foster an environment where all feel welcomed, included, and engaged. We are role models for actions and behaviors that reflect positively on Texas A&M as a place that promotes openness, inclusion, and dialogue where all perspectives are listened to for understanding.	L O Y A L T Y
E X C E L L E N C E	We are dedicated to performing at the highest level in all we do. We are passionate about upholding the Core Values of respect, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service. We recognize that excellence and diversity are interdependent and provide better outcomes both for the individual and the institution.	I N T E G R I T Y
L E A D E R S H I P	Leaders create an inclusive vision and accessible mission for both internal and external constituencies. These leaders understand the organizational importance of cultural exploration and competency development, engage in ethical and authentic hiring practices, and understand cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution.	S E L F E S S S

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difference pace, we established a four-year model with the following associated themes:

Year 1 – Self, Improving One’s Self

Year 2 – Others, Improving Others

Year 3 – Leadership, Developing Your Leadership

Year 4 – Leadership, Developing Others to Lead

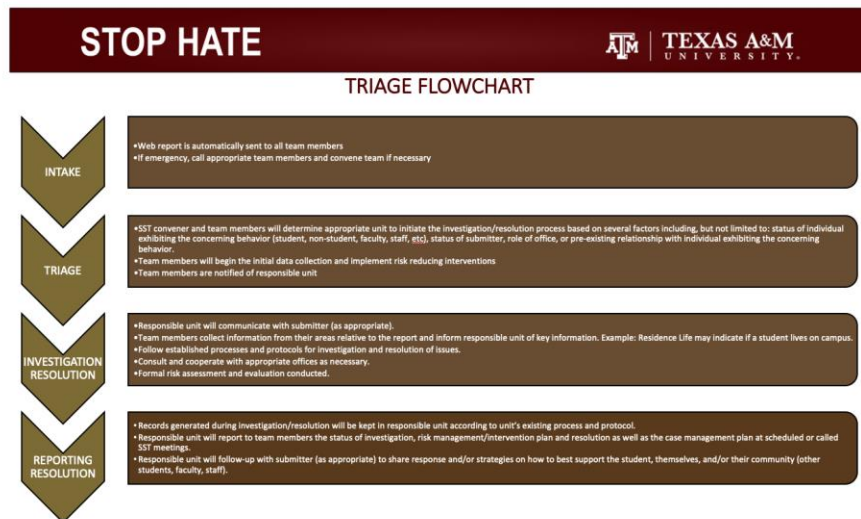
Members of the Campus Engagement Team were also able to lead a focus group of student leaders who provided feedback on the proposed culturally competent attributes associated with the Aggie Core Values. Two major takeaways were evident. First, the student leaders found tremendous value in the attribute/skill linkage between the Aggie Core Values and cultural competence. Second, the student leaders found the four-year developmental model to be highly adaptable to their organizational learning/leadership models.

Deemed a “green light” policy by The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) in January of 2019, Texas A&M University’s [Stop Hate](#) reporting portal is a best-practice example of a model hate and bias reporting process that is aligned with the [Texas](#)

[A&M](#)
[University](#)
[System Policy](#)
[08.01](#) for “Civil

Rights
Protections
and
Compliance.”
TAMU defines
a bias
complaint as,
“any report of
a threat or act

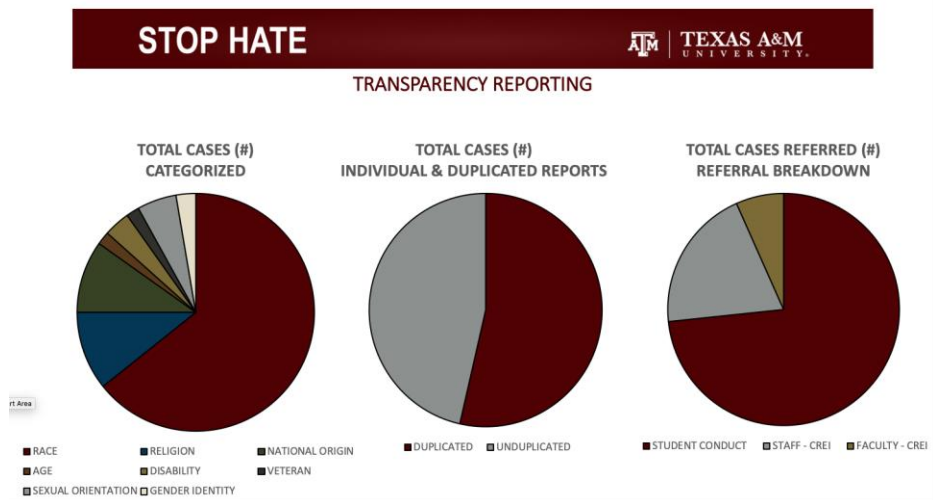
of harassment or intimidation which is directed against or targets a person or groups of persons of the Texas A&M community because of that person’s age, color, disability, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran



status, or medical or genetic information.” These categories are expressly drawn from TAMUS Policy 08.01 and are content neutral in that all classifications within these categories are equally protected.

While the Stop Hate portal is readily available and routinely communicated as a reporting site, there is room for enhanced accountability and transparency. As a result, despite a robust process of case intake, triage, investigation and resolution, there exists a lack of confidence in the process which negatively impacts the reputation of the

portal and associated processes. The Campus Experience Team embraced these constituent calls for accountability and transparency, including those found in the CDEI Report *Stronger Together*.



To that end, members of the team sought similar examples of means by which reporting portal information was appropriately shared with the constituent community. Unfortunately, we could locate no means by which the responding agency could showcase the transparency of reporting as well as organizational accountability in response to the reports. However, the Campus Experience Team was able to identify a similar process by which a campus police agency shared arrest information with the community to which they were sworn to protect and serve.

The Campus Experience Team is proposing the adoption of an accountability and transparency reporting process associated with the Stop Hate reporting portal by which the following protocols are adopted:

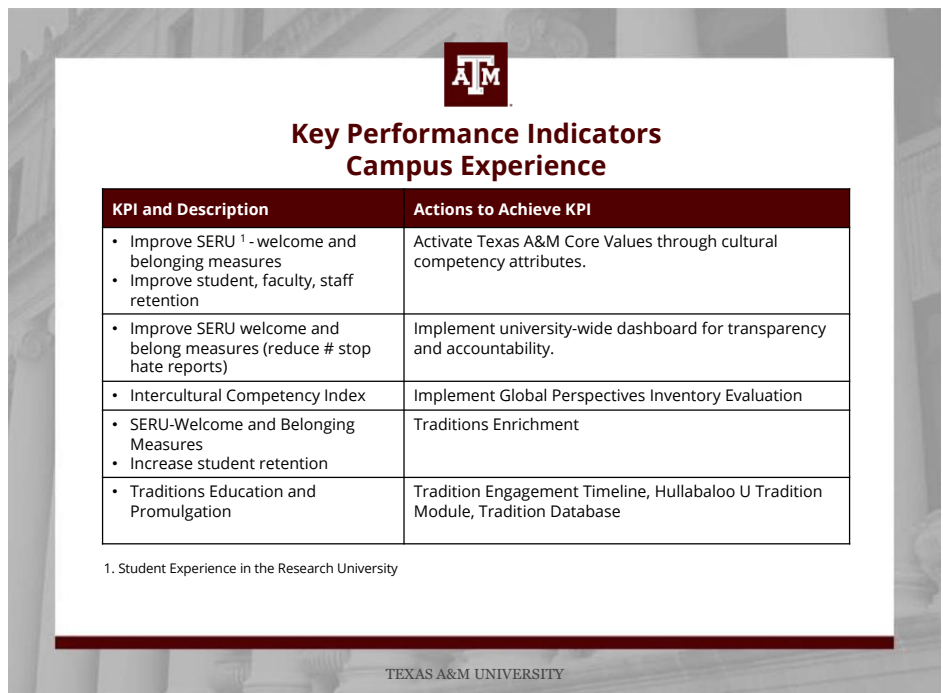
1. Continue to educate and promote the Stop Hate reporting portal to all members of the campus community. Education and promotion should continue during NSC Summer 2021 and fall 2021 training programs.

2. Embed clear protocols on the Stop Hate website that will be used in reviewing each case. The protocols should begin fall semester 2021.
3. Clearly outline on the Stop Hate website provisions by which cases may be referred for formal action by the university. The outline should be posted by fall 2021.
4. Implement a tracking process by which all cases are categorized relative to TAMUS Policy 08.01. The process should begin fall semester 2021.
5. Cases will be categorized and counted. Cases data will be shared (see proposed pie chart slide) on the Stop Hate website on a semester basis no later than 60 days into the following semester. The first posting would be in March 2022.
6. The Stop Hate committee is responsible for tracking and posting.

Members of the Campus Experience Team identified tradition enrichment and promulgation across campus and different student groups as a tool to foster an improved campus climate and experience, including promulgating new or lesser known activities

important to members of our campus community. The Campus Experience Team also noted the exceptional work currently underway by SGA with regards to Traditions Enrichment. We believe greater attention and campus investment should be made with respect to this effort. Already having a strong

collaboration between student government, former students, and student affairs, there is tremendous potential to expand these affiliates in support of the goals currently under consideration by the project managers.



**Key Performance Indicators
Campus Experience**

KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KPI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve SERU¹ - welcome and belonging measures • Improve student, faculty, staff retention 	Activate Texas A&M Core Values through cultural competency attributes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve SERU welcome and belong measures (reduce # stop hate reports) 	Implement university-wide dashboard for transparency and accountability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intercultural Competency Index 	Implement Global Perspectives Inventory Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SERU-Welcome and Belonging Measures • Increase student retention 	Traditions Enrichment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditions Education and Promulgation 	Tradition Engagement Timeline, Hullabaloo U Tradition Module, Tradition Database

1. Student Experience in the Research University

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STATUS UPDATE: TASK FORCE ON CAMPUS HISTORICAL DISPLAYS (TFCHD)

The Task Force

Co-Leads:

- **Jorge Vanegas** – Dean of the *College of Architecture* (COA)
- **Lilia Gonzales '94** – University Architect at *Texas A&M University* (TAMU)

Membership (in alphabetical order):

- **Kristina Ballard** – Chairperson, *University Staff Council* (USC), Staff Representative
- **David Chapman '67** – Retired Staff, Archivist TAMU Libraries; CDEI Representative
- **Adrian Cornelius '93** – TAMU *Black Former Student Network* (BFSN); *Association of Former Students* (AFS) and CDEI Representative
- **Shelley Holliday '99** – Senator from the COA, TAMU Faculty Senate; Faculty Representative
- **Nidhi Nagireddy '23** – Current Student, Company E-2, Corps of Cadets and Vice President of University Committees; Corps of Cadets and Student Representative
- **Erica Pauls '21** – President, *Matthew Gaines Society* (MGS), replaced by **Aketch Osamba '21**, Outreach Chair MGS; MGS and Student Representative
- **Jason Penry**, Assistant Vice President, *Texas A&M Foundation* (TAMF); Ad Hoc Special Advisor for Development
- **Jim Singleton '66** – Former Student COA, Athlete, and Member of the *Sul Ross Group* (SRG); Former Student Representative

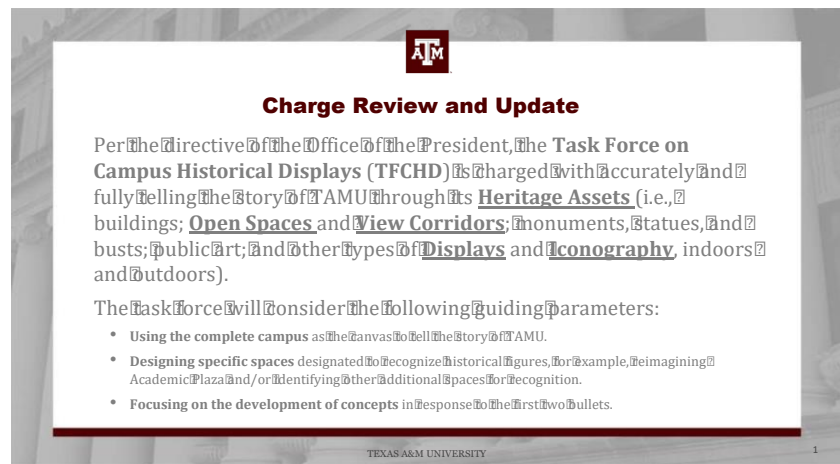
The Challenge and Charge

In response to the CDEI Report, the *Board of Regents* (BOR),

recommended to:

“Establish an action-oriented task force to accurately and fully tell the story of Texas A&M’s history through displays and iconography,” with a target investment of \$

1 Million.



Subsequently, Interim President Junkins issued the specific charge to the TFCHD and three specific guiding parameters. The charge and guiding parameters posed two challenges, both significant in terms of their scope, magnitude, and complexity: (1) determining the full story of TAMU since it was founded is a significant task; and (2) using the complete campus as the canvas to tell the story of TAMU accurately through the University's Heritage Assets.

To address these challenges, the Co-Leads of the TFCHD decided to use their experience and knowledge in the update to the *Campus Master Plan* (CMP) for TAMU released in 2017, which they also co-chaired. The update was the culmination of many months of work by many people, who represented many disciplines and a wide range of diversity of thought, and who were brought together to guide and shape the CMP around six broad and far-reaching focus elements: Campus Development Plan; Mobility & Safety; Sustainability & Wellness; Campus Guidelines; Wayfinding & Signage; and Heritage Conservation. As a roadmap, rather than just a checklist, the CMP allows TAMU to utilize its current valuable campus assets and resources to their fullest extent, while allowing for future developments to the campus. From the beginning, two aspirational goals guided the CMP: (1) increase the connectivity of the campus through the built environment, green spaces, and pedestrian oriented paths; and (2) identify heritage buildings, green spaces, and vistas for conservation as a key part of the campus environment. The CMP provides the overall physical context of the campus as TAMU moves to the future, and also, the point of departure for the TFCHD response to the President's charge.

Data Captures

Before any strategy was developed or recommended, the Co-Leads of the TFCHD made a significant effort to reach all the voices of various constituencies at TAMU through a formal survey that was based initially on seven questions to the members of the Task Force.

Data Captures

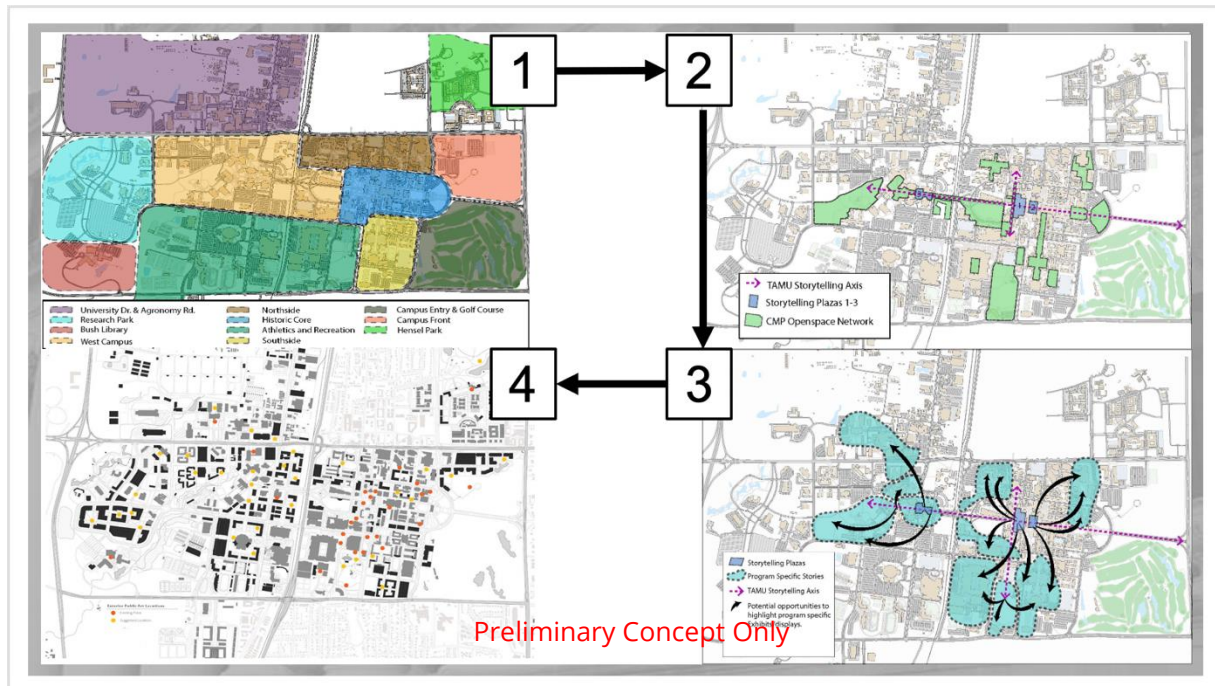
- The strategies that follow were developed and recommended by the TFCHD based on four data captures that included:
 - The Task Force on Campus Historical Displays (TFCHD)
 - Texas A&M University Administrators, Faculty, Students, and Staff
 - Members of the Leadership Council of the Association of Former Students
 - Supporters of Texas A&M University through the Texas A&M Foundation
- The recommended strategies were developed directly within the charge assigned to the TFCHD and did not include any decisions regarding the retention or removal of the Lawrence Sullivan Ross Statue.

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The questions were: **(1)** *What is working well at TAMU* within the context and scope of the charge to the Task Force? **(2)** *What is not working well at TAMU* within the context and scope of the charge to the Task Force? **(3)** *What*

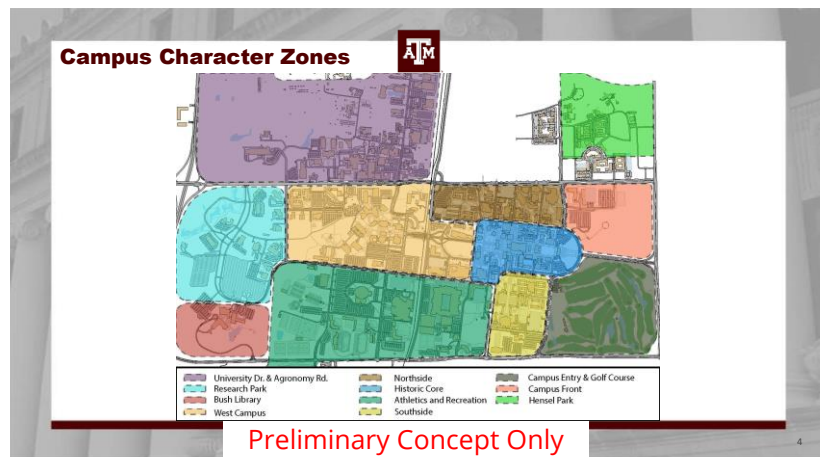
[might/could/should/must] TAMU start doing that it currently is not doing within the context and scope of the charge to the Task Force? **(4)** What is the story of TAMU that is not being told by TAMU's current Heritage Assets (HAs) that [might/could/should/must]* be told? **(5)** What [might/could/should/must]* this story tell? **(6)** How [might/could/should/must]* this story be told, e.g., what type of media would you use to tell the story? **(7)** Where on campus [might/could/should/must]* this story be told?

Rationale for Proposed Conceptual Design for Plaza 1 & Plaza



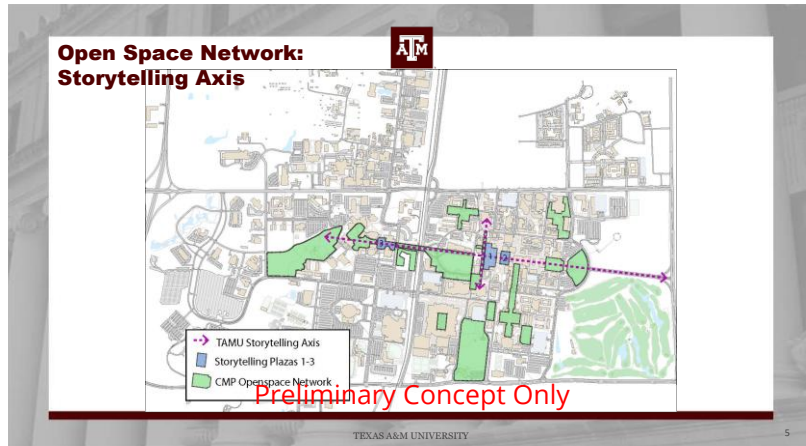
(1) Campus Character Zones & (2) Campus Open Space Network

The TFCHD recommendations are aligned and integrated with the foundation set forth in the CMP, specifically the **Character Zones** and the **Open Space Network**. This network and these zones work in union with campus



guidelines to support the creation of a campus environment that is accommodating of institutional needs and reflective of the identity and values of TAMU.

Based on analysis of data captures by the TFCHD,



recommendations for development of strategies to respond to the charge included:

- (1) Using the entire *Campus* as a canvas (*Outdoors* and *Indoors*);
- (2) Focusing on *Storytelling* and *Context*;
- (3) Making use of *Traffic Patterns* and *View Corridors*;
- (4) Investigating wide range of *Media* to identify most effective *Medium* for *Storytelling*; and
- (5) Proceeding with *Phased Implementation*.

The CMP identifies key linkages and connections across campus in the east-west and north-south direction. These linkages and connections are highlighted at their intersections and influence siting of buildings, lines of sight, and access to plazas, amenities, and displays.

The TFCHD proposed recommendation highlights the main east-west campus linkage to create a main storytelling axis, comprised of three main plazas:

- **Plaza 1** (*Academic Plaza* – Phase I);
- **Plaza 2** (*Area between Academic Building and Cushing Library* – Phase II); and
- **Plaza 3** (*West Campus* - Phase III).

The terminology of “*Plaza*” denotes changes to the spatial anatomy of the space. (i.e., configuration of sidewalks, lawn space, landscape, open gathering space, etc.)

Storytelling content within plazas focuses on events and milestones (less on individuals) that have impacted the growth and development of the university. As the story is still unfolding, space is left to add content.

This storytelling axis builds on existing north-south axis of *Military Walk*, and complements other spaces such as *Simpson Drill Field* and *Spirit Plaza* (tradition focused).

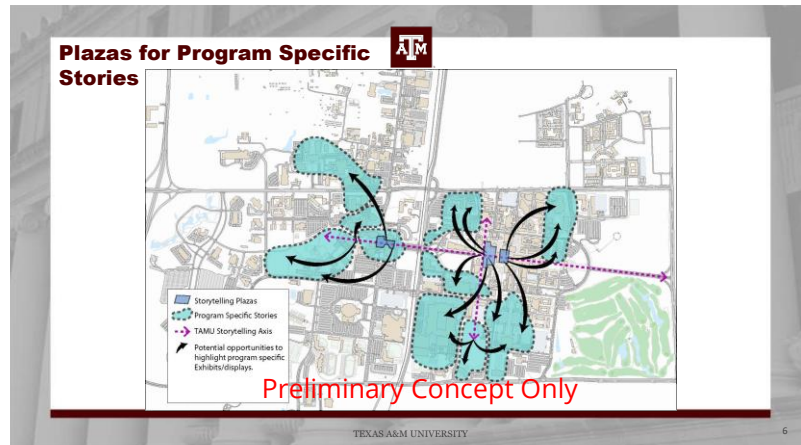
(3) Campus Plazas for Program Specific Stories

The TFCHD proposed recommendation for the creation of a main university-wide storytelling axis serves as the foundation for further expanding storytelling into program specific areas.

These stories can be highlighted within the interior spaces of buildings.

The goal would be to highlight specific achievements and accomplishments for colleges, specific programs, and department through exhibits (permanent or temporary), displays, art pieces, etc.

There is overlap and synergy with the other Board of Regents Approved Actions such as Communications Outreach and Engagement (Actions 1, 8), Campus Experience (across all actions), and Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition (Actions 5, 6) that should be considered for storytelling content.

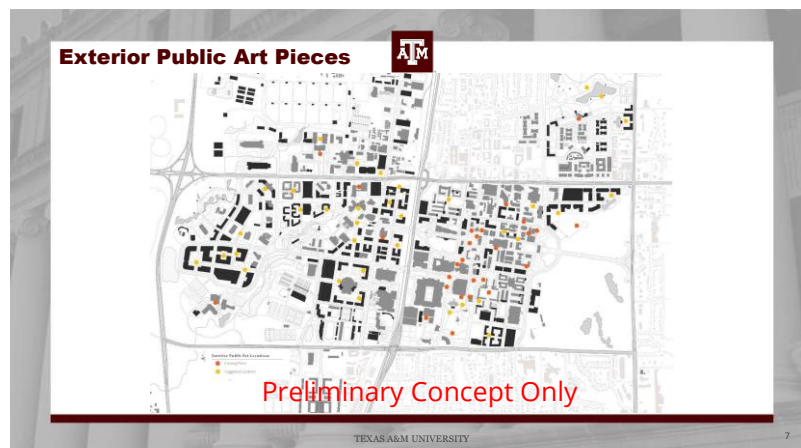


(4) Campus Exterior Public Art Pieces

The TFCHD proposed recommendation for the creation of a main university-wide storytelling axis serves as the foundation for further expanding storytelling into the overall comprehensive campus landscape.

There may be situations where stories merit separate spaces. In these instances, the location of the pieces must support the future recommendations as noted within the CMP:

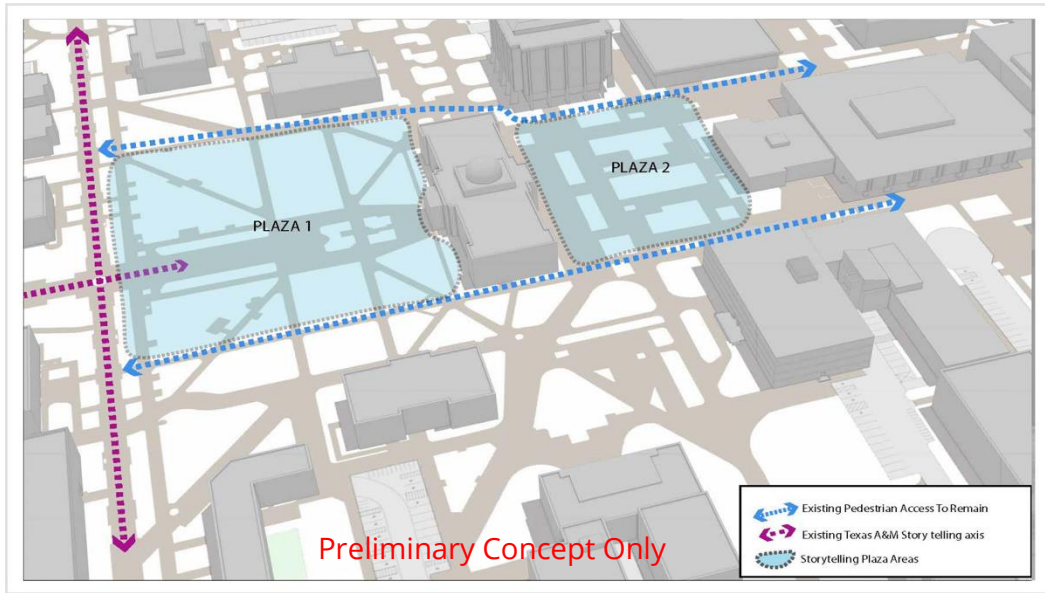
“Diversifying the type of art placed on campus will better align the University with its commitment to diversity. The subject matter of the existing collection is extremely limited - with



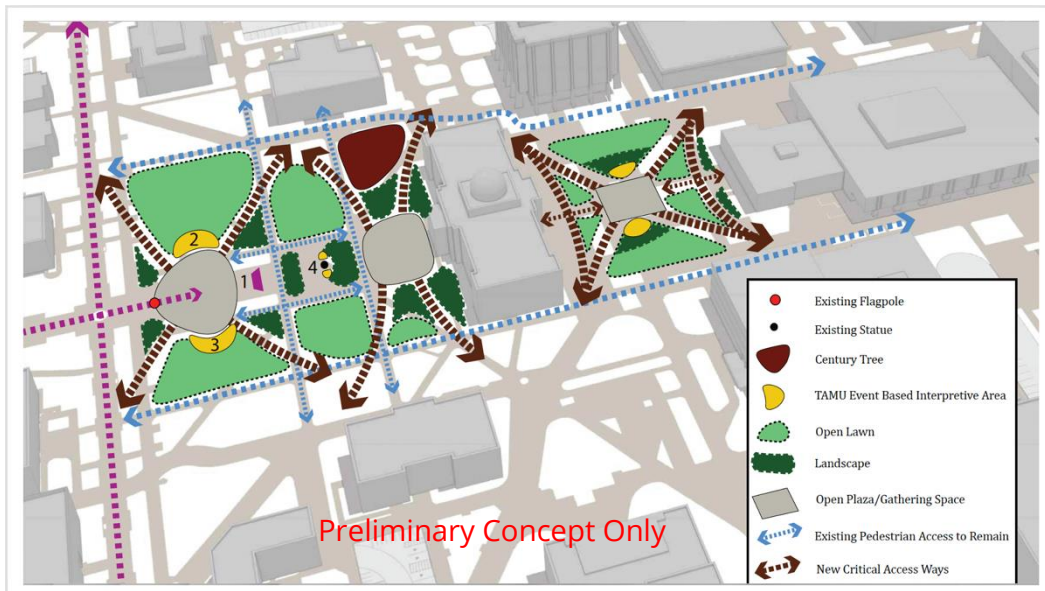
about 30% of the collection being bronze statues of historical figures. To better position Texas A&M as a global leader in higher education, there is opportunity for the University to select pieces and commission artists from diverse backgrounds to celebrate and acknowledge differing identities, values and ideas.”

Existing Conditions for Plaza 1 & Plaza 2

The TFCHD proposed recommendation for Plaza 1 and Plaza 2 is to focus the storytelling content within the plazas on events and milestones that have impacted the growth and development of the university. In order to succeed, there must be transparency in the selection of events and art pieces / displays.



Proposed Conceptual Design for Plaza 1 & Plaza 2



Initial thoughts / recommendations for **Storytelling** are to focus on the development of the university and milestone achievements associated with four Epochs of the TAMU Story, as described below.

Epoch No. 1 – The Early Years (1870 • 1900 • 1925)

In **Design Space 4**, the focus would be on:

- Enabling State legislation (Senators Matthew Gaines and George T. Ruby)
- State financial support decisions
- Lobbying success of Lawrence Sullivan Ross and Edward Lavoisier Blackshear in securing financial investment from the State
- Early building and growth under Ross, prior to 1900
- Overcoming financial difficulties during early 1900s
- WWI and its aftermath

Epoch No. 2 – Growth and Transformation (1925 • 1950 • 1975)

In **Design Space 1**, the focus would be on:

- WWII and its aftermath
- Rudder Presidency:
 - Transforming the University from a small land-grant college to a renowned university
 - Making membership in the Corps of Cadets optional
 - Admittance of women to attend the University
 - Leading efforts to integrate the campus
- First major research contributions in agriculture and life science with the Nobel Peace Prize (1970) to Norman Borlaug for enabling the “green revolution”

Epoch No. 3 – Explosive Growth and Quality Advancement (1975 • 2000 • 2025)

In **Design Space 2**, the focus would be on:

- Adding the *Sea Grant* and *Space Grant* designations to TAMU's *Land Grant* designation
- Development of the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan for TAMU
- TAMU's induction in 2001 to the *American Association of Universities* (AAU) as a Tier 1 Research Institution
- Multiple nationally ranked *Departments* and *Colleges*
- Expansion to other locations beyond College Station (e.g., TAMU at *Galveston*; TAMU at *Qatar*; College of Dentistry in *Dallas*; TAMU School of Law in *Fort Worth*; Texas A&M College of Pharmacy in *Kingsville*; Soltis Research and Education

Center in *San Isidro de Peñas Blancas, Costa Rica*; TAMU Higher Education Center at *McAllen*; and at the *RELLIS Campus*)

- A story still being written...

Epoch No. 4 – Further Growth and Quality Advancement (2025 • 2050 • 2075)

In **Design Space 3**, the focus would be on:

- The Future of the University, a story still to be written...

In addition, for **Plaza 2 Storytelling**, the TFCHD's initial thoughts / recommendations are to focus on the milestone achievements associated with:

- (1) Specific significant *TAMU Accomplishments and Impacts* within its designation as a *Land, Sea, and Space Grant Institution*;
- (2) Specific significant *TAMU Academic, Research and Scholarship, and Engagement Achievements*; and
- (3) The *Global Impact of Aggies*.

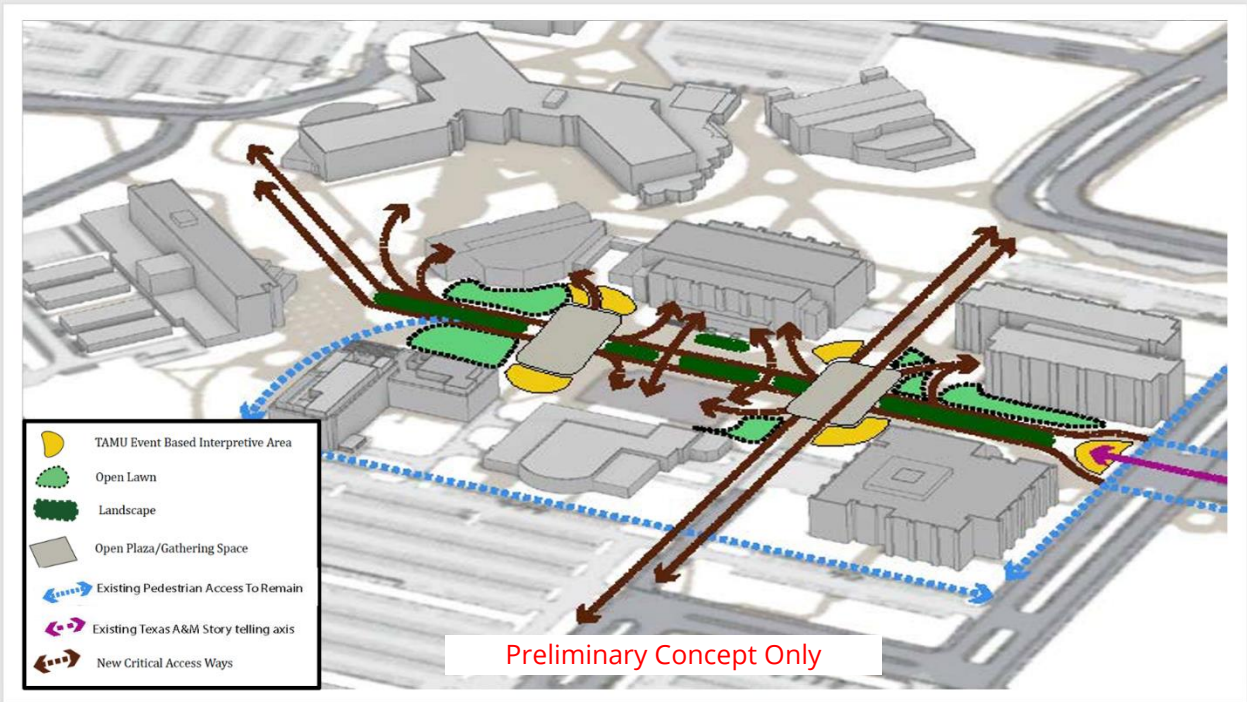
In both Plazas, the selected *medium / media for storytelling* needs to complement the story being told and should explore methods other than *statues and busts*. Additional *displays / markers* should be added to provide *history and context*. Open plazas and gathering spaces should incorporate *shading and seating spaces* to reinforce the space as a *destination*, while accounting for *major access ways and pedestrian traffic patterns*.

The developments associated with each epoch should be retrospective with recognitions of any individual's contributions done posthumously

Proposed General Concept for Plaza 3

The general concept for **Plaza 3 Storytelling** is to focus on additional significant, and more contemporary, milestone accomplishments, impacts, and achievements:

- (1) Additional significant *Accomplishments and Impacts* within TAMU's designation as a *Land, Sea, and Space Grant Institution*;
- (2) Additional significant *TAMU Academic, Research and Scholarship, and Engagement Achievements*; and
- (3) *Physical Development of West Campus*.




Key Performance Indicators

The TFCHD identified four *Key Performance Indicators* (KPI), along with their corresponding actions to achieve each KPI. These include the solicitation for:

- (1) *Professional Services for Architect and/or Landscape Architect* for the development of proposed *Concepts and Scenarios*;
- (2) *Juried Competition* for the development of *Art Pieces* and/or *New Displays*;
- (3) *A Historian* to research and develop *Storytelling Content* (Note: *TAMU faculty and Cushing Library* may also be possible resources).

The above three actions need to occur prior to providing a detailed phased plan with budgetary estimates for the development of budgetary numbers and refinement of phased implementation.

 Key Performance Indicators	
KPI and Description	Actions to Achieve KPI
Development of proposed concepts and scenarios	Solicitation for professional services for architect and/or landscape architect.
Development of proposed art pieces and displays	Solicitation for juried competition for art pieces and/or development of new displays.
Development of storytelling content and art pieces / displays	Solicitation for professional services for a historian to research and develop storytelling content. TAMU faculty and Cushing Library may also be possible resources.
Development of budgetary numbers and refinement of phased implementation	Development of the above three actions need to occur prior to providing a detailed phased plan with budgetary estimates.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY 11

NOTE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT JUNKINS ON TRANSITION

On June 1, 2021, our 26th president, M. Katherine Banks, will be in office. My intent on providing this briefing is to mark the very real work conducted to date, and to provide a smooth handoff to President Banks. This briefing is not a final report by any means but represents a fantastic start as the first phase of a four-year initiative.

What this briefing has included:

- The *Quest for the Ring* pilot program successfully led to the commitment of more students of color to Texas A&M. Much more work remains to build out this exciting program;
- More than 1000 Regents Scholars have been confirmed to date, including an increase of 150 new freshmen;
- Actionable work that ensures that the BoR-approved investment in student pathways-to-doctorate programs, faculty ACES fellows, and other recruitment and recognition initiatives for faculty and staff expands;
- Research that hones in on the gaps identified in the Stronger Together: Report of the Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion;
- Fidelity around the leadership behaviors that embody our core values and reinforce a campus experience where Aggies always contribute to the success of each other, build each other up during their time at A&M and throughout their careers and lives;
- Campus conceptual designs that build upon the 2017 Campus Master Plan for more green space and areas of focus to recognize excellence that captures historical context and a blueprint for additional spaces to honor contributions for years to come.

What this briefing could NOT include:

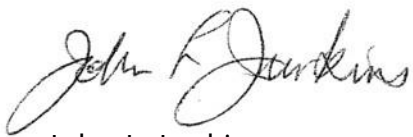
- The briefing update does not demonstrate all continuing activities that will be necessary over the remaining 3.65 years in this four-year initiative.
- Each year will require updates to build upon the previous year's KPIs in order to best utilize every penny of investment to the greatest effect possible.
- Campus designs are preliminary concepts only, not approved nor final.

I believe that we are in an exciting time and indeed a new era for our campus, hastened by an emergence from this year-plus global pandemic and calls for

improving diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the nation and here at Texas A&M.

I encourage these teams and all Aggies to keep up the good work of listening, researching and acting with measurable results to enhance our outreach and engagement of all. I am deeply grateful to them for their work as we welcome the 26th President to preside over their continued actions.

This journey is a never-ending quest to better live up to our core values and obligations as a land grant university. In the process, we will further advance this great American university.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John L. Junkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J".

John L. Junkins

21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge[©]

“The beauty of anti-racism is that you don’t have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it’s the only way forward.” — Ijeoma Oluo

The Diversity Council acknowledges systemic racism as a critical public health concern.

- Racism can include interpersonal acts of discrimination, which is not limited to individual acts of bias.
- Racism goes beyond individual attitudes or interpersonal exchanges and extends to structural and systemic factors such as institution policies and societal norms.
- “How is individual, structural and systemic institution racism operating here?” In each of our settings? How do we examine structures, policies, practices, norms and values? What are strategies to address and dismantle racism? We acknowledge that there are many questions however, let start by each person taking one step at time to dismantle racism. We have the responsibility to acknowledge racism, advocate for equitable policies and inform the public discourse.
- Think about the time and attention you dedicated to the process. A lot, right? Change is hard. Creating effective social justice habits, particularly those dealing with issues of power, privilege, supremacy and leadership is like any lifestyle change. The good news is there are an abundance of resources just waiting to empower you to be a more effective player in the quest for equity and justice. Please use this plan just as it is, or adapt it to a sector, an ethnic/racial group, or interest area.

About the 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge

- For 21 days, do one action to further your understanding of power, privilege, supremacy, systemic racism, oppression and equity as an individual, group, unit, or department.
- The challenge includes suggestions for readings, podcasts, videos, observations and ways to form and deepen community connections. Suggestions are in the following categories:
 - [Read](#)
 - [Listen](#)
 - [Watch](#)
 - [Notice](#)
 - [Connect](#)
 - [Engage](#)
 - [Act](#)
 - [Reflect](#)



- Stay Inspired

Use the 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge Chart provided at the end of this document to track your progress on the category of your choice and to stay on course. We understand that your schedule may not allow you to complete this challenge in 21 days, so please feel free to take more time if you need to.

Day	Read	Watch	Connect	Engage	Act	Notes
1						
2						
3						

We think that understanding, acknowledging and relearning our American history of racism is a critical step to understanding white privilege, white supremacy, systemic racism and health disparities. Since this is such a powerful lens into the complexities of our journey to becoming anti-racists, we have focused our resources on these issues.

While we challenge ourselves to learn and grown as anti-racist individuals, it's imperative for us not leave our colleagues or classmates of color to face or try to solve the problem of racism alone. We can work together in unity to stand against racism by taking this challenge as a group with friends and family, units, departments, colleges or organization-wide. Upon completion of this challenge, if you're interested in discussing and reflecting further in a group setting, you're invited to participate in virtual facilitated group discussions, "Conversations that Matter: Race, Racism and Anti-Racism." You can sign up on BuckeyeLearn for any one of these monthly virtual discussion groups, which will be hosted by the Diversity Council, along with various partners, from September 2020 to June 2021. Staff will be eligible to receive credit towards your P3 for Cultural Competency by attending this event.

Here are just a few ideas to get you started. Please be sure to use the chart.

READ

How White People Got Made, by Quinn Norton, explores where the term "white people" comes from and which ethnic groups have and have not been able to become "white" throughout US history.

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, by Peggy McIntosh. A groundbreaking essay that lists the ways she is began to recognize the way white privilege operated in her life.

Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White Person, by Gina Crosley-Corcoran, who was raised "the kind of poor that people don't want to believe still exists in this country," explores where race and class do and don't intersect and how she has come to understand her own white privilege.

[*The Injustice of This Moment Is Not an 'Aberration,'*](#) by Michelle Alexander, contextualizes the United States' 2020 state of racism/white supremacy as an inevitable outcome of a collective narrative steeped in denial.

[*White Fragility*](#), by Robin DiAngelo, a groundbreaking 2011 article that led to the 2018 book of the same title, explores why it can be so hard for white people to talk about race, and how the resulting silence and defensiveness function to hold racial dynamics and racial oppression in place.

[*Understanding the Racial Wealth Gap*](#), by Amy Traub, Laura Sullivan, Tatjana Mescheded and Tom Shapiro, a 2017 study that analyzed the racial wealth gap that exists between white, Black and Latino households.

[*White Mom to Racists: 'Don't use my child to further your hate-filled ignorance,'*](#) by the Rev. Edith Love, models allyship in an article written in response to online racial abuse arising from her white teen son's recent attack by a group of young teens who were Black.

[*White Fragility in Students*](#), by Teaching While White founders Jenna Chandler-Ward and Elizabeth Denevi, is a call to action which the authors share their experience in school and after school where white students and adults lack the knowledge or skill to navigate racism and conversations about it, and how that white deficit impacts students of color.

[*21 Racial Microaggressions You Hear on a Daily Basis*](#), by photographer Kiyun Kim, uses a series of photographs to elaborate on the term "microaggression." Note that Ibram X. Kendi, in his recent book *How To Be An Anti-Racist*, calls us to consider using the term "racist abuse" as a more descriptive alternative.

[*Guide to Allyship*](#), by Amélie Lamont who created this site to be an ever-evolving and growing open source guide meant to provide you with the resources for becoming a more effective ally.

[*From Alt-Right to Groyper, White Nationalists Rebrand for 2020 and Beyond*](#), by the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights (IREHR), is a report on white nationalist marketing strategy known as "groyper."

[*People of Colour Have to 'Code-Switch' to Fit in with White Norms*](#), from a longer series taking an in-depth look at racism in the UK in 2020, this article focuses on the double bind of code-switching. What is it? What toll does it take? What is the cost of not code switching?

[*"America's Racial Contract Is Killing Us,"*](#) by Adam Serwer, *The Atlantic* (May 8, 2020), the pandemic has exposed the bitter terms of our racial contract, which deems certain lives of greater value than others.

[*Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement \(Mentoring a New Generation of Activists\)*](#), by Barbara Ransby. If it takes a community to raise a child, it certainly takes a community to produce a book. Many people contributed to this book directly and indirectly.

[*“My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant”*](#) by Jose Antonio Vargas in The New York Times Magazine (June 22, 2011). Jose Antonio Vargas recounts his life as an undocumented immigrant.

[*The 1619 Project \(all the articles\)*](#) in The New York Times Magazine, is an ongoing project developed by The New York Times Magazine in 2019 with the goal of re-examining the legacy of slavery in the United States and timed for the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first Africans in Virginia.

[*The Combahee River Collective Statement*](#) is committed to fighting race, sex and class oppression, and recognizing oppression based on sexuality. These issues were analyzed not just as separate forces, but interacting forces.

[*“The Intersectionality Wars”*](#) by Jane Coaston in Vox (May 28, 2019). When Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term 30 years ago, it was a relatively obscure legal concept. Then it went viral.

[*Tips for Creating Effective White Caucus Groups*](#) developed by Craig Elliott, PhD. White caucuses are an important mechanism for people who identify as white and/or have white skin privilege to do their own work. It provides them with an environment and intention to authentically and critically engage in whiteness and white privilege, and hold each other accountable for change.

[*“Where do I donate? Why is the uprising violent? Should I go protest?”*](#) by Courtney Martin (June 1, 2020). An ally will mostly engage in activism by standing with an individual or group in a marginalized community. An accomplice will focus more on dismantling the structures that oppress that individual.

[*“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”*](#) by Peggy McIntosh. A personal journey identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege.

[*“Who Gets to Be Afraid in America?”*](#) by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, The Atlantic (May 12, 2020). Dr. Kendi says, “Americans do not see me, or Ahmaud Arbery, running down the road—they see their fear.”

[*“75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice.”*](#) by Corinne Shutask. Achieving racial justice is a marathon, not a sprint. Our work to fix what we broke and left broken is not done until Black folks tell us it’s done.

[*Resources for White People to Learn and Talk About Race and Racism*](#), a jumping-off point for white people to teach themselves about race and racism, and to get a sense for the kinds of things the Fractured Atlas White Caucus has been reading/watching/listening.

[*6 Questions to Stop Asking Your Black Friends and Colleagues Right Now*](#), this list is just a start and again, it’s important to check with friends to ask if it resonates with what they need.

[*Some Do’s and Don’ts for White People Who Want to Discuss Racism at Work*](#)

A quick guide of do’s and don’ts and ideas on how to approach every day at work during this time.

[*How to Confront Your Implicit Bias*](#), an interview by Katie Couric with Jennifer L. Eberhardt, PhD, psychology professor at Stanford University, examines how racial bias infiltrates every level of society based on her book *Biased*.

[*Racism in Medicine: Shifting the Power*](#), published by J. Nwando Olayiwola, MD, shares a personal experience in which a racist rant by a patient seemingly reverses the power dynamic.

[*White Privilege in Health Care: Following Recognition With Action*](#), published by Joseph Hobbs, describes one of many places to start on the path of self-realization and active interventions to address the racial disparities in health care and society as a whole

[*There is Still Bias in Patient Satisfaction Data*](#), published in the Journal of the National Medical Association by Kenneth G. Poole, MD and Leon McDougle, MD, question whether the discrimination and bias experienced by women and African American physicians play out routinely and systemically in patient encounters, manifesting as unequal patient satisfaction ratings, or alternatively if discrimination from patients accounts for “occasional,” anecdotal circumstances.

[*You Want a Confederate Monument? My Body Is a Confederate Monument*](#), an opinion piece written by poet Caroline Randall Williams in the New York Times as she explores the truth of oppression in a living testament to the rules, the practices and the causes of the Old South.

[*Caste: the Origin of our Discontents*](#), Isabel Wilkerson in the American caste system, and the signal of rank is what we call race...race is the primary tool and the visible decoy, the front man, for caste. The ties between the American caste system and those in India and Nazi Germany, and points to ways America can move beyond our artificial and destructive human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.

[Anti-Racist Reading List](#) curated by Ibrahim X. Kendi

[Anti-Racism Resources](#) (readings, books, podcasts, etc.)

[Ohio State’s Multicultural Center’s Racism Tool Kit](#)

[Outsmarting Human Minds](#) website

LISTEN

[Teaching While White](#), hosted by longtime educators Jenna Chandler-Ward and Elizabeth Denevi, TWW’s podcast focuses on how whiteness shows up in the education sector and what anti-racist educators are doing to challenge that. Episodes feature different nationally renowned anti-racist educator guests. (Any episode-times vary)

[All My Relations](#), hosted by Matika Wilbur (Swinomish and Tulalip) and Adrienne Keene (Cherokee Nation) is a podcast that “explores indigeneity in all its complexity.” Episodes focus on issues such as DNA identity, appropriation, feminism, food sovereignty, gender, sexuality and more while “keeping it real, playing games, laughing a lot, and even crying sometimes.” (Episodes are approximately one hour each)

[Code Switch](#), hosted by journalists Gene Demby and Shereen Marisol Meraji, both people of color, is a podcast curated by a team of NPR journalists of color who navigate the complexities of race, both professionally and personally, daily. Episodes focus on a wide range of issues overlapping race, ethnicity and culture. (Episode times vary)

[Breakdances with Wolves](#) Podcast, hosted by Gyasi Ross, Wesley Roach and Minty LongEarth, “a few Natives with opinions and a platform.” Episodes report on current events through an indigenous perspective. (Episodes are approximately one hour each)

[Black Like Me](#), host Dr. Alex Gee “invites you to experience the world through the perspective of one Black man, one conversation, one story or even one rant at a time.” (Episode times vary)

[Scene on Radio – Seeing White Series](#), host John Biewen and collaborator Chenjerai Kumanyika explore whiteness over the course of 14 episodes. Where does it come from? What does it mean? Why does it exist? (Episode S2 E1: Turning the Lens – 16 minutes)

[On Point Radio – Oklahoma to Incorporate 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Into Statewide School Curriculum](#) host David Folkenflik interviews Tulsans about the 1921 “Black Wall Street” race massacre and recent efforts to integrate it into the Oklahoma education system. (46 minutes)

[TED Radio Hour – Mary Bassett: How Does Racism Affect Your Health?](#) Guy Raz speaks with Dr. Mary T. Bassett, Director of the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University about how and why race affects the medical attention you receive, your baby's chances of living, and even life expectancy. (12 minutes)

[Here & Now – Without Slavery, Would the U.S. Be the Leading Economic Power?](#) host Jeremy Hobson explores with Edward Baptist, author of [The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism](#), how slavery established the United States as a world economic power. (15 minutes)

[NPR Morning Edition – You Cannot Divorce Race From Immigration](#), by journalist Rachel Martin talks to Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas for a response to a story in The Atlantic, written by David Frum, proposing the US cut legal immigration by half. (6 minutes)

[BBC Radio 5 live – The Sista Collective](#), created and hosted by BBC producer Jessie Aru-Phillips, each season displays the depth of Black British talent. (Episodes are approximately one hour each)

You could also choose a song from the [Soundtrack4Justice](#) playlist below.

WATCH

Short, Coffee Break Length

[This is Us](#), Dr. Eddie Glaude explains why blaming current racial tensions on Donald Trump misses the point. (3 minutes)

[The Iroquois Influence on the Constitution](#), host and producer of First Voices Indigenous Radio Tiokasin Ghosthorse explains the sequestering of two Iroquois chiefs to advise in the writing of the U.S. Constitution. (4 minutes)

[Racism is Real](#), a split-screen video depicting the difference in the white and black experience. (3 minutes)

[Confronting 'intergroup anxiety': Can you try too hard to be fair?](#) Explores why we may get tongue-tied and blunder when we encounter people from groups unfamiliar to us. (5 minutes)

[I Didn't Tell You](#), for those who ever wondered what a day in the life of a person of color is like, listen to this poem, written and spoken by Norma Johnson. (7 minutes)

[CBS News Analysis: 50 states, 50 different ways of teaching America's past](#), Ibram X. Kendi reviews current history curriculum production and use across the US (5 minutes)

[The Disturbing History of the Suburbs](#), an “Adam Ruins Everything” episode that quickly and humorously educates how redlining came to be. (6 minutes)

[New York Times Op-Docs on Race](#), multiple videos with a range of racial and ethnic perspectives on the lived experience of racism in the U.S. (Each video runs about 6 minutes)

[Why “I’m not racist” is only half the story](#), Robin DiAngelo explains the function of white fragility in maintaining racial hierarchy. (7 minutes)

[White Bred](#), excellent quick intro to how white supremacy shapes white lives and perception. (5 minutes)

[What Kind of Asian Are You?](#) Humorous 2-minute YouTube video that illustrates the utter silliness of the way many white Americans interact with Asian Americans. (2 minutes)

[What Would You Do? \(Bicycle Thief Episode\)](#), ABC’s popular show explores the impact of racial and gender bias and prejudice at a family-friendly park. Before this video, would you have anticipated this differential treatment?

Medium, Lunch Break Length

[How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Discussing Race](#), TEDx talk by Jay Smooth that suggests a new way to think about receiving feedback on our racial blindspots. (12 minutes)

[What Being Hispanic and Latinx Means in the United States](#), Fernanda Ponce shares what she’s learning about the misunderstanding and related mistreatment of the incredibly diverse ethnic category people in U.S. call Hispanic. (12 minutes)

[Indigenous People React to Indigenous Representation in Film and TV](#), conversation with a diverse range of Indigenous people by FBE about media depictions of Indigenous people, Columbus Day, and Indigenous identity. (15 minutes)

[How to deconstruct racism, one headline at a time](#), TED Talk by Baratunde Thurston that explores patterns revealing our racist framing, language and behaviors. (10 minutes)

[The urgency of intersectionality](#), TED Talk by Kimberlé Crenshaw that asks us to see the ways Black women have been invisibilized in the law and in media. (19 minutes)

[The danger of a single story](#), TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozie Adiche, offers insight to the phenomenon of using small bits of information to imagine who a person is. (18 minutes)

[How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly toward them](#), TED Talk by Vernā Myers, encourages us to work vigorously to counterbalance bias by connecting with and learning about and from the groups we fear. (19 minutes)

[Hip-hop, grit, and academic success](#), TEDx Talk by Bettina Love, PhD, explains how students steeped in hip-hop culture, often seen as deficient, actually bring the very characteristics deemed necessary for 21st century success. (15 minutes).

[Getting Uncomfortable and Learning to Speak](#), Luvvie Ajayi (11 minutes)

[Let's Get to the Root Racial Injustice](#), by Professor Megan Ming Francis, (20 minutes)

[Economic Impact on Racism](#), by Heather McGhee (14 minutes)

[Racism Impact Black People's Lifelong Health](#), by David R. Williams, PhD (17 minutes)

[Interview with the founders of Black Life Matters](#) (16 minutes)

[Gender and Language Pronouns – What They are and Why They Matter](#), by Lena Tenney and Leo Taylor, PhD, from The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University.

[Active Bystander Training](#), by Lena Tenney from The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University on being aware of bias and how to interrupt it.

For Faculty and Staff at The Ohio State University:

[Matinees that Matter](#) provides a learning experience to The Ohio State University community by recognizing the importance of ethnic, racial and economic disparities of health care in the United States. The program will highlight video and documentaries set in different ethnic or racial communities, providing a deeper exploration of the ways in which social conditions affect population health.

[Transgender Health](#), by Andrew Keaster, MD

[Understanding our Muslim Patient Population](#), by Yosef Khan, MD, PhD

[Caring for Hispanic Latino Patients](#), by Alejandro Diez, MD

[Basic Communication Needs of the Deaf Patient](#), by Michelle McCullough

[Implicit Bias](#), online module in collaboration with The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University and classes facilitated by Quinn Capers, IV, MD, available on BuckeyeLearn.

Long, Sit On the Couch Length

[When they see us](#), 4-part Netflix series by Ava DuVernay about the wrongful incarceration and ultimate exoneration of the “Central Park Five.” (Four 1-hour episodes)

[13th](#), Netflix documentary by Ava DuVernay about the connection between U.S. slavery and the present-day mass incarceration system. (1 hour 40 minutes)

[Slavery by Another Name](#), PBS documentary that challenges the idea slavery ended with the emancipation proclamation. (90 minutes)

[Unnatural Causes](#), seven-part documentary by California Newsreel that explores the impact of racism on health and U.S. healthcare. (4 hours total, episodes have variable lengths)

[Birth of a White Nation](#), keynote speech by legal scholar Jacqueline Battalora offers a blow-by-blow description of the moment the idea of, and word for, white people entered U.S. legal code. (36 minutes)

[In the White Man's Image](#), PBS documentary about the Native American boarding school movement designed to “kill the Indian and save the man.” (56 minutes)

[Race: The Power of an Illusion](#), three-part, 3-hour film by California Newsreel exploring the biology of skin color, the concept of assimilation and the history of institutional racism. (Three, 1-hour episodes)

[American Son \(Kenny Leon\)](#) time passes and tension mounts in a Florida police station as an estranged interracial couple awaits news of their missing teenage son. (Available on Netflix)

[Blindspotting \(Carlos López Estrada\)](#), Collin must make it through his final three days of probation for a chance at a new beginning in his Oakland, Calif., neighborhood. His bond with his volatile best friend soon is tested when Collin sees a police officer shoot a suspect in the back during a chase through the streets. (Available on Hulu, Cinemax or to rent)

[Clemency \(Chinonye Chukwu\)](#), Bernadine Williams is a prison warden made tough and unfeeling by the numerous deaths she has witnessed throughout her long career. (Available to rent)

[Dear White People \(Justin Simien\)](#), this film focuses on escalating racial tensions at a fictitious, prestigious Ivy League college from the perspective of several black students. (Available on Netflix)

[Fruitvale Station \(Ryan Coogler\)](#), a dramatic rendering of a real-life tragedy recounts the final hours of Oscar Grant, shot by San Francisco police. (Available to rent)

[I Am Not Your Negro \(James Baldwin doc\)](#), is an essay film, moving between archival footage, interviews, and readings of Baldwin's writings. (Available to rent or on Kanopy)

[Just Mercy \(Destin Daniel Cretton\)](#), an inspiring drama that brings one of the most important stories of our time to the big screen. (Available to rent)

[The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution](#), Stanley Nelson tells the story of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, which sought to transform a system of racial oppression. (Available to rent)

[The Hate U Give \(George Tillman Jr.\)](#), the uneasy balance between her worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. (Available to rent)

[When They See Us \(Ava DuVernay\)](#), five teens from Harlem are trapped in a nightmare when they are falsely accused of a brutal attack in Central Park. Based on the true story. (Available to rent on Netflix)

[POSE](#), is a series about New York City's African American and Latino LGBTQ and gender-nonconforming ballroom culture scene in the 1980s - 1990s. (Available to rent on Netflix)

[Trail of Tears](#), explores the resolve and resilience of the Cherokee people who resisted removal from their homelands in the Southeast in every way they knew: assimilating, adopting a European-style government and legal system, accepting Christianity and even taking their case all the way to U.S. Supreme Court.

NOTICE

Once people start to learn about white privilege and America's systems of oppression through history, they often ask, "Why didn't I see this sooner?" It's easy to overlook what we're not looking for. Once you understand the phenomenon of selective noticing, take yourself on a noticing adventure.

- 1) Start by watching the Test Your Awareness: Do the Test
- 2) Then...go out in the world and change up what you notice. Here's some of what you might look for:
 - Who is and isn't represented in ads?
 - Who are your 10 closest friends? What's the racial mix in this group?
 - As you move through the day, what's the racial composition of the people around you? On your commute? At the coffee shop, you go to? At the gym? At your workplace? At the shows you go to on the weekend?
 - What percentage of the day are you able to be with people of your own racial identity?
 - Notice how much of your day you're speaking about racism. With whom are you engaging with on these issues? Who are you not? Why do you think this is?
 - What are the last five books you read? What's the racial mix of the authors?



- What's the racial mix of the main characters in your favorite TV shows? Movies?
- What's the racial mix of people pictured in the photos and artwork in your home? In your friends, family and colleagues' homes?
- Who's filling what kinds of jobs/social roles in your world? (E.g., who's the store manager and who stocks the shelves? Who's waiting on tables and who's busing the food?) Can you correlate any of this to racial identity?
- Whom do you notice on magazine covers? What roles are people of color filling in these images?
- If you're traveling by car, train or air, do you notice housing patterns? How is the housing arranged? Who lives near the downtown commerce area and who doesn't? Who lives near the waterfront and who doesn't? Who lives in industrial areas and who doesn't? What is the density of a given neighborhood? Can you correlate any of this to racial identity?

CONNECT

Follow racial justice activists, educators and organizations on social media. Here are some ideas to get you started. A good way to widen the circle of who you follow on social media is to check out and research whom these organizations follow, quote, repost and retweet.

Teaching Tolerance

Colours of Us

Anti-Defamation League

Define American

Privilege to Progress Black Minds Matter

Teaching While White

White Nonsense Roundup

Conversations with White People: Talking about race (Facebook Group)

Race Forward Racial Equity Tools

White Awake

Seeds of Caring -ANTI-RACISM: LISTEN, LEARN, ACT

So many more you will discover!

Google who's who in your area by typing in "Racial Justice" or "Anti-Racist" + name of city/town, organization or sector. A few website visits, emails and phone calls later, you will likely have an idea of how to get on the mailing list of one or more organizations in your area who are addressing issues of power and privilege. Once you connect to one, it's easy to connect to many!

Organizations to follow on social media:



Antiracism Center: Twitter

Audre Lorde Project: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Black Women's Blueprint: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Color Of Change: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Colorlines: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

The Conscious Kid: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Equal Justice Initiative (EJI): Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Families Belong Together: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Justice League NYC: Twitter | Instagram + Gathering For Justice: Twitter | Instagram

The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

The Movement For Black Lives (M4BL): Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

MPowerChange: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Muslim Girl: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

NAACP: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

National Domestic Workers Alliance: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

RAICES: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ): Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

SisterSong: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

United We Dream: Twitter | Instagram | Facebook

Join an OSUWMC Employee Resource Group (LGBTQ, Women of Color, Young Professionals, Black Staff and Faculty, Latino/Hispanic)

Research racial justice speakers and see who might be coming to your local university, church, community center or speaker series.

Take a course or workshop by going to BuckeyeLearn (for Ohio State faculty and staff) and sign up for Diversity and Inclusion courses, go to Ohio State Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State John Glenn School of Public Affairs, The Women's Place, Continuing Education Department or Office of Diversity and Inclusion to find a course about social justice issues.

ENGAGE

This can be the hardest part for people new to racial justice work. Engaging in racially mixed settings can trigger age-old power and privilege dynamics. The goal is to be a learner more than a knower, exactly the opposite of what dominant U.S. culture teaches us to be.



Here are some engagement tips to guide you:

- Enter the process to learn and bridge knowledge gaps.
- Enter the process to practice mindful social habits like the ones below.
- Stay engaged even when your mind and body start sending you signals to shrink or walk away.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Acknowledge what you don't know.
- Validate others by listening closely and believing the truth and importance of what they're sharing.
- Share airtime so that multiple perspectives are shared and engaged.
- Step Up Step Back. If you're generally quiet, step up and practice speaking more. If you're generally a talker, practice stepping back and listening more.
- Notice your biases and judgments as they arise. These are good for you to excavate your subconscious!
- Notice when you're uncomfortable. Reflect on why you're uncomfortable and think about what you can do to build emotional stamina in this area.
- Honor confidentiality. Though you can share what you're learning in general terms, don't repeat stories in a way that can be traced back to the person who shared it.
- Find a mentor within your own racial group to support and guide your growth.

ACT

Though many people want to jump to action sooner instead of later, action without vigorous self-education, self-reflection can unexpectedly reproduce the very power and privilege dynamics we seek to interrupt. Here are a few actions that you might consider:

- Invite friend(s), family and/or colleagues to do the 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge with you.
- Prepare yourself to interrupt racial jokes.
- Interrupt the pattern of white silence by speaking openly with family, friends, and colleagues about what you're doing and learning in the 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge.
- Invite friends, family and/or colleagues to join you for one or more of your daily "to-do" for a low-threshold invitation into the work and introduction to the 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge.
- Find out if your school, workplace or faith group has an Equity Committee. What can you learn from them? Are they open to new members? Join if you can. Support in other ways if you can't.
- Find organizations such as [The Privilege Institute](#), your local YWCA and other non-profits doing racial justice work and support them through donating your time, money and other resources.
- When the status quo is racist, disrupt it. No matter how big or small, put yourself out there to create change. No need to wait until you're comfortable disrupting; it may never get comfortable, though you will get better at managing discomfort!



Examples from participants include:

- Requiring administration to change the name of a dodgeball team from “The Cottonpickers”
- Improving the representation of books in the library by raising funds and purchasing hundreds of new books
- Conducting an equity audit within the organization to dismantle discriminating policies and procedures in hiring, retaining and promoting.
- Creating learning communities to set goals, objectives and action plans
- Disrupting inappropriate language by offering alternative language you yourself are learning
- Speaking, emailing and posting about articles, blogs, movies, and the 21-Day Challenge that you find impactful. Let people know you’re not neutral!

REFLECT

Reflecting and journaling is a crucial piece of the challenge. Plan to take time every day to reflect on what you choose to do, what you’re learning, and how you’re feeling. Difficult emotions such as shame and anger, though uncomfortable to feel, can guide you to deeper self-awareness about how power and privilege affects you and the people in your life. At the very least, use the “Reflect” space on the below tracking tool.

STAY INSPIRED!

Create a Soundtrack4Justice playlist that fuels you and/or can serve as a conversation starter with people of all ages.

You can find ours on YouTube, Apple Music or see individual songs below:

[Ain't Got No, I Got Life / Nina Simone](#)

[Baltimore / Nina Simone](#)

[Be Free / J Cole](#)

[Blended Family / Alicia Keys](#)

[Blue Bucket of Gold / Gallant X ft. Sufjan Stevens](#)

[Born This Way / Lady Gaga](#)

[Brave / Sara Bareilles](#)

[Colors in Bloom / Lex Allen ft. Taj Raiden](#)

[Fight the Power / Public Enemy](#)

[Fight Song / Rachel Platten](#)

[Formation / Beyoncé](#)

[For The Kids / Homeboy Sandman](#)

[Four Women / Nina Simone](#)



[Give Your Hands to Struggle / Sweet Honey in the Rock](#)
[Get Up, Stand Up / Bob Marley](#)
[Good As Hell / Lizzo](#)
[Hijabi / Mona Haydar](#)
[If It's Magic / Stevie Wonder](#)
[Keep Ya Head Up / Tupac](#)
[Love's In Need of Love Today / Stevie Wonder](#)
[Living for the City / Stevie Wonder](#)
[Mercedes Benz / Janis Joplin](#)
[Ne Me Quitte Pas / Nina Simone](#)
[People Get Ready / Curtis Mayfield and The Impressions](#)
[Rich Girl / Nina Simone](#)
[Roar / Katy Perry](#)
[Same As It Ever Was / Michael Franti & Spearhead](#)
[Same Love / Macklemore & Ryan Lewis](#)
[Save Me / Nina Simone](#)
[Stay Human / Michael Franti & Spearhead](#)
[Super Rich Kids / Frank Ocean](#)
[Strength, Courage & Wisdom / India Arie](#)
[The 10 Stop and Frisk Commandments / Jasiri X](#)
[The Colour in Anything / James Blake](#)
[Try / Colbie Caillat](#)
[We The People / Tribe Called Quest](#)
[Try Everything / Shakira](#)
[Where Is The Love / Black Eyed Peas](#)
[White Privilege / Mackelmore](#)
[White Privilege II / Macklemore](#)
[Whitey on the Moon / Gil Scott-Heron](#)
[Stand 4 What / Nick Cannon](#)
[This Is America / Childish Gambino](#)
[To Be Young Gifted and Black / Nina Simone](#)



USE THE PLANNING TOOL BELOW TO STAY ON TRACK

21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge

Tip: diversify your habits by doing some of each

21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge Chart

Day	Read	Watch	Connect	Engage	Act	Notes
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						

20						
21						

Name:

For Ohio State Wexner Medical Center faculty and staff, email your completed chart to Bravo@osumc.edu for a chance to win a special surprise.

Sample



Day	Read	Watch	Connect	Engage	Act	Notes
1	√					Read How White People Got Made. Why didn't I learn this stuff sooner?!
2	√					Read Microaggressions. Finally get what they are. And...have I done that?
3		√				Watched Miseducation-no wonder I don't know anything! #ChangeNeeded
4			√			Found Local Group. On mailing list, liked FB pg. Going to meet on 9/15!
5	√					Read Local Group's website. Couldn't stop reading.
6				√		Attended Local Group film + discussion. Awesome people.
7	√	√		√		More I learn more I learn I don't know. Want more, more, more!
8				√		2 nd day in a row I called a new Local Group connection for ideas.
9	√					Reading how to interrupt racist jokes. Do I dare? Feeling scared.
10			√			'Liked' three national racial justice organizations on FB.
11			√		√	Attended lecture by John Powell at Local U. Wow. Where have I been?
12	√	√				New FB likes post amazing stuff. Feeling inspired!
13	√	√	√			Focusing on whiteness in schools. So many orgs/resources. Who knew?
14					√	Called 5 friends for dinner + film. All psyched but John. Pissed me off!
15	√				√	Read up on ways to address people like John. Called. Good-ish talk.
16					√	Signed up to take class at Local Community College.
17				√		Attended Local Group MeetUp. Talking Guidelines super helpful.
18				√		Met MeetUp friends for a beer. Went to part of town I'd never been to.
19	√					MeetUp friend loaned me <i>Birth of a White Nation</i> . Can't put it down.
20			√		√	Hosted dinner + <i>White Man's Image</i> film. Shocking, bonding, motivating.
21					√	Asked boss how to get on diversity committee. Want to join.

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RESPECT. EDUCATE. INSPIRE. & GROW WITH US.

#MooreImpact, #DoMoore2020 #BeMoore

Texas A&M University

2020 Diversity Accountability Reports Summaries



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Academic Affairs Climate & Diversity Committee

Overview:

The **Academic Affairs Climate & Diversity Committee (AACDC)** has responsibility for division-wide diversity and climate initiatives in the Division of Academic Affairs. AACDC is composed of a steering committee appointed by the Academic Leadership Team, as well as, several volunteer standing and short-term committees. Together, these dedicated volunteers are working on a variety of projects to implement the University's Diversity Plan within the division. Efforts have engaged about 800 staff members through committee involvement, face-to-face training programs, and supervisor training programs.

The AACDC is a steering committee is currently co-chaired by Dr. Arthur Watson and Ms. Annette Shenkir. The steering committee's liaison to the Office of the Provost is Mr. Joe Pettibon, vice president for enrollment and academic services.

AACDC Examples of 2019-2020 Initiatives Regarding Recruitment, Retention, Climate & Equity:

<p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division-level subscription to Diverse Issues In Higher Education (implemented University-wide): Allows for the posting of open job requisitions on a national platform, with the hope to yield a more qualified, diverse applicant pool. • Hiring Review Subcommittee: The goal is to examine how hiring supervisors perceive the importance of diversity in the hiring process and how that importance is inserted into practice. 	<p>Retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking Division-level Promotions: In the 2019-2020 academic year, 358 promotions were awarded, which is approximately 26% of the Division staff. 33% of the total promotions awarded were to staff of color and 67% to women. • Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee: Currently, the goals of the subcommittee are to 1) enhance the ability of the Division to retain a diverse workforce through the knowledge obtained from exit surveys; 2) enhance the ability of new staff to engage in the university and community by developing and/or consolidating information to help new employees access resources at the University and in the local area.
<p>Climate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Climate Survey: AACDC submitted items specific to Academic Affairs staff concerning climates and the Division's efforts to address any climate issues. After the 	<p>Equity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Promotions and Career Ladders: , This report explored discrepancies among underrepresented groups in the area of promotions and use of career ladders. Division

<p>survey is administered in spring 2021, it will be analyzed and recommendations made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee Conversation Series: These guided, open dialogue conversations, via Zoom, focused on the social unrest in our country and the University, and the impact of COVID-19. Division staff had the opportunity to express frustrations, learn and celebrate victories in a safe space. 	<p>leadership has requested this report annually so that issues of inequity can be routinely addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming Sessions: The Division is currently brainstorming new ways to identify and limit inequities and will report new initiatives and outcomes in the next iteration of the accountability report.
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Other Notable AACDC Initiatives and Programs:

- **Big Idea Contest:** Staff are given an opportunity to submit ideas on programs, technologies and procedures that will help advance diversity within the Division. Winners are awarded cash prizes and AACDC works with leadership to fund the most impactful idea(s).
- **Required Diversity Training:** In 2018, the Provost approved a recommendation for required diversity training for all staff in Academic Affairs, and the requirement continues annually. Each staff member is asked to participate in at least one diversity training each year, with a recommendation of two (one per semester). To date, we have had over 90% compliance among staff in the Division. AACDC offers a variety of training programs throughout the year.
- **Mini-Grant Program:** The mini-grant program awards one-time funding to Division staff to recognize progress made in advancing diversity initiatives. Funding has been awarded for conference attendance, departmental diversity programming, and research/training with subject matter experts.
- **Supervisor Programs:** These programs allow for discussions about key climate and diversity findings, implementation strategies and needs. Additionally, training is conducted on various diversity and inclusion subjects as a result of climate survey recommendations.

AACDC Financial Overview/Plan:

Training (all staff, supervisors, etc.)	\$41,000	Idea Contest	\$40,000
AACDC Steering Committee Training	\$20,000	NCORE Support	\$20,000
Mini-Grant Program	\$30,000	Diverse Issues in Higher Educ Subscription	\$8,000
Climate Survey Analysis	\$6,000	Lunch Meetings and Socials	\$1,000
		Total (FY21 allocation and carry forward)	\$166,000



2020-2021 Diversity Plan Accountability Report

A. College Description and Demographics

- The college has 15 departments, 14 of which are located on West Campus
- Departmental Programs include both Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM), and Social Science fields
- Research and Extension programs cover the gamut of agriculture and life sciences from field to table, and the health of animals, people, and the environment
- The undergraduate student population is 54% female, the graduate student population is 53% female, and the staff is 76% female
- While the faculty is only 33% female, the faculty on the tenure track is 50% female, indicating that changes to the faculty search and recruitment process are now achieving gender parity
- The undergraduate student population is 23% Hispanic/LatinX, 4% Asian, and 3% Black, with increasing trends for Hispanic/LatinX and Asian students, and declining trends for Black students
- The graduate student population is 10% Hispanic/LatinX, 2% Asian, and 4% Black, with a positive trend line for Black students.
- The staff is 15% Hispanic/LatinX, 5% Asian, and 3% Black
- The faculty is 5% Hispanic/LatinX, 11% Asian, and 1.5% Black

B. Goals and Strategies to Impact Recruitment, Retention, Climate, and Equity

- Community recruiters are placed in the major metroplexes, targeting high schools with large numbers of students from underrepresented groups
- Summer Training in Agriculture and Related Sciences (STARS) connects with high school sophomores and juniors that are interested in STEM
- Articulation agreements are being developed with junior colleges with large populations of students from underrepresented groups so these students can directly transfer to programs within the college when they complete their associate degree
- College-wide summer Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) attracted an applicant pool that was 50% female, 34% Hispanic/LatinX, and 14% Black as a potential pipeline for recruiting future graduate students into college programs
- Graduate student recruiting efforts at national meetings for both Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS), and the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)
- Several Departments and Programs within the college participated in the Life Sciences Umbrella recruiting event
- College is participating for the first time in the Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program
- Vice Chancellor and Dean's Postdoctoral Fellows diversity recruiting program was established to provide a pipeline to further diversify our faculty

- The Agriculture Graduate Inclusive Excellence Leadership Community (AgGIE LC) provides mentoring and support for recipients of the OGAPS diversity fellowships, and recipients of college merit and excellence fellowships that are students from underrepresented groups
- The college has future plans to build similar mentoring and support programs within the MANRRS and SACNAS chapters to provide similar support for our undergraduate students from underrepresented groups
- Departmental faculty mentoring programs have been developed and Promotion and Tenure policies and procedures were updated to ensure compliance with college and university policies
- Faculty salary equity is reviewed annually based on university provided data and adjustments are made as needed
- A recent study of “stalled faculty” who have been in the Associate Professor title for longer than 10, 15, 20, or 25 years found no gender or ethnicity bias in the distribution of stalled faculty
- A college inclusive excellence committee was formed with representatives from each departments climate committee, as well as additional undergraduate, graduate, and staff representatives; this committee is tasked with developing and implementing programs that will advance our diversity, equity, inclusion, and climate goals
- Cultural Competency Certificate approved for Fall 2021

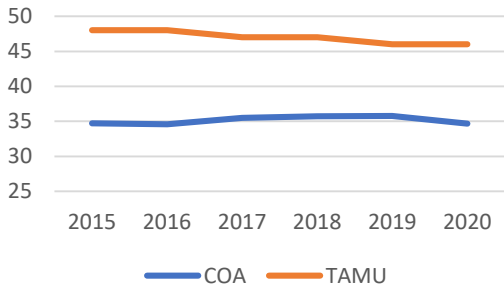
C. Challenges and impact of responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

- The primary challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic was the inability to have face to face gatherings of even small numbers of people
- This impacted our mentoring and leadership programs, as well as several undergraduate and graduate recruiting activities
- In addition to COVID-19, our faculty, staff, and students were impacted by the local and national climate surrounding race relations
- A survey was conducted to request input on what the college could do to improve and support black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)
- Some of the recurring themes included the need for education, training, and curricular initiatives to facilitate the majority white student population becoming more effective allies of BIPOC
- Students from underrepresented groups described a general fear of a lack of safety in part due to COVID-19, but also from those that express racist or prejudicial views.

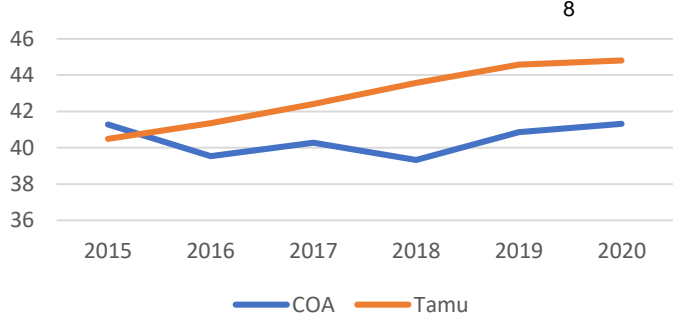
D. Diversity Plan Funding

- Funding from the Diversity Plan awards has been used in a variety of different ways to support the colleges recruitment, retention, and climate goals.
- Support for the Life Sciences umbrellas recruiting event resulted in many graduate students being recruited to several programs within the college, with a subset of these students receiving OGAPS Diversity Fellowships.
- Support was also provided for recruiting efforts at the MANRRS and SACNAS national conferences, as well as registration for faculty and students to attend and present at these meetings as well as a variety of conferences addressing race, gender, and ethnicity.
- Planned Fall 2021 celebration of diversity and inclusion in Agriculture and Life Sciences featuring student presentations and an industry/government/academia panel discussion

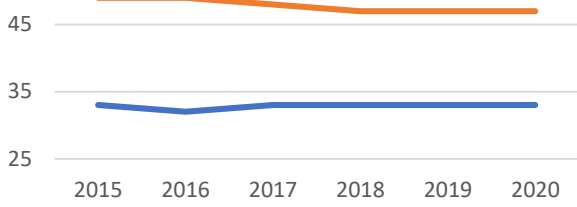
Total Students (% of females)



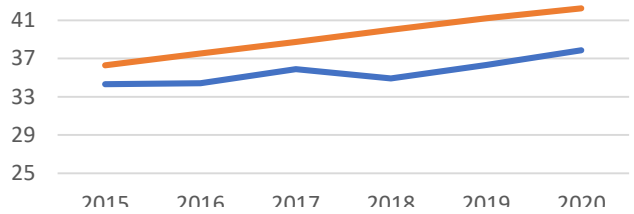
Total Student (% of URM)



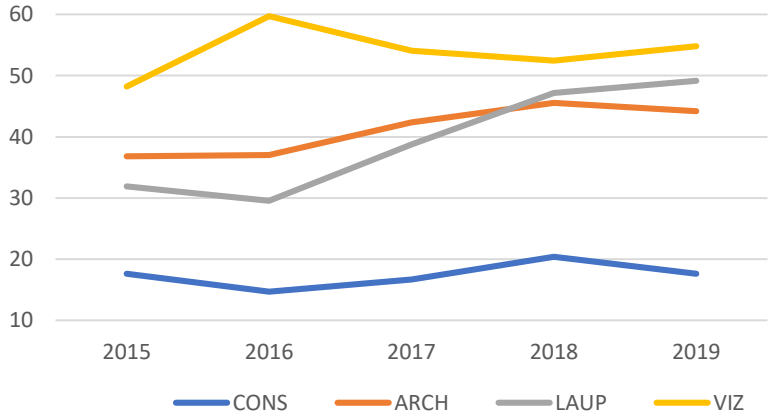
Undergraduates (% of female)



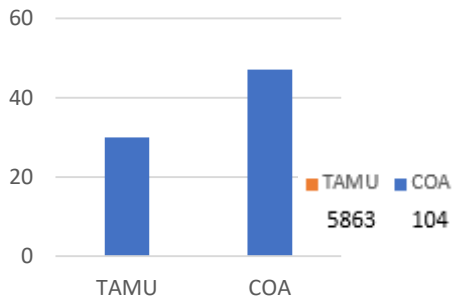
Undergraduates (% of URM)



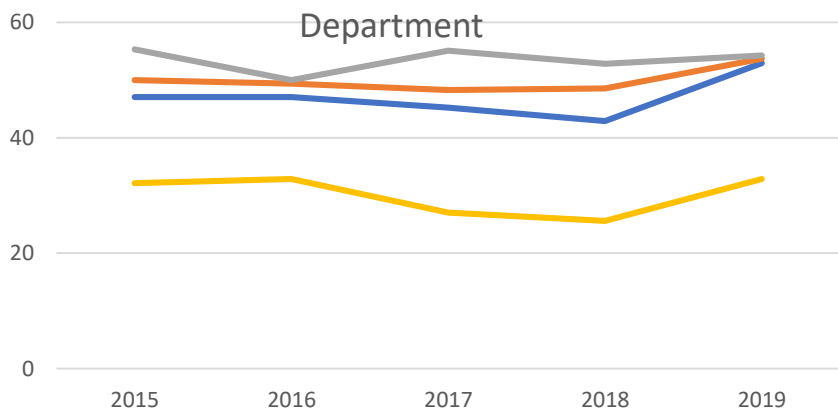
2015-2019 COA Female Faculty (%) by Department



2019 Staff URM (%) A&M - COA



2015-2019 COA URM (%) Faculty by Department



COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE
In numbers

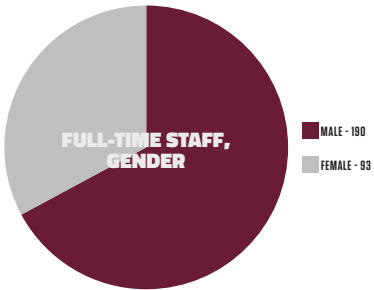


2020
2021

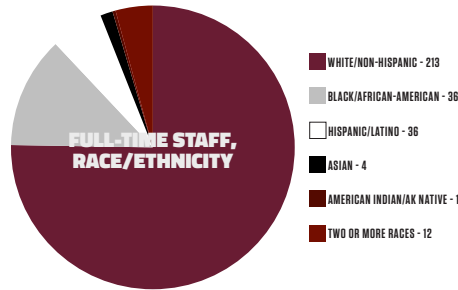
DIVERSITY PLAN ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

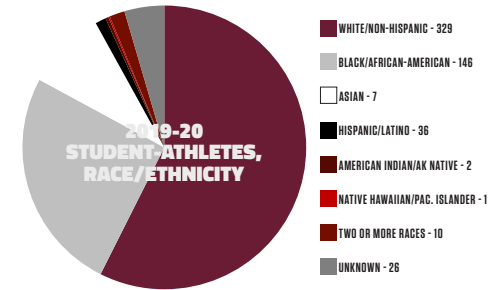
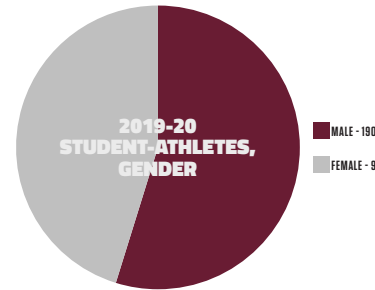
INTRODUCTION The Texas A&M University Department of Athletics employs approximately 290 full-time staff members, who provide support for 20 varsity sport programs, nearly 600 student-athletes and 24 operational units. All of our student-athletes and staff are housed in 26 athletic facilities and office spaces. The mission of Texas A&M Athletics is Building Champions through academic achievement, athletic excellence and national recognition of our student-athletes, teams and programs. *[See charts below which highlight the Department staff and student-athlete demographics]*



RECRUITMENT



RETENTION



REFLECTION

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

The Athletics Internal Operations unit is developing a Hiring Manager Training program to assist hiring managers with a consistent and formalized process, thereby ensuring Texas A&M Athletics is recruiting a diverse and talented candidate pool for open positions.

The Hiring Manager Training program will also instruct hiring managers on how to establish a formal search committee that will actively participate in the recruiting, screening and selection of candidates who are qualified and reflect the diverse attributes desired for each open position.

STUDENT-ATHLETE RECRUITMENT

Being a top tier athletic and academic institution, Texas A&M University has the ability to attract talented young people, who strive for excellence in their athletic, academic and personal pursuits. The recruiting strategies for our student-athletes are developed independently by each coaching staff to meet the needs of their respective sport program.

The resources provided to each of our sport programs along with the investments made into their practice and competitive facilities, allows A&M to recruit top talent in each of our sports and allows for our student-athletes to train and compete at an elite level. The services Athletics provides to student-athletes are extensive and a key factor into recruiting a potential student-athlete.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION

In addition to enhancing the onboarding process for staff, the Department has remained committed to the growth and retention of its staff by offering various opportunities to hear guest speakers, participate in online workshops and other initiatives that encourage personal and professional growth.

STUDENT-ATHLETE RETENTION

We focus on the holistic approach to enhancing our student-athletes' experience, which in turn leads to higher retention rates. We work to provide support in a variety of areas in order to meet the needs of our student-athletes. This can be seen through sport psychology, performance nutrition, sports medicine, and sports performance units.

Additionally, through our Center for Student-Athlete Services (CSAS), we not only provide academic and learning support, but also engagement opportunities that Empower, Educate and Equip our student-athletes to become leaders on their teams as well as throughout the campus and local communities.

CHALLENGE

With new leadership comes new direction, strategies and initiatives to accomplish our Diversity & Inclusion goals. Since 2016, three different individuals have served as the Department's Athletics Director, including the most recent change in leadership which occurred during the Summer of 2019. To that end, the constant changes in leadership and the subsequent changes to the composition of the senior staff, have led to inconsistencies in the Department's efforts, which has ultimately led to a lack of progress.

MOVING THE NEEDLE

B.L.U.E.print was launched in August of 2019 after several Black student-athletes came together with a vision to create an organization specifically for Black student-athletes, a minority group of the Texas A&M University population. **B.L.U.E.print**, which stands for **Black Leaders will Undertake Excellence**, exists to provide a safe, relatable and informative environment for our black student-athletes. The Pillars of the **B.L.U.E.print** are: **EDUCATE. EQUIP. EMPOWER.**

Also in August of 2019, the Department launched **The Aggie Commitment**. In alignment with the Core Values at Texas A&M University, **The Aggie Commitment** serves as an integral component of the overall Diversity and Inclusion plan within Aggie Athletics. **The Aggie Commitment** addresses racial inequity and social injustice, and is focused on Unity, Education, and Engagement through four primary objectives: **1.) Hiring, Retention and Representation, 2.) Celebrating Black History and Excellence, 3.) The Student-Athlete Experience and 4.) Continuing Education**

The Bush School of Government & Public Service 2020 Diversity Plan Accountability Report

Recruitment: Last year’s plans to launch an Alumni Recruiting Advisory Committee and Speaker Series in spring 2020 were not fully implemented due to COVID-19. Enhancements to last year’s recruiting activities included presentations to and sponsorships of underrepresented student leadership organizations across the country. Additionally, we continue to partner with the TAMU system, including HBCUs and HSIs in Texas, to host Public Service Weekend.

Retention: The student retention rate for the past two years is 95.7% for all degree programs. In the past year, only one of the students who withdrew self-identified as an underrepresented student and the reason was personal, not due to climate or equity issues.

Strong faculty and staff retention are a hallmark of the school: 95% for faculty and 93% for staff over the past year. In the Public Administration department, the full-time faculty members hired since 2015 include one Asian male, one African-American male, two white males and two white females. The department added an African-American male Senior Professor who teaches as an adjunct faculty member and promoted a white female to Department Head.

Climate: Following the racial turmoil during the summer of 2020, the Bush School focused on reinvigorating the college Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, chaired by the Dean of the school and including faculty, staff, current, and former student representatives.

A weekly Thursday evening “Diversity Conversations” series was initiated, where students, faculty, and staff were given the opportunity to share concerns and issues within the school and related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Bush School created an online reporting form, housed on our website for Bush School students, faculty, and staff to report issues related to Bush School climate and culture in the classroom, in the hallways, and at school-related events/functions.

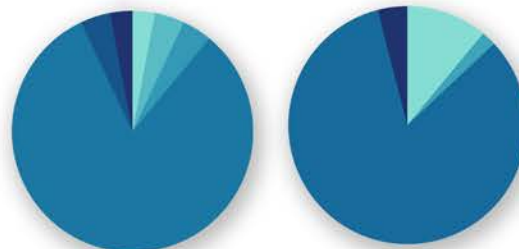
Demographic Data, '19-'20

Students



Hispanic	15%
Asian or Pacific Islander	2%
Black Non-Hispanic	5%
Native American	1%
Multi-racial (Excl. Black)	3%
International:	9%
Unknown:	1%
White:	64%
Female:	43%
Total Underrepresented:	26%

Faculty & Staff



Hispanic	3% - 11%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4% - 2%
Black Non-Hispanic	4% - 0%
International	4% - 0%
Unknown	3% - 4%
White	82% - 83%
Female:	32% - 74%
Total Underrepresented:	11% - 13%

Diversity Plan Award Uses/Expenditures

Funding Year	Award Amount	Student Implicit Bias Training	Faculty/Staff Diversity Training	Student Diversity & Inclusion Committee Support	Diversity Recruiting Initiatives (TMLI/HACU/ICW)	Alumni Diversity Recruiting/Climate Committee
2020	\$30,000	\$5,000	\$14,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$2,000
2019	\$25,000	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$12,000	\$6,000
2018	\$10,000	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$500	\$3,000	--

Diversity Plan Accountability Report: Summary

Description of Unit



Texas A&M University College of Dentistry (COD) is located northeast of downtown in Dallas. For most of its existence, training has occurred in the **main building**, currently located at 3302 Gaston Avenue. A 2004 NIDCR Research Infrastructure Enhancement grant yielded the first phase of the **Sciences Building**, now occupied by research laboratories. In January 2020, a new, state of the art **Clinic and Education Building** (pictured left) was opened to house the college’s clinical operations.

The *mission* of the College is to shape the future of dentistry by developing exemplary clinicians, educators, and scientists. Improving oral health by caring for the needs of a diverse community; seeking innovations in science, education, and healthcare delivery; and serving as leaders in health professions education remain objectives.

2019 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS	PREDOCTORAL N=412	DENTAL HYGIENE N=58	GRADUATE N=123
White/Caucasian	36.1%	55.2 %	48.8%
African American/Black	12.3%	5.2%	5.7%
Hispanic/Latinx	26.9%	25.9%	8.1%
Native American/Alaskan Native	0%	0%	0.8%
Asian American	22.3%	13.8%	14.6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
Multiracial	1.7%	0%	2.4%
International	0.5%	0%	18.7%
Unknown/Other	0%	0%	1.8%

The predoctoral student cohort at COD remains among the most racially diverse dental schools in the United States and Canada. There are currently more women than men in each class. Overall, women make up 55.5% of total predoctoral students. (This is a first in the history of the College in what was previously a male-dominated profession.) Most international students are enrolled in the graduate program.



COD students, Dallas Skyline in the background

Most Impactful Goals and Strategies

- Bridge to Dentistry Pipeline Program
- Mandatory cultural competence training for employees:
 - 100% completion of online training via TrainTraq; with onboarding; to be repeated every 2 years
 - 95% completion of face-to-face training; now at onboarding; to be repeated every 5 years
- Diversity & Inclusion Week (held annually during late September to Early October)
 - Intergenerational discussions (M, T, Th, F)
 - Mid-Week Celebration (Wednesday)
 - Presentation of Diversity & Inclusion Awards (faculty, staff, and student recipients)

- *Employee Resource Groups* include employees who identify with or advocate for African American, Asian American, female, Hispanic, or LGBTQ+. The ERGs provide support for members, most recently, in response to racial unrest and the coronavirus pandemic.
- *Diversity Score Cards* were completed by 100% of the departments and offices. The results were presented to the Administrative Council for review.
- *Recognition for DEI*: COD applied for and received three (3) national awards for diversity & inclusion: the Insight into Diversity STEM, the Insight into Diversity HEED Awards and the ADEA William J. Gies Award for Vision



One of the slides displayed in an ERG presentation Diversity and Inclusion week

COVID-19: Challenges/Responses

- COVID-19 posed multiple stressors for graduating students including the implementation of nontraditional measures to complete their course of study, determining how and when graduation would occur, and arranging to take state board exams. Thus, an administrative decision was made to forego the 2020 Graduation Survey.
- General concerns about the pandemic: Faculty, Staff, and Student Town Hall Meetings; Education in safety protocols provided for all
- Clinical and Pre-clinical Experiences – staggered privileges/attendance to support social distancing
- Didactic teaching delivered virtually.
- Diversity programs were changed to virtual format.
 - The Conference on Race, Intersectionality Sexuality, and Equality (R.I.S.E.) - 253 participants via Zoom Webinar format.
 - 2020 D&I Week:
 - Noon day Facts & Snacks (35-75 participants daily)
 - Mid-week observance (248 faculty, staff, and students)
 - Diversity & Inclusion Awards



TAMCOD USE OF DIVERSITY FUNDS							
Year Awarded Funds	Diversity Award Amount	Contests, Awards, Promotion/Awareness	Student /Employee Groups Climate-focused Activities	Diversity & Inclusion Speakers Series	Training, Workshops, Conferences	Other Administrative Costs	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
2015	\$15,000	0	0	0	0	\$15,000	\$ 15,000
2016	\$5,000	0	0	0	0	\$5,000	\$ 5,000
2017	\$55,000	0	0	\$1,000.00	\$3,250.00	\$15,000	\$19,250.00
2018	\$25,000	\$6,392.27	\$308.00	\$3,342.76	\$1,075.90	0	\$11,119.00
2019	\$60,000	\$9,214.19	\$1,794.36	\$2,292.66	\$11,562.90	0	\$24,864.11
2020	\$65,000	\$ 2,937.80	\$1,124.60	0	\$ 5,653.49	\$ 5,579.15	\$15,295.04
Total	\$225,000	\$18,544.26	\$3,226.96	\$6,635.42	\$21,542.29	\$ 40,579.15	\$90,528.08



2020 DSA Diversity Plan Accountability Report Summary

DSA Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

We are committed to cultivating a campus environment where people from all backgrounds and experiences can thrive. We build and model a welcoming environment that promotes a deeper understanding of identities of an increasingly diverse population.

DSA Strategic Plan Relevant Goals & Objectives

- Create an inclusive environment that develops global citizens and leaders who productively engage in a wide spectrum of ideas, perspectives, and cultures; and staff diversity and inclusion
- Develop strategies to enhance recruitment and retention of a highly qualified, diverse workforce, and train and develop staff to meet the evolving needs of an increasingly diverse student body.

TAMU DSA Student and Staff Employee Composition

Chart 1: 2016-2020 DSA Employees by Full-Time Staff & Student/GA

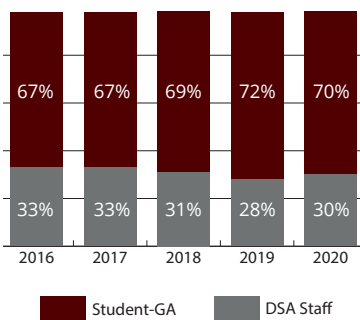


Chart 2: DSA Student Employees and Graduate Assistants by Race/Ethnicity

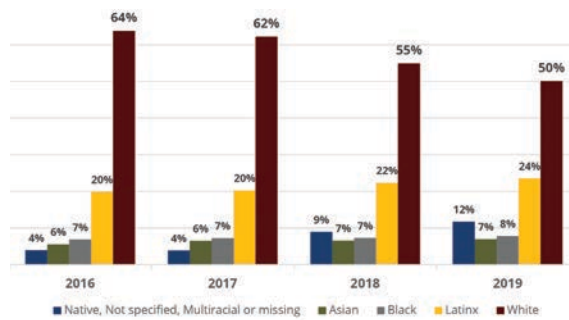
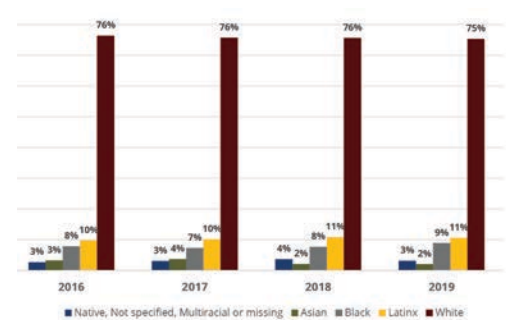


Chart 3: TAMU DSA Full-time Staff by Race/Ethnicity



Staff Recruitment

- Incorporated diversity, equity, and inclusion-focused questions into the interview process and utilizing salary negotiation, hiring adjustments, professional development allotments, and moving expense stipends to strengthen job offers.
- Highlights
 - Diversified the Corps of Cadets across gender, race, career field, and academic background in recruiting, operations and training and the Hollingsworth Center for Ethical Leadership.
 - Surveyed the experiences of Student Health Services candidates with diverse identities to gain insight into what they may bring to high turnover positions.
 - Challenges included attracting a highly skilled, diverse workforce across racial, ethnic and other social identities with interest in Texas A&M.

Retention

- Survey found top reasons staff exit is for better career opportunities, higher salary, and work-life balance.
- Prioritized work-life practices including university well-being initiative, administrative leave awards, one-time funding, salary and position reclassifications, job-related skill enhancement pay, hiring salary adjustments, professional development stipends, alternate work locations, flexible schedules, wellness and educational release time, and formal staff awards.
- Highlights
 - Student Activities climate survey and enhanced communications on professional development.
 - Residence Life provided education modules on DEIA handling, reporting and referring to campus resources for live-in staff.
 - Multicultural Services Multicultural Graduation Ceremony celebrated the successes of Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi American (APIDA), Black and African American, and Hispanic and Latinx Aggies.

Climate

- Partnered with the College of Education & Human Development and the Division of Enrollment and Academic Services for the Gallup Q12 Engagement Survey where 464 staff members participated (83% response rate).
- Overall results were generally positive with Teamwork as an area targeted for increased engagement (see Chart 4)
- Highlights
 - MSC Student Programs Office developed a common language initiative to educate and prepare staff.
 - Corps of Cadets added respect as a value, addressed DEIA as part of this value, and integrated a Leadership Development Model into cadet education.
 - Becky Gates Children's Center surveyed its families to integrate cultural events and celebrations into classroom learning.
 - University Art Galleries collaborated with Counseling and Psychological Services on an art meditation program to help with stress and anxiety disorders.
 - Department of Music Activities performed a piece by Omar Thomas, written to honor the victims and families of the attack on Mother Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, SC.

Chart . : Gallup Engagement Hierarchy

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Equity

- Aligned salary adjustments or merit increases with annual performance evaluation; balance position titles and work load; balance and align salaries across position titles; utilize one-time merit based on performance; and use all merit processes to support lower-paid staff based on performance.
- Committed recurring funds and established division-wide committees to support professional development, staff recognition, and staff wellbeing across all position levels.
- Realigned awards subcommittees to include more diverse representation, focused on accessibility for events and engaged staff across race, gender, job titles, and department voices during coordination.

Moving the Needle & Implementing New Strategies

- Updated the Diversity Committee charge to include:
 - Provide educational opportunities to increase staff abilities to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across racial, ethnic, and other social identities.
 - Sponsor engagement opportunities to shift organizational culture toward more communication, connectedness, and support through respectful and purposeful dialogue and exchange about DEIA topics.
 - Establish and standardize department-level accountability reporting practices for recruitment, hiring, retention, and climate/well-being to support the Diversity & Respect Behavior Competency for non-faculty employee performance to meet the evolving needs of our increasingly diverse student body.

Challenges

- Recruitment & Retention
 - Perceptions related to relocating to an institution with Texas A&M's historical legacy, located in what is considered a remote city and in a state known for its conservative reputation.
 - Low enrollment numbers of some underrepresented student populations inhibited diversity of student staff.
 - Limited flexibility of Division of Student Affairs career ladder.
- Climate & Well-Being
 - Psychological fatigue of staff who serve students during sustained periods of a highly volatile and politically charged national climate.
 - Need for accountability among staff related to DEIA.
- Navigating COVID-19 Impact
 - Inability to maintain open-door and in-person practices to monitor and observe student well-being, as well as purposefully engage students with programming and gathering spaces.
 - Correlation between physical distancing and social distancing for students who need to socially integrate into and engage with the campus to be successful.
 - Budget reduction, hiring freeze, and virtual realities have affected recruitment and hiring.
 - Discomfort and inauthentic feelings associated with virtual conversation and support spaces.



Diversity Accountability Report Executive Summary

Students

5046 Undergraduate **945** Master's **540** Doctoral

2019	Total	Male	Female	Asian	Black/AA	Hispanic/Latinx	White	Total Diversity
Undergraduate	5046	26%	74%	4%	4%	24%	65%	35%
Graduate	1571	25%	75%	4%	8%	23%	54%	36%

Retention/Recruitment Highlights

- Hired new Director of Recruitment
- Integrate recruitment and student success efforts
- First-year retention: 94.3%
- Realigned Houston Endowment Scholarship



4-Year Undergraduate Graduation 2015 Cohort

	CEHD	TAMU
Black/AA	42.4%	53.7%
Hispanic	63.6%	57.8%
First-Gen	61.9%	53.2%
Total	69.5%	58%

Faculty

2019 Total	Male	Female	Asian	Black/AA	Hispanic/Latinx	White	Total Diversity
211	43%	57%	11%	10%	9%	70%	30%

Retention/Recruitment Highlights

- ACES Fellows
- Mentoring at various levels
- Annual Retreats
- Seed funding
- Faculty Investment Program to recruit mid-career Faculty



30% of Faculty are people of color



57% of full-time faculty are women

Staff

2019 Total	Male	Female	Asian	Black/AA	Hispanic/Latinx	White	Total Diversity
184	28%	72%	6%	11%	12%	67%	33%

Retention/Recruitment Highlights

- Staff Equity Hiring plan
- Mandatory supervisor training
- Staff professional development opportunities & funding



Staff racial/ethnic diversity increased **11%** over the past **6 yrs.**

Climate Initiatives

- A Celebration of Black Culture and Education
- CEHD DEI Film Series
- Women's Research on Women Symposium
- DEI Higher Education Virtual leadership seminar led by Drs. Edna Chun and David Owen
- Diversity in Higher Education Workshop Series

Equity and Social Justice Collective

- Formed in Summer 2020
- Includes faculty, staff, and students
- Identifies tangible action steps and recommends policy changes
- Conducts analyses of DEI efforts at department level

Challenges

COVID-19



Remote Work Resources



Community Partnerships

- Aggie Homework Helpline
- Let's Chat

National Climate

"Ongoing societal injustices, racial unrest, and the massive disruption of life as we know it due to the global pandemic are forcing us to reflect and confront difficult realities. These challenges coupled with a historic presidential election impact the climate in our classrooms and broader college." - 2020 DAR Report

New and Ongoing Goals

1. Retain faculty, staff, and students of color. Recruitment has improved in these areas, retention lags behind.
2. Address ongoing issues of incivility and inequitable power dynamics between and among faculty and staff.
3. Enact actions identified by the Equity and Social Justice Collective.
4. Develop strategies and actions for the retention and student success for underrepresented graduate students.
5. Provide sponsorships to programs whose mission advances diversity, equity, and inclusion within CEHD, across Texas A&M, and within the greater community.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Education &
Human Development

DIVERSITY

IN THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Engineering



RECRUITMENT SUCCESSES

2020 Undergraduate Student Enrollment¹

16,920 TOTAL
undergraduates enrolled

	2012	2020
Female	1,607 19.1%	3,718 22%
URM*	1,731 20.6%	4,747 28.1%

* Underrepresented minorities

Graduate Student Enrollment¹

Increase in percentage of **domestic graduate students** due to pandemic and Quick Admit Program

34.7% 2019 → **42%** 2020

Tenure-track Faculty

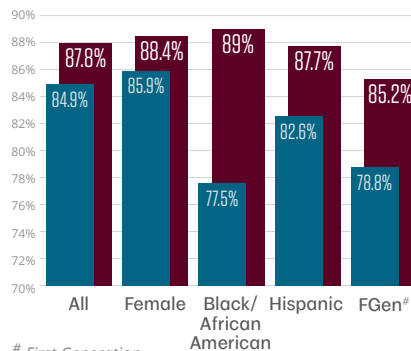
Increase in hiring from URM groups

	2017	2020
Female	55	79
Black/African American	5	14
Hispanic	34	38

RETENTION SUCCESSES

Undergraduate Retention²

Progress toward meeting **one-year undergraduate retention** goal of 90%.



[#] First Generation

■ 2018 Cohort ■ 2019 Cohort

Graduate Student Retention² APPROXIMATELY **90%**

Staff Retention

Staff turnover has improved overall and in underrepresented groups.

2015 **19.9%** staff turnover
2019 **8.6%** staff turnover

LARGEST COLLEGE
ON TEXAS A&M CAMPUS

PRESENCE ON **MULTIPLE CAMPUSES**

College Station, Qatar, Galveston, McAllen, Engineering Academies across Texas

RANKED **2nd**

in URM and HISPANIC B.S. degrees awarded³

RANKED **2nd**

in URM and HISPANIC Tenure/Tenure-Track Faculty³

RANKED **3rd**

in B.S. DEGREES awarded to WOMEN³

¹ Source: Texas A&M Data and Research Services (DARS). Thus, enrollment data does not include: Biological and Agricultural Engineering (BAEN), Marine Engineering Technology (MARR) or Qatar students. Enrollment is 17,865 when BAEN, MARR and Qatar are included.

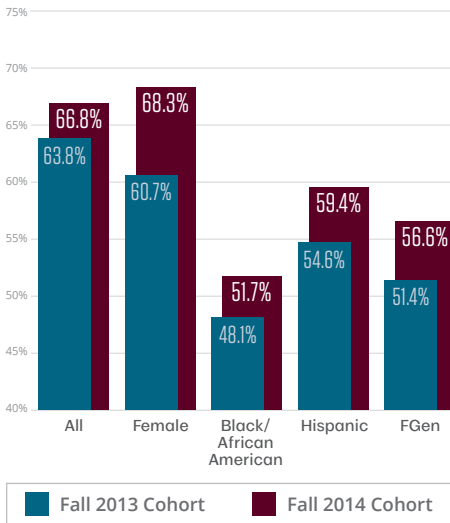
² Source: Texas A&M Enterprise Information Systems (EIS) Argos Reporting Tool. Thus retention data does not include: MARR, Qatar or Engineering Academy students.

³ Source: American Society for Engineering Education's (ASEE) Engineering & Engineering Technology By The Numbers 2019.

EQUITY HIGHLIGHTS

Six-Year Graduation Rate¹

Continued improvement in **undergraduate six-year graduation rate** goal of 75%.



Underrepresented Faculty

Partnership with the

ACES PROGRAM

(Accountability, Climate, Equity and Scholarship Fellows Program)

creates opportunities for URM FACULTY

CHALLENGES

COVID-19 has significantly impacted the college

CONCERNS

Decrease in graduate enrollment <i>Quick Admit program mitigated drop</i>	Faculty Teaching, staff/student modalities Lack of contact with students	Students Online course quality Lack of social/professional contact	Academic advising staff Anticipated decrease in student success	Faculty/staff with children/elderly care Concerns about lower productivity

DIVERSITY MATTERS BECAUSE

- Diversity is critical to excellence.
- Diverse problem-solvers mean diverse solutions.
- The lack of diversity represents a loss of talent.
- The ability to be successful in STEM is not restricted by gender or race.
- Enhancing diversity is the key to long-term economic growth and global competitiveness.
- The pool of future students in the state and nation is becoming increasingly diverse.

Gibbs, Kenneth. "Diversity in STEM: What It Is and Why It Matters," *Scientific American*, Sept. 2014.

CLIMATE HIGHLIGHTS

2019 Staff Climate Survey

75% of staff indicate **SATISFACTION** with college climate



65%

of staff report comfort with **CLIMATE FOR DIVERSITY**

2019 Student Engineers' Council Survey

79%

agree college promotes **DIVERSE STUDENT BODY**



82%

of students agree the college promotes a **WELCOMING CULTURE**

18 INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

Director for Recruiting

- Female and URM undergraduate student recruiting
- Female, domestic and URM graduate student recruiting

Common First-Year Experience

- Fostering an environment that supports student success

Full-Time Associate Dean for Inclusion and Faculty Success

- Faculty recruiting, retention and climate issues

Quick Admit Program

- An expedited application review process for Texas A&M University students graduating with an appropriate bachelor's degree

Engineering Summer Bridge Program

- Impacting math preparedness and student retention

Women in Engineering and Access and Inclusion Programs

- Recruitment and retention of female and URM undergraduate students

First-Generation Program (FGen)

- Retention of generation undergraduates through mentorship



Photo taken prior to COVID-19

LEARN MORE
engineering.tamu.edu

¹ Source: Texas A&M EIS Argos Reporting Tool. Thus retention data does not include: MARR, Qatar or Engineering Academy students.

**DIVISION OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS
2020 DIVERSITY REPORT**

PRESENCE:

	Female	Asian	Hispanic	African-American
F&O FY 2016	37%	2%	12%	9%
F&O FY 2018	36%	2%	16%	9%
F&O FY 2020	38%	2%	17%	10%
TAMU FY 2020	56%	5%	14%	8%

RECRUITMENT:

	Female	Asian	Hispanic	African-American
FY 20 Presence	38%	2%	17%	10%
Applicants (FY 15 – FY 17)	43%	5%	17%	14%
Applicants (FY 18 – FY 20)	54%	3%	20%	15%
Hires (FY 15 – FY 17)	38%	4%	20%	11%
Hires (FY 18 – FY 20)	46%	1%	21%	12%

CLIMATE, RETENTION, AND EQUITY OUTCOMES:

	Female		Asian		Hispanic		African-American	
	Trend	Current	Trend	Current	Trend	Current	Trend	Current
Turnover								
Supervisory Titles								
Promotion								
Administrative Leave		%		Hrs				Hrs
One-Time Merit				%				\$



CAMPUS SNAPSHOT

- Undergraduate and graduate instruction in marine and maritime studies in science, engineering and business and for research and public service related to the general field of marine resources.
- Home to the Texas A&M Maritime Academy
- Eleven undergraduate programs in life, physical and social sciences, humanities, business, transportation, and engineering technology. We also offer four graduate programs in Marine Biology (MSc and Ph.D.), Marine Resource Management (MSc), Marine & Coastal Management and Science (Ph.D), and Maritime Administration and Logistics (MSc).
- Fall 2020 graduate and undergraduate students 58% male and 42% female
- The campus' 141 faculty members includes 110 full-time faculty. 40% of the faculty are women and 60% are men, while 21% are underrepresented minorities.

CLIMATE, RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND EQUITY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Hullaballoo U by the Sea's** first-year experience courses enables new students to learn more about the campus and to connect directly to a variety of resources. In Fall 2020, 99% of all non-transfer incoming students participated in a HU and 33% of transfer students chose the option to participate.
- **The 1973 Center**, a multicultural student center, opened in Fall 2020. It offers study spaces, gender neutral restrooms and will house two Faculty Fellows in Spring 2021 who will maintain office hours and host events in the space to engage with students.
- **Deans CARE Internship** project brings three BIPOC/LGBTQ+ students into the Office of Academic Affairs to collaborate on a BIPOC and LGBTQ+ Student Resource map. The project collects on and off campus resources and contacts that support the needs of a range of cultural identity affiliations and has implications for both recruitment and retention.
- **Allies by the Sea** revamps our campus Allies program originally directed to LGBTQ+ campus community members to broaden allyship to include antiracism work. It will also incentivize work at three levels--ally, advocate, and educator—and include accountability mechanisms for continuing the work at each level

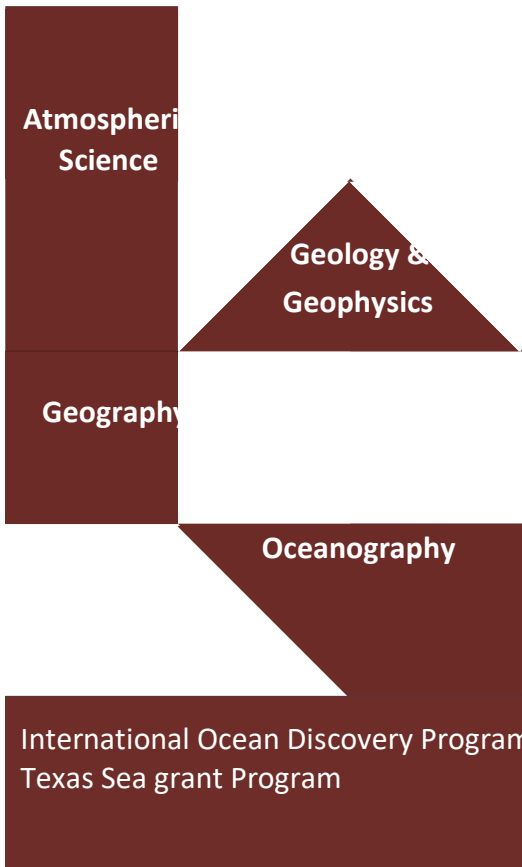




TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

College of Geosciences

As a comprehensive academic unit focused on earth science and human interactions with the environment the College of Geosciences is committed to building a climate that advances a culture of equity and inclusion. This requires a sustained and comprehensive effort to address inclusion. Over the last decade, the College efforts have resulted in increased diversity within the undergraduate population, the implementation of a college-wide diversity plan to guide this work in the coming years.



<i>% of URM Undergraduates</i>	<i>'%</i>
<i>% of URM Graduate Students</i>	<i>'%</i>
Faculty	.2



College of Geosciences Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan Summary

Goal 1: Build a culture of inclusion by creating a more welcoming, respectful, and inclusive climate for all.

1.1 Develop a suite of training and programming opportunities to support ongoing education and professional development around anti-racism topics (e.g., racism, implicit bias, cross-cultural knowledge, and microaggressions).

1.2 Incorporate promising practices that center diversity, equity, inclusion, and cross-cultural understanding in performance evaluations in ways that allow all members to contribute and be recognized for their efforts in building a culture of inclusion

1.3 Implement ongoing strategies to gather and analyze data related to equity, inclusion, and cultural understanding.

1.4 Provide clear and transparent reporting mechanisms regarding incidents of racism, racial bias, and other equity-centered events

Goal 2: Increase the representation and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff across the college. Promote the development and implementation of recruitment strategies that work to address bias and advance promising practices to increase the representation of underrepresented individuals.

2.1 Actively recruit diverse undergraduate and graduate students, with a focus on individuals from underrepresented backgrounds, through utilization of recruitment programs and implementation of strategies to reduce bias in the recruitment process.

2.2 Leverage recruitment opportunities and incorporate processes to address conscious and unconscious bias to recruit diverse faculty and staff with a focus on individuals from underrepresented backgrounds.

2.3 Support increased retention among BIPOC students, faculty and staff through increased access to and engagement in mentoring opportunities

Goal 3: Enhance undergraduate experience to support exposure to questions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism for all students.

3.1 Develop a scaffolded approach to embed discussion of DEI and anti-racism throughout the undergraduate curriculum.

3.2 Identify opportunities to build DEI programming in non-classroom experiences for undergraduate students.

Goal 4: Celebrate and highlight the efforts of BIPOC scholars both within the college and nationally.

4.1 Improve seminar series and other invited talks to support increased representation among BIPOC scholars as well as scholars across the career pathway (e.g., postdocs as well as senior scholars)

4.2 Build mechanisms to support the inclusion of BIPOC voices in college and department programming.

Goal 5: Transparent and timely collegewide communications related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

5.1 Build college-level communications strategies to highlight DEI efforts

5.2 Increase department level initiatives focused towards diversity, equity, and inclusion agenda.



EEO MINORITY CODE

Snapshot as of October 31	Fall 2018 %	Fall 2019 %	Fall 2020 %
White	62.74%	59.32%	60.27%
Black or African American	15.69%	6.78%	8.22%
Hispanic or Latino	15.69%	20.34%	21.92%
Asian	3.92%	5.09%	4.11%
American Indian	1.96%	1.69%	1.37%
Two or More Race	0%	1.69%	1.37%
Blank / Not Specified	0%	5.09%	2.74%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

RECRUITMENT RETENTION CLIMATE EQUITY

HROE refined its recruitment processes through the use of technology to better understand recruitment pools and targeted advertising. Additional improvements were made by the use of inclusive language in job advertisements.

HROE made improvements in retention, an area that had been defined as a weakness in the last two diversity reports, by focusing on employee development, beginning to implement succession planning processes, and significantly reducing turnover.

HROE made significant improvements in climate by involving all staff in redefining its vision, mission, and values.

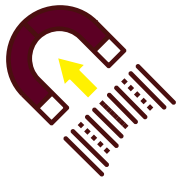
Equity was addressed across the Division by completing a market-based salary study and aligning merit adjustments to the results.

Division of IT DIVERSITY PLAN

GOALS



ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PERSONAL GROWTH OF EMPLOYEES



RETAIN THE MAJORITY OF OUR EXISTING STAFF



SHARE DIVISION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES WITH STAFF TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HOW THEIR DAILY WORK IMPACTS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THESE GOALS.

DATA-INFORMED STRATEGIES FOR POSITIVE CLIMATE



Offer flexible work schedules and work remotely when possible

Provide professional development opportunities in the form of **Technically Speaking** and **Speakers Bureau** events



DEI group meets weekly to provide recommendations and feedback

Implementation of University-wide IT Mentoring Program



Distributed **COVID Essential Employee Coins** and **Frontline Employee** glass paperweights

Instituted monthly Coffee Conversations with the CIO Zoom sessions open to all Division of IT employees to ensure the Division stays connected



DIVERSITY PLAN AWARDS

DONATION

\$10,000

MATTHEW GAINES STATUE FUND



PURCHASED BOOKS FOR DIVERSITY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

STIPEND FOR A DIVERSITY PRESENTATION





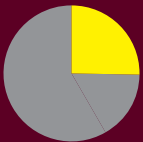
Women and other Historically Underrepresented Groups (HUGs) are historically underrepresented in technology fields. As a division, we are committed to reversing this historical trend. We continue to make improvements in this area, but recognize we still have room for improvement.

HIRING

POSITION APPLICANTS
IN 2019 - 2020

919 APPLICANTS
APPLIED FOR
IT POSITIONS

128
WOMEN



14 OF 55
POSITIONS HAD ZERO
FEMALE APPLICANTS

Data shows that only 18% of degrees in computer science are obtained by women, so our numbers are representative of the amount of women going into the information technology field.

Even with this information, we will still focus on additional advertising and recruiting to attract more female candidates.

DEMOGRAPHICS

DIVISION OF IT EMPLOYEES

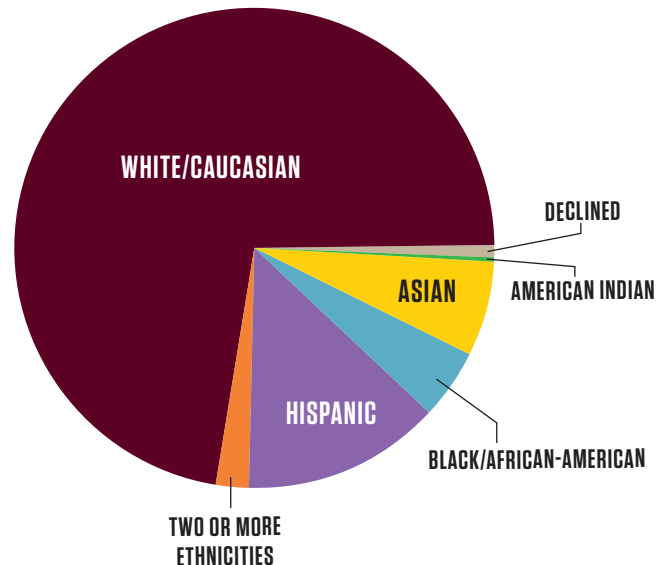
261
EMPLOYEES

193
MEN

68
WOMEN

DIVISION OF IT EMPLOYEES
BY IDENTIFIED ETHNICITY

In 2019-2020, we increased our diversity percentage in every identified ethnicity.

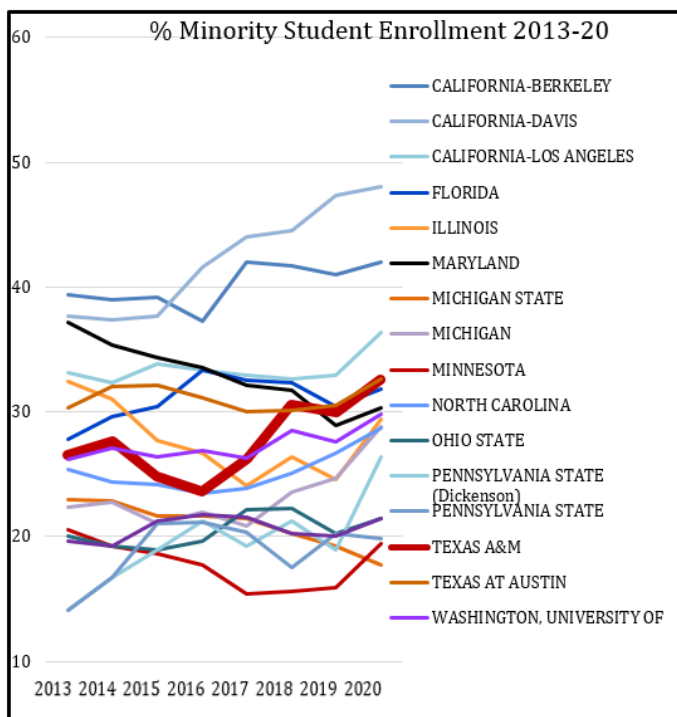




Diversity Plan Accountability Report

Mission & Demographics

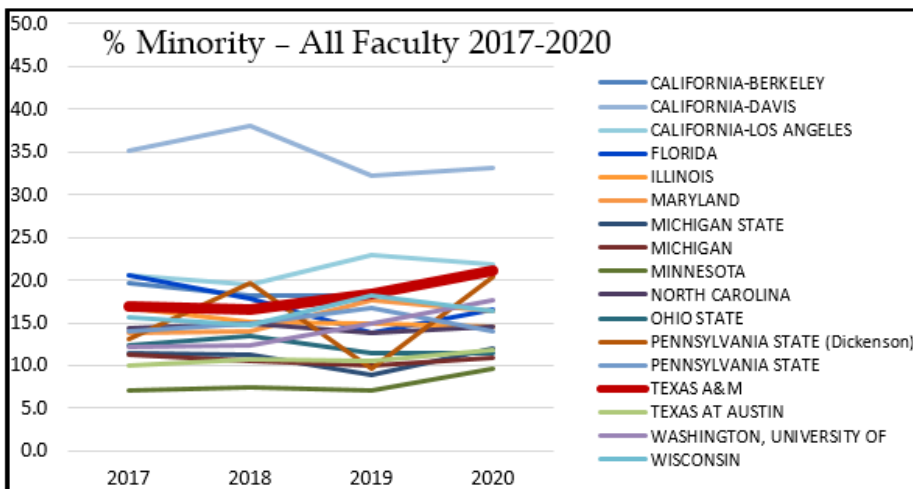
Our mission starts with the preparation of our JD students to practice law and to advance the development of law. We also provide legal services to underserved communities, teach U.S. law to foreign lawyers in our Master of Laws (LL.M.) program, and provide a foundation in law for non-lawyers in our Master of Jurisprudence (M.Jur.) program.



Diversity and inclusion are compelling values in our field, central to the meaning of the U.S. Constitution’s “We the People.” American Bar Association standards require law schools to demonstrate our commitment to these values “by concrete action.”

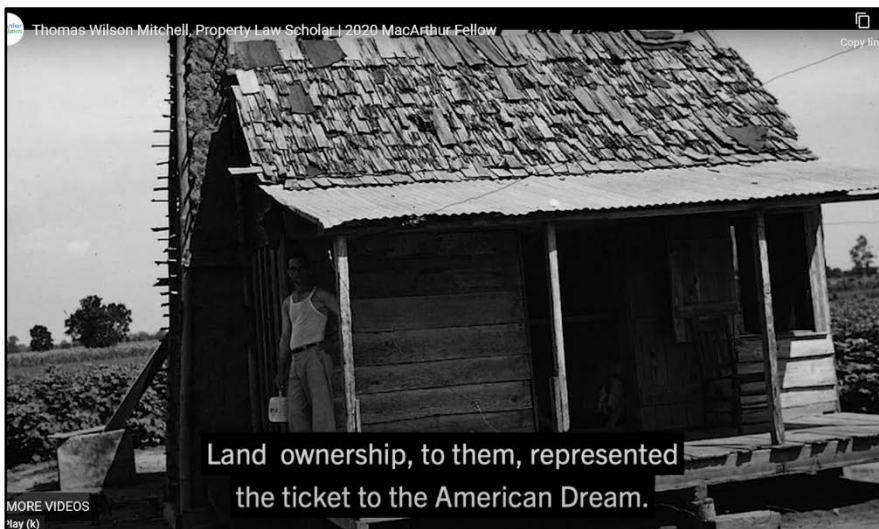
In the seven years since the law school became part of the Texas A&M family, our concrete actions have led to a robust increase in minority student enrollment. Among peer institutions, we are second only to three California schools and tied with the University of Texas.

We are pleased at the increasing diversity of our faculty, now also second only to our California law school peers. We continue to work toward greater diversity among our adjunct faculty and staff. In these areas, our candidate pools are not diverse; limits on our salary offers also hamper progress.



Special Challenges & Impact of 2020-2021

On our campus, we met the extreme challenges of this academic year by talking with a candor and compassion that helped show us our own strength. Facing the pandemic, political tensions, and heightened awareness of racial injustice, we held several long and robust online meetings to support our students and each other. In response to the disruption caused by COVID-19, we thoughtfully considered alternatives and came to unity on the wisdom of a mandatory pass/fail grading system for the spring semester. In response to polarization, we taught first-year students how to practice reflective listening around “hot-button” issues. In response to the summer’s tragic police killings of African Americans, including Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, we shared personal experiences of racial discrimination and generated a dozen pages of ideas for teaching racial justice in law classes. Our library compiled a collection of [antiracism resources](#).



Advancing the development of the law, our faculty members made strides, some especially noteworthy:

- Our [Immigrant Rights Clinic](#) won asylum for a Syrian refugee
- Professor Thomas Mitchell won a MacArthur “Genius” Grant for his work on reforming inheritance laws to help [preserve land ownership](#), especially among Black and other disadvantaged families

With Diversity Plan award funding, we have:

- Hired a wellness coordinator
- Offered travel grants to help minority students visit our campus
- Sponsored a diversity essay contest for entering students
- Supported student-led diversity events
- Held and taken part in workshops on dialogue and reflective listening skills

Meeting the challenges of 2020, we maintained community, even though distanced, with several innovations: a cooking lesson from the dean, a faculty/staff Zoom chorus for our online commencement, and another chorus on Constitution Day, during which we sang “[We the People](#).”





TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

College of Liberal Arts

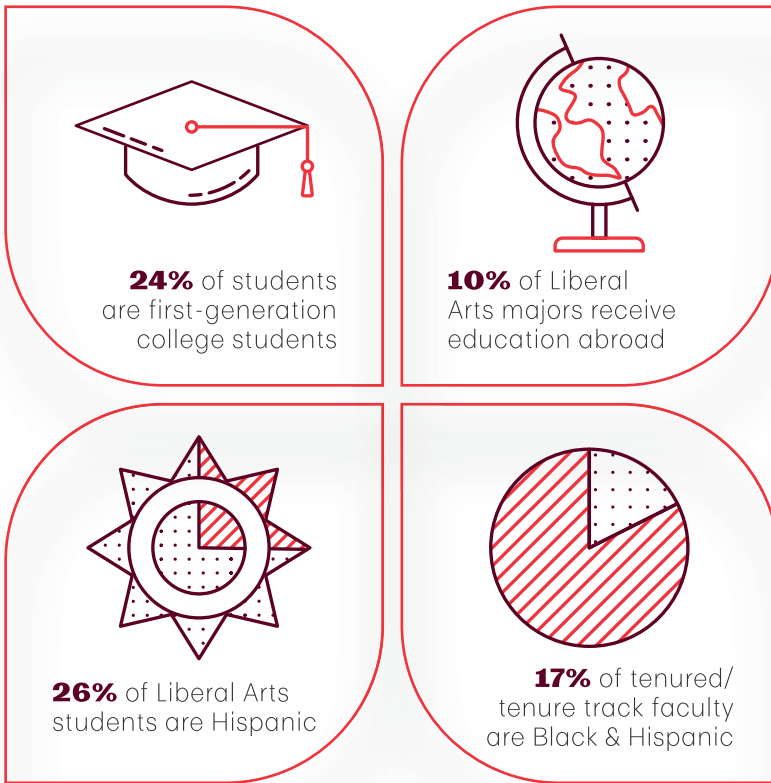
COLLEGE DIVERSITY

The College of Liberal Arts seeks to be a leader in diversity & inclusion on campus and among peer institutions. Many of its departments and programs inherently emphasize diversity scholarship—Africana Studies, Sociology, International Studies, Latino/a and Mexican American Studies, Women’s & Gender Studies, to name a few.

As part of the College’s commitment to lifelong learning and inclusive excellence, we incorporate climate and inclusion at all levels of our strategic plan. Two of our four goals explicitly focus on “fostering inclusive and welcoming workplaces and learning environments” and “enriching the intellectual life of our university in the broader community.”

A liberal education is “founded on the premise that to be effective in the pursuit of truth, one’s mind must be ‘liberated’ from the habits of routinized thinking.”

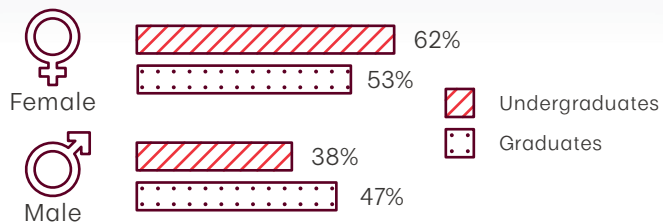
— Lynn Pasquerella —
President, AAC&U



7,806 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

806 GRADUATE STUDENTS

2,313 DEGREES AWARDED Undergraduate degrees awarded in 2019–2020



QUICK FACTS

- ▶ Liberal arts is a leader in awarding degrees to Hispanic, Black, and first-generation students.
- ▶ Undergraduate students in Liberal Arts have a four year graduation rate of 74%.
- ▶ Liberal arts is among the top 15 colleges—private and public—in the United States for graduates starting salaries.
- ▶ Liberal arts is consistently a leader in offering students international experiences.



Anthropology



Communication



Economics



English

Hispanic
Studies

History

International
StudiesPerformance
Studies

Philosophy



Political Science

Psychological &
Brain Sciences

Sociology

INTERDISCIPLINARY CRITICAL STUDIES

- Africana Studies
- Latino/a & Mexican American Studies
- Religious Studies
- Women's & Gender Studies

UNIVERSITY STUDIES DEGREES

Concentrations in the following:

- Health Humanities
- Journalism Studies
- Race, Gender, Ethnicity
- Religious Thought, Practices, & Culture
- Society, Ethics, & Law

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

- Africana Studies
- Digital Humanities
- Film & Media Studies
- International Communication & Public Policy
- Latino/a & Mexican American Studies
- Women's & Gender Studies

MOVING FORWARD

CHALLENGES

- ▶ Perception of TAMU inhibits recruiting
- ▶ Graduate Student stipends lag
- ▶ Gaining momentum during and after the COVID-19 pandemic
- ▶ Funding scarcity for new initiatives

NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2020-2021

- ▶ More departments engaging in outreach to strategic high schools
- ▶ Achievements in Climate and Inclusion (ACI) Staff Award
- ▶ Supporting open-education initiatives to reduce the cost of textbooks
- ▶ Undergraduate Programs Office give "90-hour checkup" to all majors to ensure timely graduation

CONTINUING INITIATIVES TO MOVE THE NEEDLE

- ▶ Achievements in Climate and Inclusion (ACI) Faculty Award
- ▶ Advancing Climate Together (ACT) Grant
- ▶ Participation in ACES Fellows Program Pilot
- ▶ First Generation Freshman Innovation Group (FIG)
- ▶ FIRST Mentor Program

BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF INCLUSION

- ▶ Lunch N Learn series
- ▶ Regents Scholars Initiative
- ▶ Diversity Science Cluster hires
- ▶ Brazos Valley Reads
- ▶ Multi-department on-campus event for Diversity Fellowships
- ▶ Active Climate & Inclusion college-level committee

Demographics

Figure 1 - Libraries Staff & Faculty Demographics 2019

	2012	2014	2016	2018	2019
Gender					
Male	35%	32%	36%	41%	39%
Female	65%	68%	64%	59%	61%
Race/Ethnicity					
African American/Black	8%	7%	3%	6%	5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	10%	10%	6.5%	6.5%
Hispanic	15%	7%	9%	9%	13%
Native American/Alaskan Native	0	0	0	.5%	.5%
White	73%	76%	77%	78%	75%



Figure 2 - Libraries Faculty Demographics by Rank 2019

	Faculty Status			
	C&I/L	Tenure Track	Tenured	All
Gender				
Male	32%	35%	37%	35%
Female	68%	65%	63%	65%
Race/Ethnicity				
African American/Black	4%	0%	2%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%	12%	12%	9%
Hispanic	7%	12%	10%	9%
Native American/Alaskan Native	0	0	0	.5%
White	85%	76%	76%	79%



Figure 3 - Libraries Faculty Demographics Compared to Campus 2019

	All Libraries Faculty	All TAMU Faculty
African American/Black	2%	3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	9%	8%
Hispanic	10%	6%
Native American/Alaska Native	0	.2%
White	79%	56%
International	0	23%
Unreported	0	4%



DeEtta Jones & Associates Engagement

We have engaged with DeEtta Jones & Associates to guide us through two asynchronous, online courses that will add to our cultural competencies and we will work with DJA to eventually create a strategic plan built through a DEI lens. The two courses; Essentials of Cultural Competency and Reducing the Negative Impact of Bias in the Workplace were taken by over 90% of our faculty and staff which has begun to give us a common vocabulary as we work to connect and communicate with each other even when the topic is difficult and complex.

Additionally, the Libraries identified 22 persons to serve as Facilitators to conduct facilitated discussions between online segments to deepen the course curriculum through dialogue and then once again to tee up the Libraries to begin preparing for our work in strategic planning.

The next phase will include the creation of a ten-person strategic planning committee to conduct internal and campus-wide environmental audits, as well as research peers and aspirants and create participant pools from our user community to be included in focus groups. These pools will include internal and external stakeholders.

2 mandatory courses for all employees of the University Libraries and University Press

- *Essentials of Cultural Competency*
- *Reducing the Negative Impact of Bias in the Workplace*

22 employees served as facilitators for small groups to discuss courses

10 employees doing core groundwork leading towards creating a Strategic Plan with DEI as its core lens

Notable Highlights

Funding from the Diversity Plan Awards is used primarily in two ways. The first is to support all faculty and staff to travel to conferences and events to support their personal and professional growth in diversity, equity, and inclusion. The second is to partner with other units and student groups, who may not have discretionary budgets, to help create events that support a wide range of perspectives and understanding on campus and in the community - we have been able to adapt to a virtual environment with COVID-19 in play.

- Created LibGuide showcasing resources to help be an antiracist - guide adopted by Hullabaloo U as part of curriculum
- Moderated a discussion of *Latinos Beyond Reel* with Dr. Chyng Sun and filmmaker Miguel Picker as part of Hispanic Heritage Month.
- Ongoing collaboration with Health Promotions to bring awareness to topics including sexual assault awareness and prevention as well as interpersonal violence prevention
- Partnered with the Hispanic President's Council and BCS Public Libraries to create LibGuide showcasing works created by Americans whose ancestors come from Mexico, the Caribbean, Spain and Central and S. America
- Hosted Dr. Mary Campbell from TAMU Sociology to speak on Institutional Racism
- Sponsored film screening during APIDA Heritage Month (eventually canceled due to COVID)
- Presented *Slavery By Another Name* as part of Black History Month
- Created and hosted panel discussion with First Gen Students to better understand their perspectives
- Hosted and partnered with Liberal Arts to execute programs for Language Week
- Fourth annual Human Library - continues to grow with 24 Books and 78 Readers
- Hosted several NCORE webinars for faculty and staff including *Race, Immigration, and Fake News?* and *Woke Olympics and Social Justice Arrogance*
- Faculty and staff book club reading Trevor Noah's *Born A Crime* and *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi



DIVISION OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

2021 DIVERSITY PLAN ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT



INTRODUCTION

We love finding innovative ways to share the Aggie experience with the world. We endeavor to weave diversity, inclusion, equity and accountability into all we do.

OUR UNITS

ADVERTISING	BRAND EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT	CAMPAIGNS/ INITIATIVES	KAMU-TV (PBS) AND RADIO (NPR)	LICENSING	MEDIA MANAGEMENT
NEWS	PHOTO/VIDEO	PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS	SOCIAL MEDIA (18 CHANNELS)	STRATEGY AND ANALYTICS	TRADEMARKS

DUAL MISSION

Our division has the dual responsibility of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) among our own division team members and promoting DEI for the university as a whole.

MISSION: DEI AND OUR TEAM

Continually foster a diverse, inclusive environment among division employees.

- Recruit diverse team members
- Training in all-hands meetings
- Host nationally-renowned DEI speakers, trainers, facilitators
- Sponsor team members for leadership development programs
- Assign individuals to support Office for Diversity initiatives, which also provides learning opportunities for our staff
- Maintain strategic plan that embeds DEI across tactics

MISSION: DEI UNIVERSITY-WIDE SUPPORT

Lead and support university-wide DEI communications internally and externally.

- Support Office for Diversity initiatives
- Feature diverse faculty, staff students in national media advertising
- Conduct media outreach for compelling stories
- Create videos and graphics, and provide other creative support
- Engage students, faculty and staff in dialogue on social and other channels
- Provide transparency and responsiveness on DEI issues

DEMOGRAPHICS



75%
OF SENIOR LEADERS
ARE WOMEN

Please note: The transfer of KAMU-TV team into MarCom impacted percentages in diversity - a key area of focus for improvement.



AREAS OF FOCUS

Maintaining operations and meeting goals under pandemic protocols:

- Switched to virtual platforms for internal meetings and other activities and then returned to campus in staggered shifts, with mask wearing and social distancing
- Kept the Aggie family connected through virtual Silver Taps, Midnight Yell Practices, Muster, graduation ceremonies and Facebook Live events
- Revamped activities with our corporate partners
- Maintained the university's COVID-19 information site and other communications to keep the campus community safe and informed

Communicating Texas A&M's strengths and challenges during nationwide uprising against social injustice:

- Crafted and distributed messages from President Young and others
- Used social media to quickly inform stakeholders
- Used Texas A&M Today to showcase historically underserved faculty, staff and students, and to provide a platform for campus members to share their views on critical issues
- Sponsored workshops on D&I issues for communicators across the A&M System

- Added year-round programming on race and related issues at KAMU-TV/FM
- Supported HEED/Diversity Champion wins with advertising, news and social media coverage; work closely with Office for Diversity year-round on a variety of efforts

Additional D&I efforts:

- Updated the interactive mobile campus map to include information for wheelchair users and locations of all-gender restrooms
- Targeted MarCom job postings to net a larger applicant pool with a goal of making our team better reflect the state's demographics
- Mandatory diversity training for MarCom staff
- Supported the strategic planning effort to expand the multicultural center in the MSC

Challenges:

- Management of challenging issues related to both the pandemic and social unrest, while maintaining operations
- Pandemic fatigue
- Recruiting and hiring to increase staff diversity
- Staff retention due to merit pay freeze



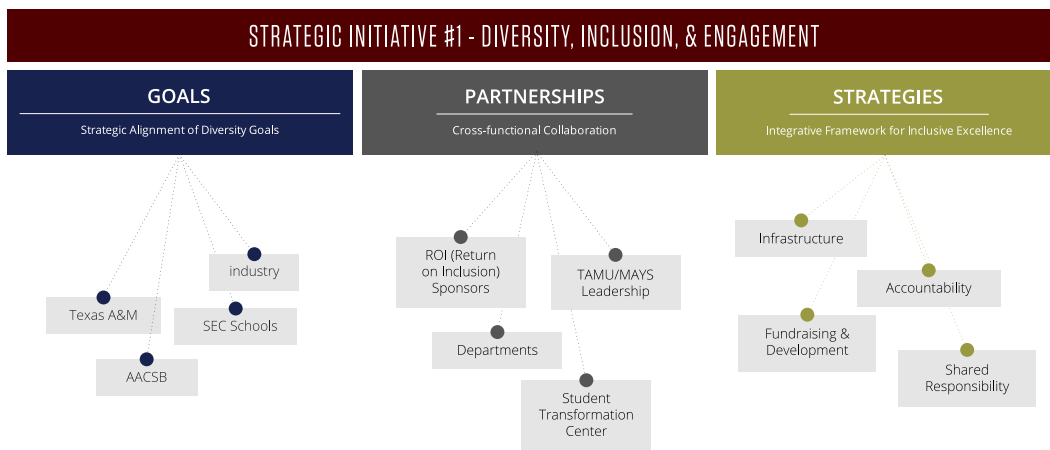
Advancing the World's Prosperity

A culture of inclusion is paramount to achieving our mission.



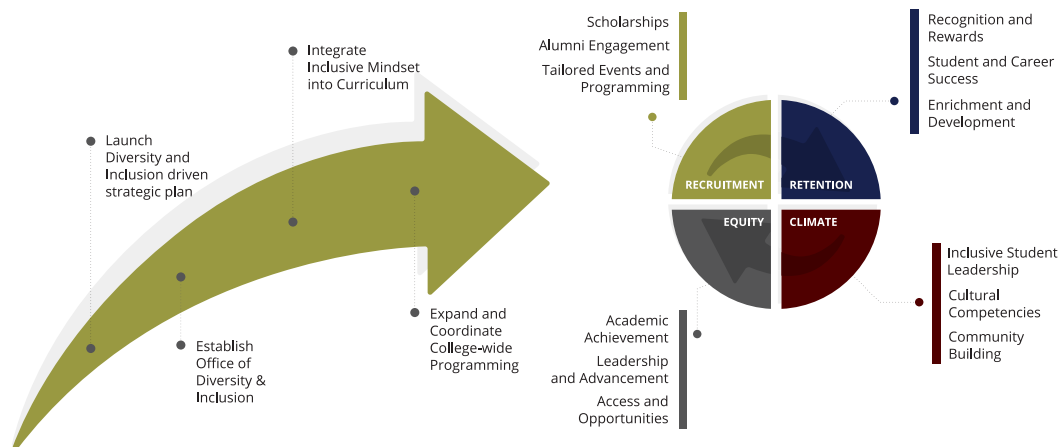
Strategic Impact

Diversity, inclusion, and engagement are critical components of a strong college culture.



Creating an Equitable and Inclusive Climate

Embedding diversity and inclusion throughout the strategic plan engages faculty, staff, and students.



Accountability

Inform Actions | Enhance Efficiency |

Effectiveness

Undergraduate Student Admissions

Number of Underrepresented Minority Students

January 2019
350

January 2020
365

January 2021
412

4% increase from 2019

13% increase from 2020

Graduate Student Enrollment

10.7%

increase in Black/African American graduate students from fall 2018 to fall 2019

21.7%

increase in Hispanic graduate students from fall 2018 to fall 2019

Faculty & Staff

Leading Peers in Percent of Underrepresented Minority Faculty

8%

 TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Mays Business School

2.5%

 Terry College of Business
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

1%

 FOSTER
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

7.5%

 TEXAS McCombs

1st

Accounting department ranks first among top business schools in the country for underrepresented Ph.D. program graduates as well as number of underrepresented faculty

16%

URM staff increase from 2018 to 2019

Climate & Equity

Multi-Million Dollar

increase in fundraising for Diversity & Inclusion

116

student leaders participated in inclusive student leadership workshops

80%

of Innovations in Inclusion, Diversity, and Accountability Grants awarded to staff

852

students received unconscious bias training in Freshman Business Initiative (FBI)

TEXAS A&M COLLEGE OF MEDICINE DIVERSITY

ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

- Founded in 1977, the college has five campuses: Bryan-College Station (B-CS), Dallas, Houston, Round Rock and Temple
- There are five basic science departments and five other (mostly clinical sciences) departments
- There are 584 medical students, 150 graduate students and 616 full-time faculty and staff
- The B-CS and Houston campuses offer the pre-clerkship first-year curriculum: regular and Engineering Medicine (EnMed), respectively. The remaining pre-clerkship and clerkship curricula are offered at all five clinical campuses
- Diversity vision statement: Diversity and inclusion drive excellence
- College mission: To improve the health and well-being of the people of Texas and beyond, through excellence in education, research and health care delivery
- Having military service and rural background as diversity categories acknowledge the history of the university and the college's commitment to military medicine and to rural and population health

MEDICAL AND GRADUATE STUDENTS RECRUITMENT

Our goal is to build a community of students, staff and faculty that mirrors the demographics of the state of Texas (Table 1). We have also defined target underrepresented demographics (Table 2). There are multiple programs and processes in place committed to the recruitment, retention and timely progression of students into a diverse alumni population. Examples are our pipeline programs and holistic admissions process to increase the number of underrepresented in medicine (URM) students.

Table 1. TEXAS RACE/ETHNICITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Race/Ethnicity	Texas State Demographic (TD) 2019
Hispanic/Latino	39.6%
Black/African American	12.8%
American Indian	1.0%
Asian	5.2%
White	41.5%

Table 2. TEXAS A&M COM DIVERSITY CATEGORIES

Students	Faculty/Staff
Underrepresented in Medicine (URM)	Underrepresented in Medicine (URM)
Low Socioeconomic Status	Military Service
Rural Background	1st Generation Health Professional
Military Service	Female
1st Generation Undergraduate	

Table 3. MD STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Entering Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of students	192	166	126	120	175
Underrepresented in Medicine (URM)	11.5%	18.7%	10.3%	19.2%	12.5%
Low Socioeconomic Status (SES)	17.2%	16.3%	14.3%	5.0%	10.9%
Female	46.4%	43.4%	48.4%	45.8%	50.3%
1st Generation Undergraduate	11.5%	7.2%	16.7%	10.8%	11.4%
Military Service	3.1%	3.0%	1.6%	2.5%	2.3%
Non-Texas Residents*	6.8%	3.0%	4.8%	5.8%	10.3%
Race/Ethnicity**	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Asian	37.0%	35.5%	47.8%	36.7%	38.3%
African American	2.6%	2.4%	1.7%	8.3%	4.00%
American Indian	0.5%	0.6%	0.9%	0.0%	0.6%
Hispanic	8.3%	15.7%	9.6%	10.8%	8.0%
Caucasian	43.8%	40.4%	45.2%	41.7%	40.6%
Pacific Islander	-	-	-	0.8%	N/A
Other	-	-	-	0.8%	N/A
Unreported	3.1%	6.6%	6.1%	4.2%	8.6%

Table 3 shows the five-year trend of College of Medicine (COM) students' demographics. COM is committed to tracking known factors for a diverse student body. Females outnumber males for the first time, and this is attributable to our evidence-based holistic admissions process. COM added two pipeline programs to honor our commitment to military medicine; our strategic plan now includes goals, strategies and objectives for military medicine. The assistant dean for graduate studies attended nationwide conferences focused on URMs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); this has helped to increase graduate student numbers from 131 to 150 with more females enrolled than males. Hispanic and African American populations show significant increases from 2018 to 2020.

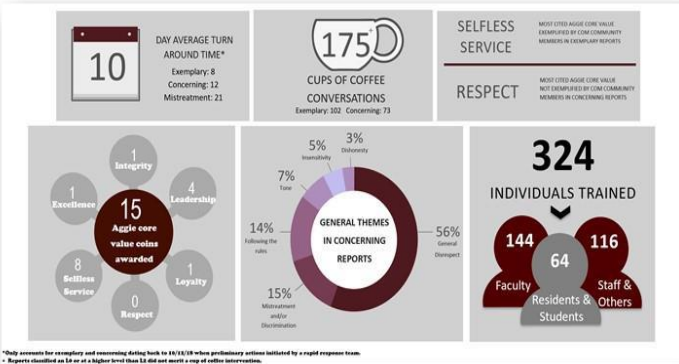
*COM is required to accept no more than 10% non-Texas residents as medical students.

**Applicants may identify as multiple ethnicities. As a result, totals each year may exceed 100%

Table 4. TEXAS A&M COM ACTS

New COM ACTS Pillars	Diversity & Inclusion Parameters Addressed
Appreciation	Retention, Equity
Communications	Recruitment, Retention, Climate, Equity
Transparency	Equity, Climate, Retention
Shared Governance	Retention, Climate, Recruitment

Figure 1. LEEP REPORTING DATA



RETENTION

Students: Our retention/progression of medical students is good, with a 98% graduation rate (national average ~84%); we want to make it even better. We promote retention through preventive and reactive programs. In the preventive category is MedCamp, a three-week pre-matriculation program **designed to increase the retention of medical students** who come in with known risk factors for underperformance (e.g., below average MCAT and GPA scores, nontraditional majors, long gap between degrees, certain ethnicities, low SES, being a first-generation college student).

Upon matriculation, Academic Support Services staff provide general academic counseling and support. Academic Navigators proactively check student academic records with the view to arresting negative trends through arranging academic support. Should a student underperform in any test, reactive support kicks in; this includes course director/mentor-guided remediation.

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) gives administrative and financial support to URM students’ organizations through the students’ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee, which oversees URM-based student-led activities, including a monthly DEI seminar series to foster inclusivity in both medical and postgraduate programs.

Faculty: Although low faculty turnover implies good retention, it simultaneously slows efforts to correct decades-long minority underrepresentation. COM faculty development program (**FDP**) initiatives are designed to enhance retention, and they include the certificate-awarding COM Education Academy courses, seminars/ workshops, peer- and senior-colleague mentorship.

Staff: COM staff are encouraged to elect their mentors and take advantage of the new DEI plan/bylaws’ provisions for staff training in DEI matters and

representation on the DEI committee. COM staff ³⁷ development budget covers conferences and teaching/research scholarship.

CLIMATE

Table 4 illustrates our new functional integration framework—Appreciation, Communication, Transparency and Shared Governance (**ACTS**)—introduced by Dean Amy Waer. It shows how ACTS aligns with DEI. Dean-led weekly check-in meetings for listening to and updating students, staff and faculty on COM’s COVID-19 status/policies include a “You said; We did” format. ACTS has contributed significantly to motivating students, staff and faculty, thus enhancing the COM climate.

In 2018, COM introduced the Learning Environment Enrichment Program (**LEEP**, see Figure 1) fostering a climate that embraces the Aggie Core Values. The online Aggie Conduct Awareness form provides real-time opportunities for students, staff and faculty to report exemplary or concerning behaviors. LEEP rewards positive behaviors and mitigates negative behaviors through the **Cup of Coffee program** adopted from Vanderbilt University. Due to its success, other medical schools have reached out to COM for assistance in implementing similar programs.

EQUITY

Students: From students’ perspective, the perception of fair play in the teaching/learning environment—including transparency of tests—is critical. COM thus promotes students’ representation in various committees, such as the Admissions, Curriculum, DEI and the Students’ Promotions (SPC) committees. The SPC ensures due process protection as outlined in the students’ handbook. In response to COVID-19 and George Floyd, an Anti-bias Curriculum (**ABC**) taskforce of students and faculty are working to improve equity in the curriculum, partly through the inclusion of course content representative of race, ethnicity and lifestyle characteristics aligned with what doctors see in practice.

Faculty: Per university rules, all employed faculty receive annual performance reviews, and promotions are conducted by the Tenure and Faculty Promotions Committee. Departmental mentors provide guidance on scholarly activities, research, promotion and tenure (P&T) timelines, as well as review P&T packets. Our Office of Faculty Affairs and the university’s Office of the Dean of Faculties provide seminars on promotion and tenure processes. COM Business Office is currently conducting a faculty salary analysis. The COVID-19-mandated budgetary cuts were achieved through an ACTS-driven transparency and shared governance decision process.

Staff: A 2019 (AAMC) Staff Survey showed low staff satisfaction with “opportunities to advance my career at this medical school.” In addition, many staff positions at COM do not have career ladders. COM recognizes this and is committed to promoting organizational effectiveness for the satisfaction and well-being of staff and faculty.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NURSING

2020-2021 DIVERSITY PLAN ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, Texas A&M University College of Nursing operated in uncertain, disrupted health care and academic environments due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, and significant issues of racism and other forms of injustice that plague society. Our main campus is located at the Texas A&M Health Science Center in Bryan, TX with a remote campus in Round Rock, TX. To fulfill our mission of educating professional nurses of today and leaders of tomorrow through the provision of excellent educational programs in nursing, we work to identify, attract and graduate students of high potential, especially those from groups who have been historically underrepresented in health care in the State of Texas. We support two advising locations in Lufkin, TX and McAllen, TX to accomplish this part of our mission.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The tables below provide 2019/2020 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) comparison data for students, faculty and staff. The faculty data also compared the proportion of men as an underrepresented population in nursing.

STUDENTS:

Texas A&M College of Nursing Benchmark Comparison - Student Race/Ethnicity

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY	TAMU COLLEGE OF NURSING	UT-AUSTIN COLLEGE OF NURSING	U OF MI COLLEGE OF NURSING	AACN SCHOOLS
White	69%	48%	51%	66%
Minority	31%	52%	49%	34%

Student diversity has improved over five years from 16% to 31% minority students and is approaching the national profile. Student diversity at peer institutions is greater than TAMU CON. Doctoral degree programs at these schools improve diversity enrollment. TAMU CON is actively preparing for doctoral programs.

FACULTY:

Texas A&M College of Nursing Benchmark Comparison - Faculty Race/Ethnicity & Identified Gender

RACE/ETHNICITY DIVERSITY	TAMU COLLEGE OF NURSING	UT-AUSTIN COLLEGE OF NURSING	U OF MI COLLEGE OF NURSING	AACN SCHOOLS
White	83%	66%	83%	83%
Minority	17%	34%	17%	17%
IDENTIFIED GENDER				
Female	89%	93%	93%	92%
Male	11%	7%	7%	8%

Faculty diversity improved over five years and is aligned with one institutional peer and the national benchmark, yet lower than our TX peer. At 11%, the proportion of male faculty is higher than both peers and the national data.

STAFF: Texas A&M College of Nursing Benchmark Comparison - Staff Race/Ethnicity

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY	TAMU COLLEGE OF NURSING	UT-AUSTIN COLLEGE OF NURSING	U OF MI COLLEGE OF NURSING
White	73%	75%	82%
Minority	27%	25%	18%

Staff diversity data has improved from 19% minority in 2017 to 27%, outpacing our peer institutions.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
College of Nursing



DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT

- Adopt real-time promotion of recruitment events using social media and diversity messages.
- Adopt holistic admissions based on consultant work. Admissions committees plan to complete by May of 2021.
- Faculty STRIDE training is required and we had an 80% participation rate for all faculty.
- We have implemented new diversity recruitment markets for faculty positions.
- We now include DEI across all points of employment. A goal for 2019-20 was for new staff, faculty and administrative position postings to include a statement of preferred candidates whose experience and values promote a climate of DEI. Faculty candidates submit a statement about their DEI commitment and experience.

ANTI-RACISM AND HEALTH EQUITY

In the summer and fall of 2020, Texas A&M College of Nursing embraced new approaches to significant issues of racism and injustice. Expansion of membership and functions of our Climate and Diversity Committee took place for better representation of faculty, staff and students across programs and sites. The committee quickly established new goals for 2020/21 which are to:

- Create a Safe Space for dialogue about racial injustices and experiences. (ongoing)
- Every College committee meeting agenda requires a DEI lens as an agenda item. (complete)
- Training on implicit bias & systemic injustice that contributes to health inequities. (ongoing)

In addition, the college hired our first Deans CARE Intern (Deans Committed to Anti-Racism Efforts), a new initiative by the TAMU Council of Deans. The intern is an undergraduate student who is working with the dean to research publicly available DEI statements of colleges/schools of nursing accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

A narrative analysis of these statements will assist the Climate and Diversity Committee in drafting our first foundational College of Nursing DEI Statement, to be approved by a vote of all faculty, staff and students.

RETENTION & CLIMATE

- Climate & Diversity committee expansion. (completed - noted above)
- Provide professional development of advisors on diverse student retention practices.
- Establish a chapter of the National Hispanic Nursing Association. (under development)
- Host student listening sessions, currently led by Climate and Diversity Committee chair.
- Participate in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) new DEI survey. This was launched in February 2021 after IRB approval.
- Initiate focus groups/coffee chats. Zoom chats with faculty and staff initiated.
- Provide annual programming (e.g., resilience). New workshop on resilience delivered in January 2021, option to participate in resilience coaching program available to faculty/staff.
- Support professional development of staff. Requests for funding approved.
- Evaluate faculty and staff salary equity on annual basis. (complete)
- Planning and implementation of annual programming that reaches all students, faculty and staff by the Climate and Diversity Committee (e.g., movie night with a health-related diversity movie) implemented in February 2021.

RETENTION & CLIMATE

- Revised annual review to include readiness for promotion for faculty and staff. (complete)
- Annual performance evaluation to include goals for continuing professional development aligned with promotion for faculty and staff. (complete)
- Evaluate faculty salary equity on an annual basis and assure that salaries are at the 50th to 75th percentile of nationally normed salaries. (complete)

EFFECTS OF COVID-19

The pandemic is challenging for academic and practicing nurses. Our retention of RN to BSN and MSN students was affected due to the increased RN workload and family demands. Many of our clinical partners were unable to fulfill agreements to host or precept our nursing students in their facilities. This created a stressful situation for our students and faculty. The Texas Board of Nursing allowed for more simulation time to supplement student learning. We were able to focus our in-person clinical hours to those students in their last semester and those nearing graduation. Financial stress on students required additional support. Stress on faculty is tremendous, yet they are creative and recommended teaching with virtual reality, a new approach to patient care that was implemented during this time.

DIVERSITY FUNDING

Funding for the diversity plan in 2020 supported: (a) diversity recruitment advertising for faculty candidates in targeted minority nursing organization materials; (b) related professional development for student affairs and academic affairs team members; (c) student crisis support; (d) diversity workshop participation for two lead faculty; and (e) planned climate building consultation for faculty and staff on resilience.





TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

College of Pharmacy

Diversity Accountability Plan Report for the College of Pharmacy

Introduction

The Texas A&M Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy (COP) was established in 2006 in Kingsville, with an enrollment of about 75 students per class, to meet a critical need for health care professionals, including pharmacists in the South Texas Region. Based on data from the Texas Department of Health and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the 19 southern-most counties in the South Texas and Upper Rio Grande regions have the fewest pharmacists and fewest physicians per 100,000 population. Subsequently, based on the success of Kingsville program and continued need for qualified pharmacy professionals, the college expanded its program and established a second four-year campus in College Station in 2014, with an enrollment of about 35 additional students for a total of 110. The mission of the college is to develop and inspire a **diverse group of future leaders** in pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences through transformational education, innovative research, holistic care, and effective outreach and service.

Significant strategies and programs

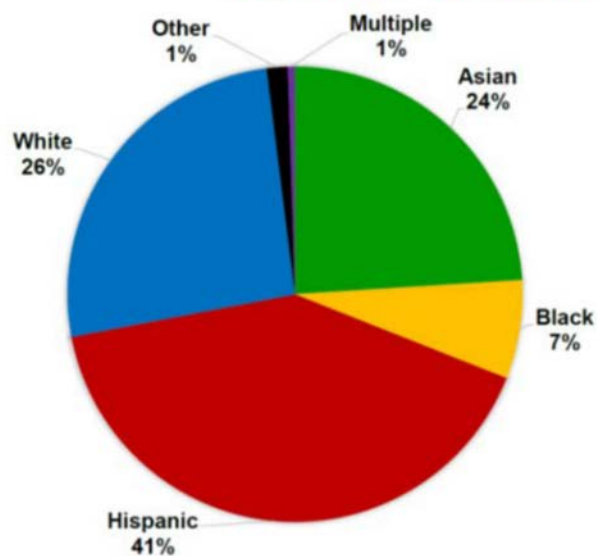
- Texas A&M University Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy (COP) has programs and committees dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion. The combination of these programs student pipelines, holistic admissions, scholarships, student organizations, Office of Student Success, ASPIR²E program, training/development for faculty, staff, and students contribute the campus climate of our college.
- **Holistic admissions** including Multiple Mini Interview (MMI). This interview model has an individualized view of each student's potential and is designed to assess non-cognitive skills of a candidate that correlate with success and has been shown to reduce bias in assessing candidates.
- The **ASPIR²E program** and **Office of Student Success (OSS)** are designed for holistic development of each student's progression and provide support and assistance for a student's transition to the professional environment through graduation.
- **Cultural Diversity Committee** is a great organization for its students, faculty, and staff to promote acceptance and understanding of diversity. The students have great pride on who they are, which is evident, by the student's excitement to sharing their culture, food, and traditions.
- **Open, forthright and inclusive communications** between and among all stakeholders, including Coffee with the Dean, Candid Conversations, Roundtable discussions on topics have allowed to create a welcoming and respect environment for everyone.

Outcomes

- COP is ranked (at #46) among the Top 50 PharmD Programs in the Nation as per US New and World News
- Ranked 5th as one of the most diverse student populations amongst all pharmacy schools
- Ranked 5th in the Hispanic graduates rates amongst all pharmacy schools

- Ranked 1st in the nation for best return on investment (ROI).
- The college is **ranked #1** in the nation among all accredited programs as per the **College Affordability Guide**, and have the **lowest tuition and fees** in Texas, as per the AACP.
- In the **2020 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) student survey** on the college graduation Class of 2020 show that
 - **97.2%** of the students agreed or strongly agreed their pharmacy practice experiences allowed **direct interaction with diverse patient populations**
 - **99%** of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the College of Pharmacy was **welcoming to students with diverse backgrounds**.

CURRENT STUDENTS



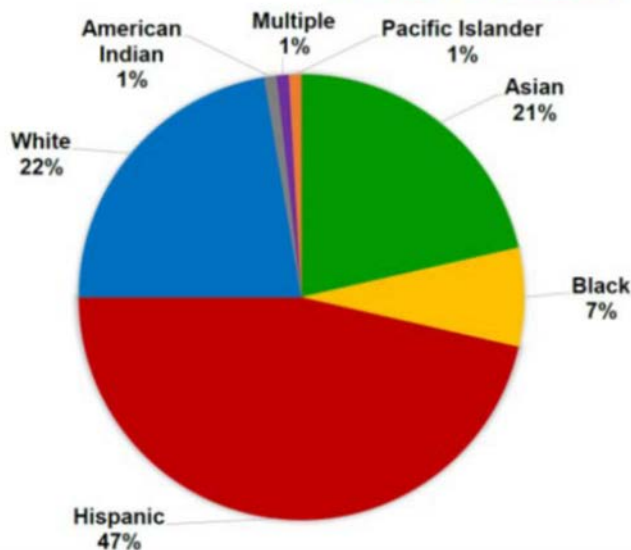
Classes 2021 to 2024

439 Enrolled

61% Women
39% Men



CLASS OF 2024



Class 2024

112 Enrolled

64% Women
36% Men

30% First Generation

51% South Texas Residents



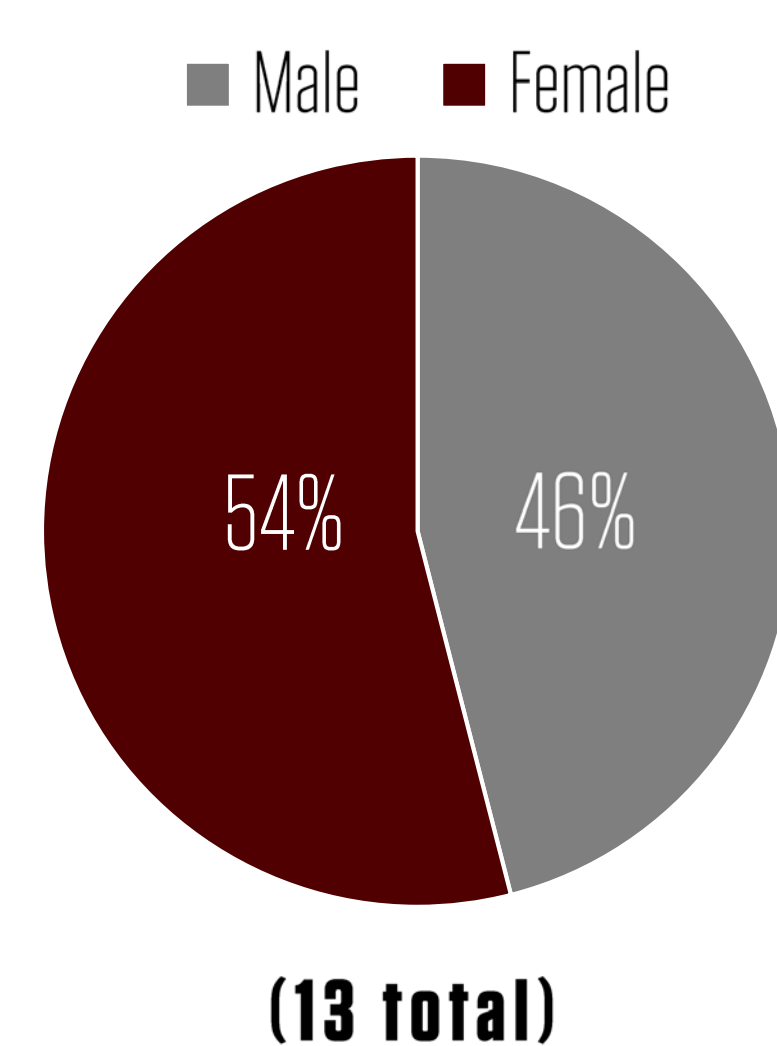


INTRODUCTION

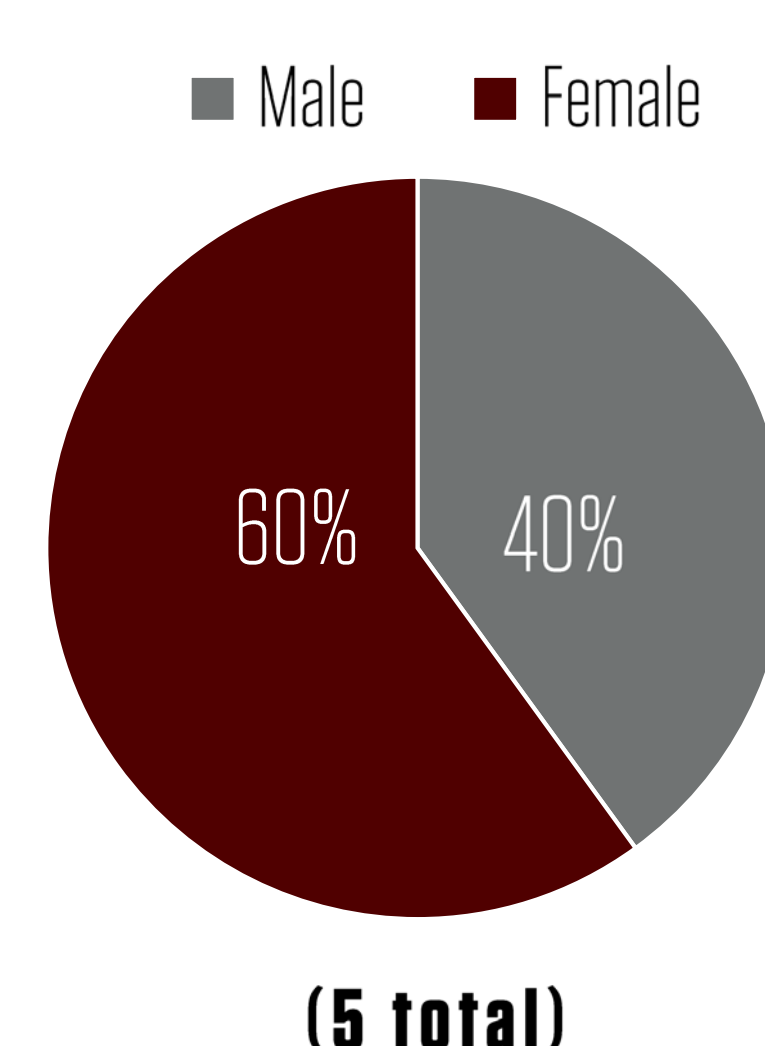
The Office of the President (OP) and the Office of Government Relations (GR) are located in the Jack K. Williams Administration Building. The office manages activities, correspondence and engagements on behalf of the University President, and GR is Texas A&M's interface with state and federal elected officials. The office consists of 13 FTEs and 5 student assistants.

DEMOGRAPHICS

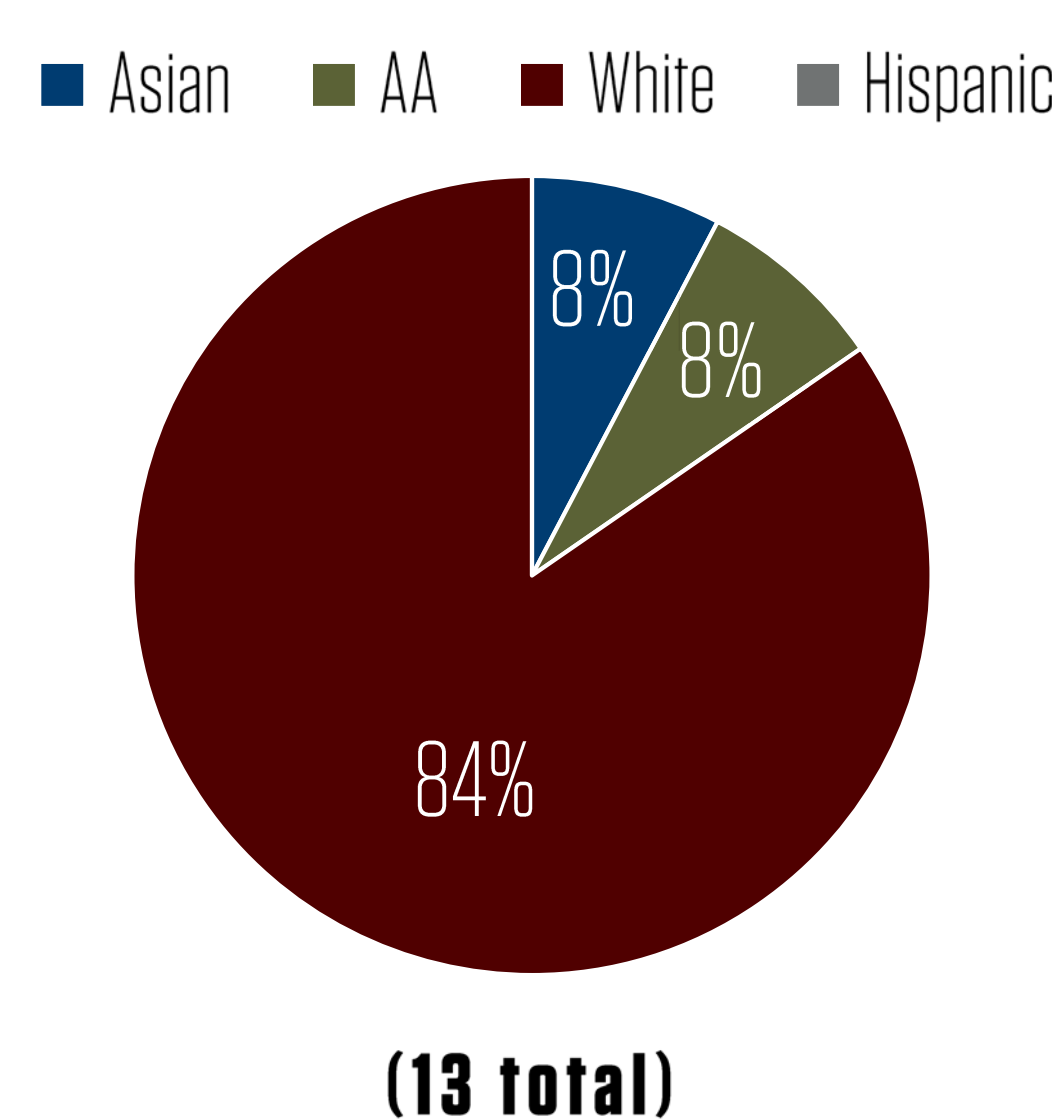
FTE – GENDER



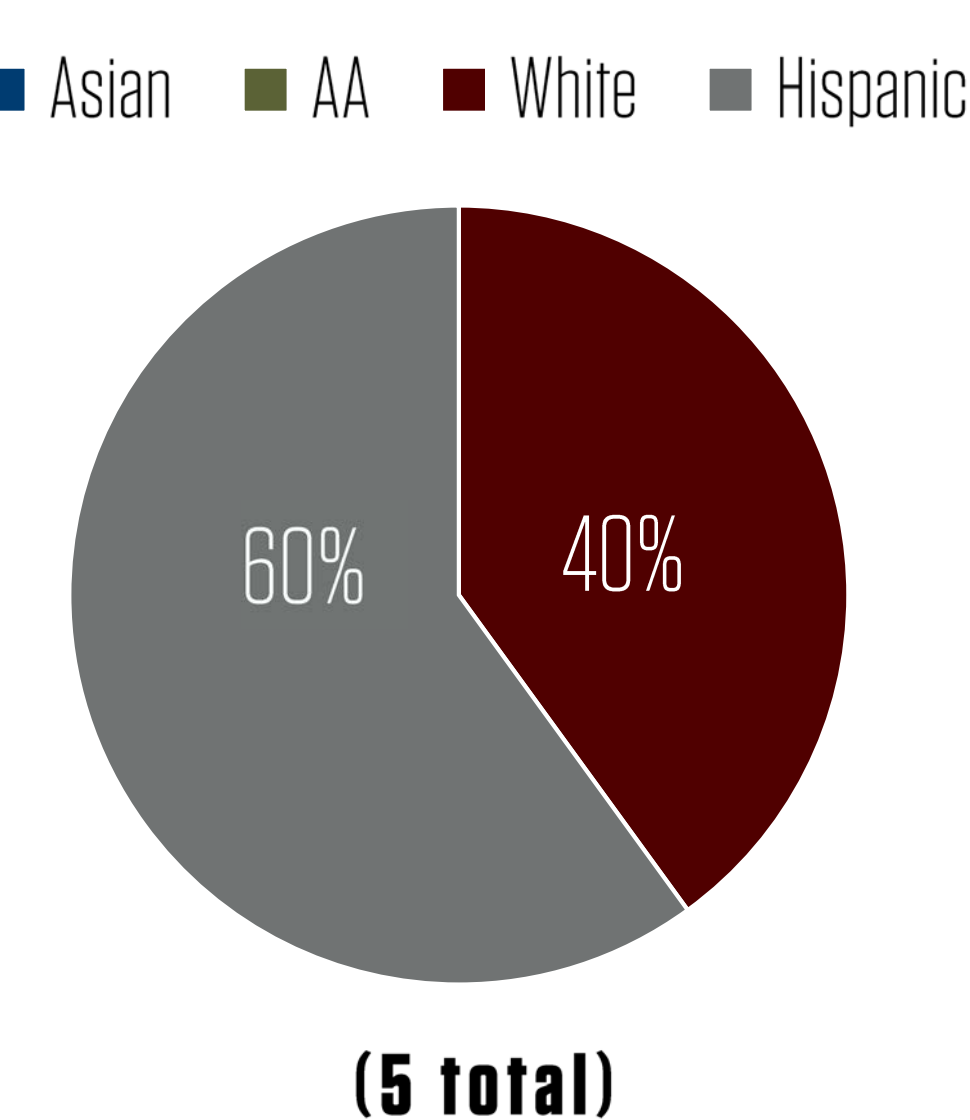
STUDENT – GENDER



FTE – ETHNICITY



STUDENT – ETHNICITY



GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- Started the **Office Outreach Program** to better educate OP staff and heighten our level of knowledge around issues impacting campus climate.
- **Student Exploration Dialogue Opportunity (SEDO)** provides our student assistants the chance to hear the unique Aggie journey and perspective of another student from a different country.
- Below, the Office of the President visits Texas A&M Disability Services in July 2019 (part of the Office Outreach Program) to learn about services and support available for Texas A&M students with disabilities.



“We felt appreciated and heard.”

– Dr. Kristie Orr, Director for Texas A&M Disability Resources (pictured above center)

The Office of the President plans to:

- **Revisit the Office Outreach Program** in a virtual context, and
- Conduct virtual **outreach to multiple offices** in spring 2021.

CHALLENGES

- **In addition to the pandemic, serving as an unofficial “call center” and hub** for students, faculty, parents, former students, and community stakeholders on various issues.
- **Keeping staff informed** and educated on press issues impacting sense of belonging and mattering at Texas A&M.
- **Staying motivated and managing our time** in order to keep performing the main functions and operations of the office.

UTILIZATION OF FUNDING

Sponsored the work of the **Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**



Purchasing copies of *“Race on Campus”* for the entire office to read and discuss during spring of 2021

Future investments

- **Increase our sponsorships of campus community organizations** that have a diversity, equity and inclusion focus
- **Provide more staff professional development** in the areas of diversity equity and inclusion



"The tradition of selfless service is something I like about the School of Public Health, which is very much needed in the world to eliminate health disparities."

MAHBUB HOSSAIN



"I hope to inspire other students from historically underrepresented backgrounds to pursue careers in public health. I would encourage students to come to the Texas A&M School of Public Health because of the supportive faculty and the endless opportunities to conduct impactful research."

BENIKA DIXON

735 Sites in Texas

35 US States

22 Countries

We provide many learning opportunities for students. These include applied practicum experience, education abroad, and community partner volunteer opportunities. Practicum experiences occur across the state, nation, and world.

The 17th Health Disparities, Education, Awareness, Research & Training Consortium workshop "Disparities in Health in America: Working Toward Social Justice" will be hosted virtually this summer.



**HEALTH DISPARITIES, EDUCATION, AWARENESS, RESEARCH & TRAINING
HDEART Consortium**

All 254 counties in Texas are impacted by our programs.

This fall student leaders organized multiple events and a social media series to encourage civic participation.



44 **WHY I VOTE**

I vote because I recognize the importance and power of the ballot box.

My rights as a Black woman are determined by officials who are elected, and it is my personal responsibility to have my say about my life.



JACQUITA N. JOHNSON, MPH



SPH Health & Wellness

POLLS, POLICY & PUBLIC HEALTH

HEALTH & THE 2020 ELECTION

OCTOBER 14TH, 3-4 PM CST

Join us for a virtual conversation on civic participation, advocacy, and what health issues are at stake in the upcoming election!

This is a PH Scholar eligible event.

Dr. Timothy Callaghan, PhD
Assistant professor at the Texas A&M School of Public Health. Has had research featured in prominent journals regarding health politics, the Affordable Care Act, & state politics.

Dr. Alva Ferdinand, DrPH, JD
Associate professor at the Texas A&M School of Public Health. Published multiple works, including research about the impact of texting bans on motor vehicle crash-related hospitalizations.

RSVP AT: BIT.LY/2020TAMUPPP

Climate & COVID-19

The School of Public Health is leading COVID-19 pandemic efforts on modeling, contact tracing, and testing to serve the University, the State and beyond. But we remain committed to our climate and our community. We have conducted virtual graduation celebrations, faculty search interviews, and even a school wide, half-day summit for our strategic planning process.



COVID-19 Conversations
premiering May 28, 2020 from Noon-1 pm

A free series open to the public aimed at helping our community better understand the background and details of the COVID-19 pandemic and a public health response.

SPH GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

Brittany Brayboy
MPH, JPHCH

Hometown
Houston, Texas

Future Plans
I am currently working as a contact tracer for Harris County Public Health. My ultimate goal is to do outreach work in the community, to help alleviate issues surrounding sexual health.

SPH GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

Sagar Javi
MPH, Epidemiology

Hometown
Surat, Gujarat, India

Advice to PH Students
Get involved with student organizations at SPH. Some of them provide opportunities to conduct your own research with help from faculty advisors. This will certainly boost your confidence going forward.

The mission of the School of Innovation is to provide platforms for the university community that facilitate cross-disciplinary collaborations for student, faculty, and staff. Innovation Partners' mission is to lead the university's intellectual property commercialization efforts. These units are partnered to bring commercialization in better alignment with the university's core educational mission. In the coming year the office of the Vice President for Entrepreneurship and Economic Development will consolidate commercialization efforts and the School of Innovation under the banner of Texas A&M Innovation Partners. Innovation[X] and MaroonBase will continue in the reorganized unit.

Our Role

The School of Innovation and TAMU Innovation Partners have some real advantages when it comes to our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts. We do not house either a faculty or students, but present the university with programming that cuts across colleges, departments, and academic programs. Our signature programs, Innovation[X] and MaroonBase, are designed to engage a broad array of faculty and students in new and existing collaborative activities, particularly those that might not have otherwise done so.

Innovation[X] Program

Goals and Strategies - The Innovation[X] Program proceeds from the basic idea that productive multidisciplinary collaboration is fundamental to solving big problems. Beginning in the 2019-20 academic year, we developed a program that brings together faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students from across campus to work on year-long, research-based projects that address real-world issues.

After Year 1 of the Innovation[X] program, our goal was to double the number of teams from 6 to 12 teams, involving over 100 students. We did not set a specific goal in terms of number of faculty involved, but hoped to increase it proportionally. We met these goals and surpassed them.

I[X] Projects/ Faculty	I[X] Proposals	I[X] Projects	% Female PIs	% Minority PIs	Total Faculty	Faculty Colleges/ Units	Faculty Depart- ments
Year 1	24	6	33%	Not avail	30	10	22
Year 2	65	15	73%	47%	80	16	15

I[X] Student Applicants	# Applications	% Minority	% Female	% Gender Non-Binary	% UG	Colleges	Majors
Year 1	184	66%	58%	Not avail	58%	12	71
Year 2	475	71%	58%	.6%	74%	14	106

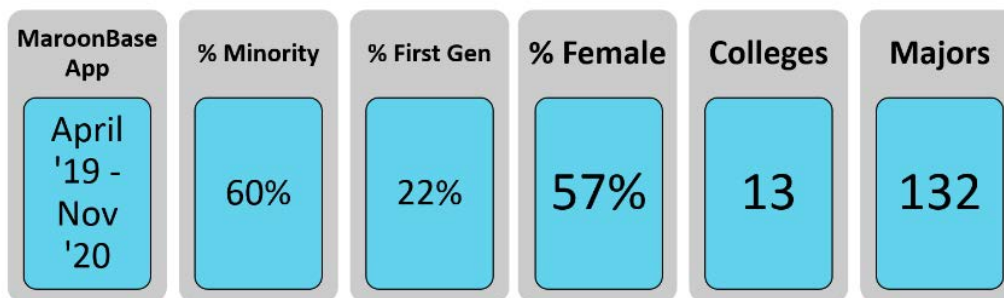
I[X] Student Participants	# Participants	% Minority	% Female	% Gender Non-Binary	% UG	Colleges	Majors
Year 1	87	Only full cohort avail	Only full cohort avail	Not avail	63%	10	43
Year 2	204	67%	66%	1.5%	69%	14	80

Addressing Challenges

- **Access and Communication** - Response to our calls for proposals last year were so positive and applications from students so numerous that we understood how important it was to expand opportunities, both for faculty and for students. Moreover, we succeeded in building teams consisting of a widely diverse set of students and faculty. 8 of our 21 I[X] projects have centered on or highlighted areas of diversity. We also learned from our pilot program the value of following up with faculty after they submit in order to improve their proposals. In many cases, this iterative process caused faculty to expand the ways in which they would include more students and more disciplinary perspectives into their work.
- **Navigating COVID-19** - When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our campus and the world, we decided it was important to fund more Innovation[X] projects that dealt directly with the pandemic and its after-effects. And, to that end, we decided the Diversity Award funds we received would be used to co-fund a project related to some DEI aspect of the pandemic response. To our delight, the faculty committee selected three projects, all of which engaged some DEI aspect.

MaroonBase

Goals and Strategies - In our first full academic year of promoting MaroonBase (2019-2020), our goal was to include events that would appeal to a wide community of students. At the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, the app had been downloaded and used by approximately 300 students. Our goal for the 2020-2021 year is to grow both the number of students using MaroonBase by 50%, and add groups across campus as more formal partners. Until now, we have essentially been in product development mode, and with our updated version of our app launching in spring 2021, expect to roll it out to a larger audience.



Climate and Recruitment - A particular focus during this first year of MaroonBase has been to include event promotion for and outreach to student groups like the newly formed First Generation Aggies, activities like the Diversity Hackathon, the Human Library, Immigration Week, and the Aggie Allies logo contest. We specifically made efforts to promote events for students through MaroonBase that highlight equity and equality related to current and future careers, such as the recent "DS/CCTR Panel | Job Searching with a Disability," "New Nonprofit Narratives for DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)," and "The Art of Interviewing and Understanding the Offer," which covers salary negotiation. MaroonBase has so far featured 136 events related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Addressing Challenges - Current efforts to expand access are focusing on partnerships across campus. This year we have cemented relationships with the Career Center, Bush School, and the Library, as well as student orgs like Intellectual Property Aggies College Station and Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization. We also plan on engaging groups like the Corps of Cadets, Athletics, MaroonCoats, and other units that promote leadership next semester by kicking off a monthly focus on a specific area of interest (starting with "Leadership Month").

Innovation Partners

By engaging faculty, staff and students through our *own* commercialization workshops, pro bono attorney office hours and online resources, our goal is to provide knowledge and support to move Aggie innovations from the lab to the world. We are excited to serve as a bridge to connect inventors with the resources they need for success and to connect the network of Aggie inventors to each other. We hope this engagement and efforts to increase support and streamline the disclosure process for faculty inventors will bolster faculty retention and enhance inventor culture on campus.

When U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross launched the newly established National Council for Expanding American Innovation, he outlined the challenge in innovation for the United States: "Simply stated, too small a segment of the American population is engaged in the innovation economy, and in the creation of inventions, the development of new and novel products, and the formation of entrepreneurial companies. Because of the SUCCESS Act, the USPTO studied the available literature and found deep inequalities that exist in the innovation enterprise, with a plethora of white males, and a dearth of minorities, women, and veterans. We will have difficulty being successful as a nation if we do not have more people engaged in the creative economy." Vice President Andrew Morriss serves on the Council's working group whose charge includes devising ways to measure progress. In the coming year, Innovation Partners will partner with the Office for Diversity to develop a plan for our community to increase participation by under-represented groups—women, veterans, and racial and ethnic minorities—and help the Commission reach its goal of broader engagement and inclusion in the inventor and creative community.

Demographics

	Female	Asian	Black	Hispanic	International	Total
Faculty	25.1%	9.3%	1.4%	2.7%	16.4%	366
Staff	45.2%	17.5%	3.7%	6.8%	0.0%	354
Graduate Students	34.5%	9.0%	1.9%	6.0%	37.9%	1145
Undergraduate Students	52.9%	14.0%	3.3%	30.0%	1.8%	2684

Departmental Composition

	Faculty		Students	
	APT*	T/TT**	Graduate	Undergraduate
Biology	23	35	132	1474
Chemistry	27	40	296	278
Mathematics	48	75	174	526
Physics and Astronomy	6	62	165	228
Statistics	14	30	378	138

Science Leadership Scholars (flagship undergrad retention effort)

	Cohort 1*	Cohort 2*	Cohort 3*	Cohort 4*
Retained in CLSC	65.2% (28.6%)	60.0% (36%)	90.48% (33.3%)	95.5% (86.4%)
Changed Majors	26.0% (38.1%)	20.0% (32%)	9.5% (57.1%)	4.6% (13.6%)
Retained to TAMU	91.3% (66.6%)	80.0% (68%)	100% (90.4%)	100% (100%)
Female	71.43%	35.0%	66.7%	45.5%
Hispanic	52.4%	40.0%	61.9%	54.6%
Black	4.8%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	23.8%	35.0%	23.8%	27.3%

*Cohorts 1, 2, 3, 4 represent graduating students in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023. Percentages in each cell represent Science Leadership Scholar students (Control group students)

Students are first generation in college from low-income families

Faculty Investment Hires

Chemistry, Mathematics, Statistics

COVID-19 Challenges

- International Graduate Student enrollment
- Problematic in-person course attendance
- Increased focus on virtual undergraduate research

science.tamu.edu

Progress

- Awards including Leadership in Excellence
- Diversity Proposals and Conferences
- Strengths, Opportunities, Aspiration Results Plans
- Review of Evaluation Guidelines
- Mentoring Programs
- Faculty and Staff Advisory Committees
- Robust Student Organizations & Activities
- Goals in Faculty Hiring, Student Retention
- Continued Excellence in Community Outreach
- Visionary Direction Through Departmental SOARS



Program to Advance Science Scholars

This two-year program pairs early career female faculty with internal advocates and external mentors in order to help them successfully navigate work-life balance and also develop a robust network of renowned scholars from across Texas A&M and the nation.

Diversity-Related Programs and Initiatives

Diversity and Equity Grant Programs

Leadership in Equity and Diversity (LEAD) Award

Primary Care Travel Grant

Created a college-level anonymous online reporting mechanism to reward positive diversity and inclusion-related experiences and address negative ones, using feedback to create a more equitable environment for all faculty, students, and staff, independent of status, reporting structure, or affiliation

Derya Akleman | 514 Blocker | 979-845-7362

TEXAS A&M COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE & BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES (CVM)

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



Top Colleges for Diversity

Top Colleges for Diversity

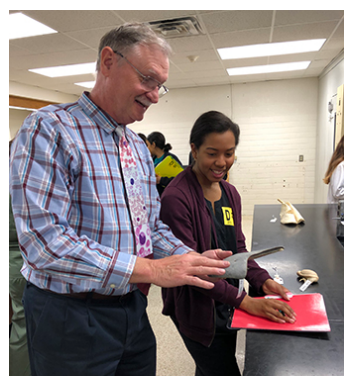
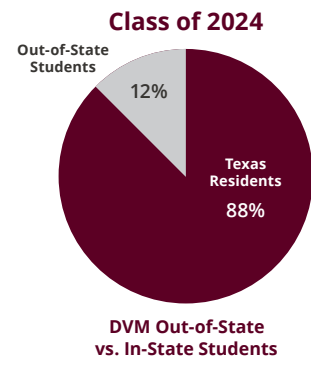
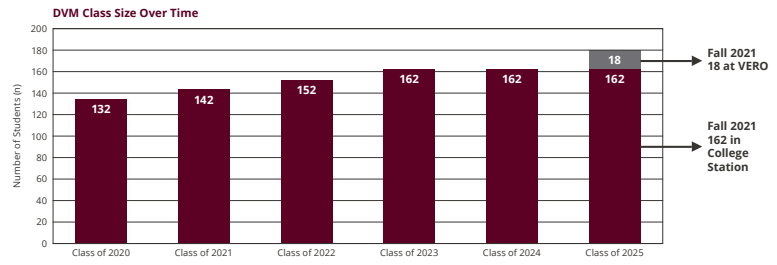
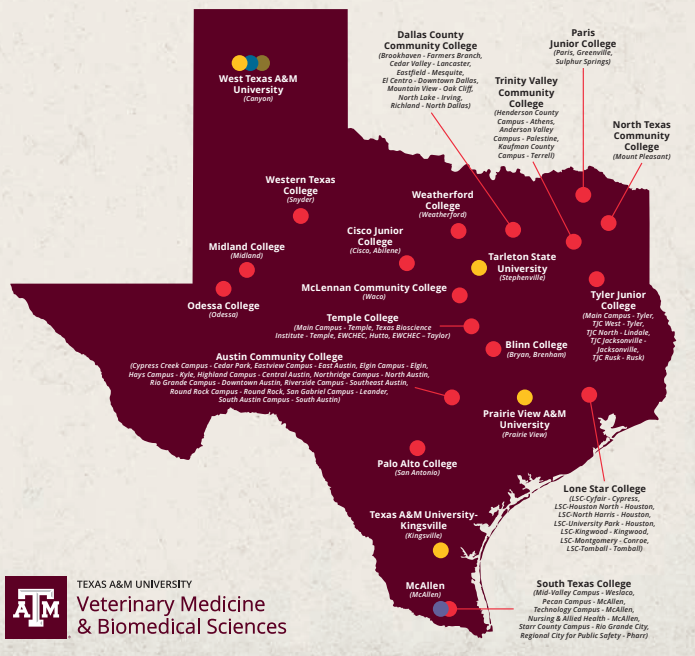
Top Colleges for Diversity

Serving Texas and Increasing Access to Veterinary Medicine

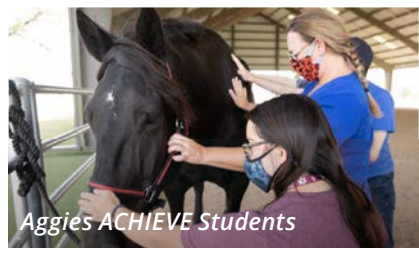
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE & BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES (CVMBS) STUDENT RECRUITMENT

MAP LEGEND

- **BIMS 2+2 Program**
 17 pipeline community college MOAs chosen for diversity attributes; students seamlessly enter Texas A&M
- **Graduate**
 New PhD program at WT (Hispanic-serving institution)
- **BIMS at McAllen**
 Completed first full year, Spring 2019; students principally Hispanic and first-generation
- **DVM 2+2 Program**
 2+2 program at WT; two years in Canyon and two years in College Station
- **DVM MOAs**
 Pipeline MOAs with four System Universities: WT University (Hispanic-serving institution), Texas A&M-Kingsville (Hispanic-serving institution), Prairie View A&M University (HBCU), and Tarleton State University



Teaching a student during a PEER-hosted event



DVM students at the Boys & Girls Club of the Brazos Valley.



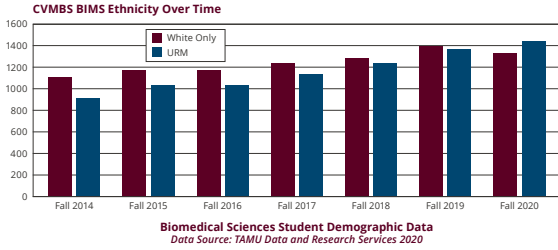
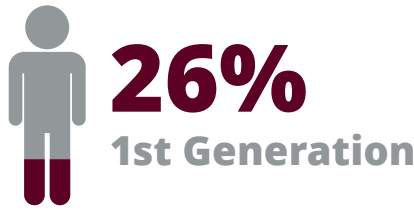
CVMBBS Open House 2019

**17 BIMS
 2+2 Community
 College Agreements**

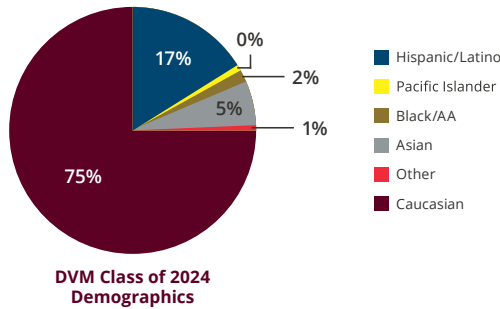
**New 2+2 DVM
 Program at WT (VERO)**

**DVM Pipeline MOAs
 - 2 Hispanic Serving and 1 HBU**





Class of 2024 Underrepresented Students



182

Faculty and Staff have completed a 40-hour Conflict Management & Leadership Course

SPRING 2020 Diversity Quiz Event 60 Winners

Undergraduate BIMS	Race/Ethnicity			Gender	1st Gen.
	URM	Black	Hispanic	Female	
CVMBs 2020 (n=2,759)	52% (n=1,432)	3.5% (n=97)	31.2% (n=862)	70.2% (n=1,938)	26.02% (n=718)
CVMBs 2019 (n=2,821)	51.3% (n=1,447)	3.5% (n=100)	31.2% (n=879)	71% (n=2,000)	28% (n=786)
CVMBs 2018 (n=2,821)	50.24% (n=1,338)	4.58% (n=122)	29.59% (n=788)	70.11% (n=1,867)	28.1% (n=748)
TAMU 2020 (n=53,181)	28.5% (n=15,157)	3.0% (n=1,595)	25.2% (n=13,402)	46.6% (n=24,782)	23.5% (n=12,498)
TAMU 2019 (n=54,476)	41.4% (n=22,532)	3.15% (n=1,715)	24.5% (n=13,352)	47.11% (n=25,666)	24.43% (n=13,310)
TAMU 2018 (n=54,369)	38% (n=20,526)	3.34% (n=1,817)	24% (n=12,998)	47.4% (n=25,767)	25.2% (n=13,677)

Undergraduate Student Data
(CVMBs: Combined Biomedical Sciences and VetMed University Studies Students)
Data Source: 20th Day Enrollment Data 2020, TAMU Data and Research Services

Graduate	Race/Ethnicity				Gender
	URM	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial (excluding Black)	Female
CVMBs 2020 (*n=254)	31.1% (n=87)	2.8% (n=7)	16.14% (n=41)	4% (n=9)	64% (n=162)
CVMBs 2019 (*n=255)	30.2% (n=77)	3.13% (n=8)	16.08% (n=41)	4% (n=8)	64% (n=163)
CVMBs 2018 (*n=259)	30.2% (n=77)	5.4% (n=7)	15% (n=38)	3% (n=7)	68% (n=175)
TAMU 2020 (*n=12,365)	23% (n=2,812)	3.63% (n=457)	11.05% (n=1,379)	1.36% (n=168)	43% (n=5,350)
TAMU 2019 (*n=12,387)	21% (n=2,585)	4% (n=447)	11.1% (n=1,370)	1.33% (n=165)	43% (n=5,295)
TAMU 2018 (*n=12,364)	20% (n=2,462)	4% (n=448)	10.2% (n=1,262)	1.4% (n=169)	43% (n=5,287)

Graduate Student Data
Data Source: TAMU DARS 2020; Association of American Veterinary Medicine Colleges 2019-2020

Professional DVM	Race/Ethnicity					Gender
	URM	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	Female
CVMBs 2020 (n=598)	23% (n=135)	4% (n=21)	1.33% (n=8)	12.04% (n=72)	3.2% (n=19)	81% (n=483)
CVMBs 2019 (n=576)	21.4% (n=123)	5% (n=26)	1.04% (n=6)	14% (n=78)	2.3% (n=13)	80.03% (n=461)
*AAVMC 2020 (n=13,548)	21.15% (n=2,865)	6% (n=749)	3% (n=392)	8% (n=1,010)	4% (n=538)	82% (n=11,080)
*AAVMC 2019 (n=13,323)	20% (n=2,614)	5% (n=664)	3% (n=380)	5% (n=717)	5% (n=658)	82% (n=10,861)
**AAVMC 2020 (n=13,320)	20.2% (n=2,691)	6% (n=743)	2% (n=258)	7.42% (n=989)	4% (n=537)	82.4% (n=10,902)
**AAVMC 2019 (n=13,097)	19% (n=2,438)	5.1% (n=663)	2% (n=247)	6% (n=780)	5% (n=658)	82% (n=10,687)

DVM Student Data
Data Source: Assoc. of American Veterinary Medicine Colleges & TAMU Data and Research Services (DARS) 2020
*All DVM Programs ** Excluding HBCU (Tuskegee Institute)



2019 Staff Award Recipients

22 Gender Neutral Restrooms



Scan to watch "I Am CVM" videos

Workshops
Leadership and Communication in Action: Engaging in Difficult Dialogues (20 completed)
Dare to Lead™ (75 completed by end of January)

The "I Am CVM" video series celebrates the differences of the CVMBs' many diverse, talented, amazing faculty, staff, and students, while encouraging all to remember that we are united by a common goal of creating a welcoming environment for everyone. For more information, go to tx.ag/IAMCVMPlaylist.



THE COLLEGE AT A GLANCE

12 DEPARTMENTS



2ND LARGEST COLLEGE OF THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY COLLEGE STATION CAMPUS

4 INDEPENDENT PROGRAMS

- Africana Studies
- Latin American & Caribbean Studies
- Religious Studies
- Women's & Gender Studies

7 CENTERS & INSTITUTES

- Census Research Data Center
- Center for Maritime Archeology and Conservation
- Center for the Study of the First Americans
- Glasscock Center for Humanities Research
- Center of Digital Humanities Research
- Public Policy Research Institute
- Race and Ethnic Studies Institute

RECRUITMENT

UNDERGRADUATE

- New Performance Studies department certificate in performing social activism created
- Economics department workshops at large URM population Texas high schools resulted in 11% increase in Hispanic student enrollment

GRADUATE

- Psychological and Brain Sciences department's PhD program joined national initiative to enhance URM student recruitment, which increased URM's in that department from 17% to 36%

FACULTY

- The college utilized Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows program to recruit and hire nine faculty from underrepresented demographic groups, and whose work focuses on issues of race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation

STAFF

- The college required applicants to include DEI reflection statement, while hiring committees implemented hiring matrix to include applicant's DEI related work

RETENTION

UNDERGRADUATE

- First-year Psychological and Brain Sciences department orientation seminar introduced with focus on strategies and mentoring about careers and grad school

GRADUATE

- First-year Economics department support program assigns both an advanced graduate student mentor and a faculty member to mentor students

FACULTY

- Early-career Philosophy department faculty mentoring program created and implemented

STAFF

- The college fostered a sense of community and cooperation by centralizing undergraduate advisors and placing advising pods in buildings across the college

CAMPUS CLIMATE

UNDERGRADUATE

- History department climate and inclusion director received college grant to develop Black Lives Matter special topics course
- Sociology department adopted land acknowledgment statement prepared by the Native American and Indigenous Organization

GRADUATE

- The college reassured students about extra funding to ease COVID-19 related anxieties
- The college hosted informational sessions and workshops with Disability Services and Counseling & Psychological Services to improve overall mental health and wellbeing

FACULTY

- English department organized roundtable on "Ending Anti-AAPI Violence and Racism" and received a CRISS Social Impact grant to further their efforts

STAFF

- Communication department faculty pooled personal resources for staff holiday gifts to demonstrate staff's value
- The college hosted an annual staff appreciation luncheon with awards for outstanding service

EQUITY

UNDERGRADUATE

- English 210 course integrated anti-racist and inclusive pedagogies and offered a free alternative to textbooks saving students \$423,900

GRADUATE

- The college approved raising the minimum nine-month stipend for all doctoral students in the college to \$16,000
- The college funded a plan to help history department offer fifth year guaranteed funding to ALL students

FACULTY

- The college plans to increase the number of lines allotted to the ACES' program to five per year, given its success in placing women and URM faculty on tenure track

STAFF

- Each advisor pod in the new college-centralized advising model has a manager who serves as mentor and works on reclassifications, merit pay increases, and equity pay

REFLECTION

If the university expects students, faculty and staff to foster the narratives needed to recruit and retain people from underrepresented groups, it must stop turning a blind eye to the growing perception of the university's indifference to their wellbeing.

- University mandates for processes to resemble pre-pandemic 2019 processes cause faculty, staff, and student concerns in regards to safety and health with the additional burden of regular interruptions to teaching, conducting research, and hosting communal engagements
 - Retention programs for first-generation students and students from underrepresented backgrounds face weakened success as a result of constant safety anxieties
 - Calls for classroom accommodations are largely denied
 - Despite having successfully demonstrated their ability to work from home in the 20-21 academic year, staff are largely denied permission to do so now
- Preliminary results from "Differential Impacts of COVID-19," a study conducted by ADVANCE, reveal disproportionate impacts on certain groups in higher education
 - "Women faculty... are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (increased caregiving responsibilities at home)"
 - "Disproportionate impacts on scholars of color"
 - "35% [of graduate students] have moderate or high levels of depression"

Despite increased challenges brought about by COVID-19, the College of Liberal Arts has made significant strides in retention, climate, equity, and inclusion.

- The college was awarded \$90,000 in 2021 for its previous year's diversity efforts and spent \$13,658 more this year to support climate and inclusion efforts for faculty, staff, and students
- Dr. Troy Harden was brought to the college to lead the Race and Ethnic Studies Institute (RESI) and he noted:
 - "Our primary goal is to support a community of scholars committed to the many aspects of race and ethnicity studies research and teaching that contributes toward a development of ideas grounded in diverse and comprehensive thought."
 - "RESI can serve to bridge into a critical historical and contemporary view of race and ethnicity, challenging the university community to not only observe, but to act."
- The College also recognized people for their invaluable DEI work
 - The college funded the "Achievements in Climate and Inclusion" (ACI) awards for faculty who demonstrate substantive and frequent commitments to helping faculty, students, and staff from underrepresented groups navigate what they perceive as a sometimes-hostile climate on campus
 - The staff version of ACI awards was offered for the first time in the fall of 2020

Handbook for Faculty Search Committee Members

(Revised February 2023)

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Introduction

This handbook is designed to assist the faculty search committees with successfully recruiting new faculty and administrators. However, nothing in this handbook can match the knowledge and hard work many dedicated individuals bring to the effort of creatively and persistently striving to hire at Texas A&M University. We Recognize this and endorse the fact that in each discipline, or sub-discipline, a thorough understanding of the culture and expectations of individuals in the potential prospect pool must be utilized for successful searches and hires to occur. This handbook offers resources so that the search and hire process align with university requirements and goals. It also offers ideas to aid committees in their efforts to enrich existing search practices.

The handbook is organized in sections that represent key elements of the search process:

- Laying the Groundwork for an Effective Search
- Initiating the Search Process and Recruiting Applicants
- Evaluating Candidates
- Interviewing Candidates
- Recruiting (and Retaining) the Finalist

Objectives

The objective of this handbook is to provide evidence-based practices to increase the diversity of applicant pools, to ensure the fair and equitable review of all candidates, and to demonstrate that Texas A&M University is committed to creating an inclusive, welcoming, and supportive environment for all faculty, staff, and students. *(Note: The list of recommendations are compiled from a variety of sources identified in Appendix H.)*

While conducting searches for new faculty members, the search committee should keep in mind not only the unit's needs, but also Texas A&M University's commitment to increase the diversity of the faculty. At Texas A&M, diversity encompasses the various characteristics of persons in our community, including but not limited to age, background, citizenship, disability, education, ethnicity, family status, gender, gender identity/expression, geographical location, language, military experience, political views, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and work experience.

Texas A&M University's commitment to diversity goes beyond increasing the diversity of faculty. The university's diversity plan rests on three overarching goals. Accountability, Climate, and Equity.

1. **Accountability:** Establish structures, processes and policies that hold all units accountable, and reward units and individuals for demonstrating their current standing, plans, and progress in creating an environment where the diversity of individual identities and ideas are treated equitably in a climate that fosters success and achievement by all.
2. **Climate:** promote a positive and supportive climate by identifying aspects in the climate of individual units and the University which foster and/or impede a working and learning environment that fully recognizes, values, and integrates diversity in the pursuit of academic excellence.
3. **Equity:** Integrate into the mission and goals for the University and units assurance that students, staff, and faculty (tenure and non-tenure track), regardless of identity, are all treated equitably.

How Diversity Aligns with Excellence

This handbook is based on research that demonstrates that excellence and diversity are closely aligned. Simply put, there is no need to sacrifice excellence in order to increase diversity.

Diversity comes in many forms. Every individual person brings a diversity of experience, age, background, education, gender, gender identity/expression, race, ethnicity, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, religion, citizenship status, family status, political views, geographical location, work experience, and military experience. Diversity can be viewed as “the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values, and beliefs as assets to the group or organization with which they interact” (Academic Impressions 2019). These diverse experiences add a breadth of perspectives for addressing problems. For this reason, diverse organizations are known to perform better, be more innovative, and make better choices (Mayer, Warr & Zhao 2018; Pichler et al. 2018).

Within academia, faculty who represent diverse perspectives and experiences (broadly defined) are well-positioned to serve as role models for an increasingly diverse student body. Currently, the student body is noticeably more diverse in terms of gender and race/ethnicity than the faculty. In addition to serving as mentors and role models for students from underrepresented groups, research shows that faculty from historically

underrepresented groups are more innovative in their pedagogical approaches. Faculty who bring new perspectives to the institution are also more likely to value the inclusion of issues related to race, class and sexual orientation in course materials and classroom discussions (Smith and Schoenfeld 2000). All of these factors are positively correlated with undergraduate and graduate student retention.

The term “underrepresented” is used throughout this handbook to describe situations when a particular group’s proportionate representation in a unit (whether the unit is defined as the department, college, or university) is smaller than its representation in the general population. Black, LatinX and Native American individuals, for example, are underrepresented in academia. While women are underrepresented in many -- but not all -- academic disciplines, they are particularly underrepresented in STEM fields.

The Concept of Implicit Bias

Many of the strategies and techniques in this handbook are designed to reduce the influence of implicit bias. We all have subconscious or implicit biases about other social groups (including but not limited to groups based on age, gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity). These perceptions are shaped by past experiences and stereotype and may inadvertently influence our behaviors and decisions (such as our decisions on how to evaluate job candidates).

There is an extensive amount of literature on the impact of implicit bias on the evaluation of job application materials (such as CV, reference letters, student evaluations, etc.) (See handout, “Key Research Findings. Unintentional Bias – Gender, Race, Sexual Orientation & Religion.”) Taken together, this research suggests that there are many steps that can be taken to reduce the influence of implicit bias in the search process. That is one of the central objectives of this handbook. Being aware of potential biases is a key step to ensuring that the search process is fair and equitable for all candidates.

Foundations for an Effective Search

CONTINUOUS PREPARATION FOR HIRING

- ✓ **Build diverse networks, and always be on the lookout for applicants for future open positions.** Recruiting can and should begin before you have a position. Faculty members in the unit should regularly scout for potential job applicants who would enhance the diversity and excellence of the department. Faculty should be encouraged to start building relationships with promising scholars at conferences. The department might also consider inviting promising scholars from underrepresented groups to give a lecture on campus *before a search is underway*. Faculty members can also ask colleagues at other institutions for names of promising candidates. These tactics will help widen the pool from which you recruit.
- ✓ **Always take steps to improve the climate for members of underrepresented groups.** A department's ability to attract candidates from underrepresented groups is going to be higher if there is a welcoming and supportive department climate. Therefore, it is crucial that department is continuously take steps to improve the climate. This way, all faculty feel included and welcome whether or not the department is actively hiring.

ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS TO INITIATE A SEARCH

- ✓ **Refer to college and university guidelines for the administrative aspects of hiring.** All new hires have to be approved by your college, the Faculty Affairs Office (and in some cases, the Provost's Office) at the beginning and end of the search process.

The Faculty Affairs Office has prepared guidelines for deans, department heads and department staff to use for faculty searches. See "Hiring" on the Faculty Affairs website (facultyaffairs.tamu.edu) for more information. Your college is likely to have its own set of guidelines for offer letters and startup packages.

Initiating the Search and Recruiting Applicants

FORMING A SEARCH COMMITTEE

- ✓ **All members of a search committee should be advocates for diversity, not just women and faculty of color.** This is one of the reasons that it is important for all members of the committee to complete the Search Committee Training workshop.
- ✓ **Build a diverse search committee.** It is highly recommended that every search committee includes women and members of historically underrepresented groups, and/or individuals who have contributed to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in their scholarship, teaching, advising or service.

In the early stages of the search, the department should lay the groundwork for a fair and equitable search process and take steps to encourage candidates from underrepresented groups to apply for the position.

The search committee should also include faculty from different ranks and faculty who represent different research areas within the department. Departments may want to consider adding staff and student representatives to the committee.

- ✓ **Consider service equity when forming the committee.** Be mindful of the fact that many women faculty and faculty from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups tends to have larger service commitments than other faculty at the same rank. The emotional labor involved with serving on the committee is also likely to be higher for these faculty, particularly when issues of diversity and inclusion come up in a search. In other words, it can be emotionally challenging for women faculty and faculty from historically underrepresented groups to point out bias and discrimination to other committee members. When women and faculty from historically underrepresented groups are asked to serve on search committees, departments should consider other service obligations and make adjustments, so they are not overburdened with service commitments that hinder their research productivity and their psychological well-being.

LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A FAIR AND EQUITABLE SEARCH

- ✓ **Incorporate discussions of diversity and excellence early into the search process.** Search committee members may want to set aside some time to talk about the importance of recruiting a diverse pool of applicants. These conversations should be framed around the link between diversity and excellence. If the department has had challenges in recruiting women or minority candidates in the past, the committee may want to discuss why this might be the case and be prepared to come up with strategies for confronting any biased views within the department. For suggestions on how to respond to various beliefs about diversity in hiring, see p. 27-28 & p. 32 of the University of Wisconsin's guide for search committees: https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf.
- ✓ **Develop clear expectations with committee members.** Search committee members should understand from the onset that service on a search committee is an important and time-consuming task. It is important that all search committee members attend all meetings, participate actively in the process, treat all applicants fairly, maintain confidentiality, etc. Typically, committee members should help define the job position, publicize the search, recruit applications, develop evaluation criteria, evaluate applicants, develop interview questions, help host candidate visits on campus, and ensure that the process is fair and equitable. The search committee chair will have additional duties with scheduling meetings and interviews and serving as a liaison with the department head and any department staff who are responsible for hiring and scheduling logistics. Questions to consider: Do members need to attend all meetings in person? What work needs to be completed before each meeting? Do some committee members have special roles and responsibilities (e.g., a graduate student representative)?
- ✓ **Establish a search timeline.** The search committee should decide the following: When will the ad be posted? Will the deadline be a hard deadline or a preferred deadline? When will the committee start to review candidates and narrow down the list of candidates? When will the committee ask for references? Will the committee use preliminary interviews (e.g., Zoom, phone, etc.)? If so, what are the proposed dates for preliminary interviews? When will the committee narrow the list

further to a short list of semi-finalists? What are the proposed dates for on-campus interviews?

- ✓ **Develop an Advertising and Recruitment Plan.** Where will ads be posted? What steps will the committee take to ensure that the job ad is distributed widely (e.g., contacting colleagues at other institutions for nominations; making personal contacts with women and minority candidates; placing announcements in places aimed specifically at underrepresented minorities and women, etc.)
- ✓ **Establish Ground Rules for Committee Meetings.** The committee should discuss the following issues: What information is confidential? What information is shared with other faculty (and at what stage of the search)? What information is shared with undergraduate and graduate students and staff (and at what stage of the search)? If there are internal candidates, how will the committee (and the department) ensure that there is a fair and equal review process for all applicants? How will the department proceed if one of the candidates has a personal tie to a candidate that could be considered a conflict of interest? What ground rules can be established to ensure that all committee members feel comfortable sharing their opinion, and no one dominates the discussions?
- ✓ **Clarify the Decision-Making Process for the Committee.** Some departments have established rules and procedures for decision-making. Some committees try to reach consensus, while other vote. Some committees may incorporate a point system into the evaluation rubric. For the short list, a committee may allow members to vote in favor of interviewing multiple candidates. Different methods for making decisions and voting have advantages and disadvantages. Committees that use a point system should be careful not to share a ranked list of shortlisted candidates based on points, as this can bias the outcome of a search.

If a department does not have established rules and procedures, committee members should discuss whether the committee will conclude the search with a ranked list of acceptable candidates, or merely submit a list of acceptable candidates to the Department head (or Dean) that identifies strengths and weaknesses. (If departments do have established procedures, the committee may want to revisit the procedures to ensure that they allow for a fair and equitable search.

Questions to Consider: Is the committee expected to make decisions on the shortlisted candidates? If a point system is used to shortlist applicants, will all committee members know the scores for each of the shortlisted candidates, or will this information only be known to the search committee chair? Is the committee expected to make a final recommendation for the hire?

- ✓ **As part of the groundwork, consider having search committee members sign a confidentiality agreement?** See the Sample Confidentiality Agreement developed by the Texas A&M University Libraries (Appendix C).

DEFINING THE POSITION

- ✓ **Write the position description in a way that will attract a broad and diverse pool of applicants.** Define the position as broadly as possible in terms of desired research area, experience, and disciplinary background. Ensure that each stated qualification is directly related to identified needs in the department. Consider why each stated qualification is needed. As appropriate, use “desired” rather than “required” to describe qualifications that might be ideal from the department’s perspective but are not absolutely required in order to fulfill the role. Keep in mind that candidates who do not meet all of the “required” qualifications cannot be considered further.

Narrowly defined ads identify multiple required criteria. Such ads may inadvertently exclude female candidates or candidates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. For example, some candidates may be very qualified for the position, yet they are working in an interdisciplinary area of study and don’t meet a narrowly defined requirement for a degree from a specific discipline. Narrowly defined ads might also rule out applicants who have less traditional backgrounds.

Consider the difference between the two ads below:

A broadly defined ad: *“The Department of Anthropology invites applications for a tenure track position in cultural anthropology. Applicants must have a Ph.D. in anthropology (or a related discipline) at the time of the appointment, and active research program, ability to*

teach undergraduate and graduate courses in cultural anthropology and a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Preference will be given to candidates who specialize in medical anthropology and/or economic anthropology.”

A more narrowly defined ad: “The Department of Anthropology seeks applications for a medical anthropologist with experience working with public health organizations in sub-Saharan Africa. Applicants must have a Ph.D. in anthropology at the time of the appointment, an active research program, ability to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in medical anthropology, and a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.”

Simply put, broadly defined position descriptions are more likely to result in a large (and more diverse) pool of applicants. An added benefit is that faculty reviewing candidates are less likely to focus on demographic aspects of an individual candidate when there are multiple candidates from historically underrepresented groups.

- ✓ **Be sure to include all relevant information in the job ad.** The position description should include information that a potential applicant would need or want to know about a position opening. Typically, position descriptions include the following things:
 - Position Title:
 - Required Qualifications:
 - Desired Qualifications:
 - Responsibilities:
 - Application Procedures:
 - Affirmative Action and Confidentiality Statements; and
 - Descriptions of the Department and University.

- ✓ **In your job ad, give careful consideration to the information you convey about your unit, the university, and the community.** Consider ways that the description of your department can be used to generate interest in that position. For example, a description of department initiatives and vision is more exciting and attractive than a description of faculty numbers and degree programs. Descriptions of the department and the university can include initiatives related to diversity, inclusion, and equity, including reference to the university’s Diversity Plan, and the university’s designation by INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine as a 2019 Higher

Education Excellence in Diversity Award (HEED) recipient and a 2019 Diversity Champion.

- ✓ **Craft your description of the benefits of living in the community in a way that is as inclusive as possible.** In describing the institution and the broader community, be mindful of why some individuals may or may not see themselves as included in the description. Well-intended language such as “family-friendly community” or “the comfort and convenience of a small town” might be more attractive to candidates who are married, who have children, and/or who enjoy the outdoors. Such language, however, may cause applicants from other groups (e.g., those who are single without children, those who identify as LGBT, etc.) to question whether or not they would want to live in Bryan-College Station. (This general line of thinking can be applied to other TAMU campus locations.) The solution is to broaden the description of the local community in a way that would be attractive to a wider range of applicants. One example comes from TAMU’s College of Medicine:

“Bryan-College Station is a vibrant, dynamic community that offers cultural diversity, arts and entertainment, job opportunities and overall quality of life. The community’s low cost of living is advantageous to the student and general populations, making it an ideal place to live.”

- ✓ **Consider allowing applicants to write about how their personal commitment to diversity and inclusion informs their past and future professional contributions.** The job ad can ALSO encourage candidates to write about their experiences and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This signals a higher commitment to diversity and inclusion than ads that tack on a statement about diversity at the end of an ad. For example, candidates may be asked to comment on their demonstrated ability to mentor and support students from diverse background, their experience with different teaching strategies and learning styles, methodological or pedagogical approaches that demonstrate a commitment to diversity or inclusivity, their experiences mentoring and recruiting students from underrepresented groups, a research agenda that addresses issues that involve or affect diverse groups, and /or their experiences working with underrepresented communities. Adding something like this to your job ad conveys that diversity and inclusion are core values for your department and college.

Search committees should decide in advance how much weight to assign to a candidate's statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Candidates do not need to be a member of an underrepresented group to write a strong statement. A strong statement will include specific and detailed examples. For example, an applicant could write about how they routinely add scholarship from members of underrepresented groups in their courses.

- ✓ **Be sure to include the required Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Statement in your ad.** All ads must include the following statement in its entirety:

“Texas A&M University is committed to enriching the learning and working environment for all visitors, students, faculty, and staff by promoting a culture that embraces inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability. Diverse perspectives, talents, and identities are vital to accomplishing our mission and living our core values.”

“Texas A&M is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/ Veterans/ Disability Employer committed to building a culturally diverse educational environment. Applications from women, minorities, and members of other underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged and will be actively sought. The University is aware that attracting and retaining exceptional faculty often depends on meeting the needs of two careers and therefore implements policies that contribute to work-life balance.”

- ✓ **Make sure your job ad is approved by the Faculty Affairs Office before you post the job.** All position descriptions must be approved by your college dean and the Faculty Affairs Office through Interfolio before they can be posted.

RECRUITING APPLICANTS

- ✓ **Develop an aggressive recruitment plan.** Post your advertisement in the usual places, but also be sure to post the ad in places that target members of underrepresented groups. This might include websites and/or journals that are targeted to women and underrepresented minority scholars in your discipline. (See Appendix E.) Send your ad to committees and organizations that work to advance the representation of underrepresented groups in your field. Popular conceptions that there are very few women or minorities for a particular search should not be used as an excuse for not using these techniques.

- ✓ **Identify and contact individuals with strong records that match your position description.** Have members of the search committee help identify applicants with exceptional records. Contact potential applicants directly (via email or phone) to encourage them to apply for the position (without promising an interview or position). This method tends to be more effective than sending a generic letter to department chairs at institutions with PhD programs. This method is specifically effective for candidates who may already be employed (but may be willing to consider other opportunities).

- ✓ **If you post the position description on your department's website, include a list of the search committee members.** If the search committee is diverse, the position will be more attractive to faculty from underrepresented groups.

- ✓ **Advertise for longer than 30 days.** (Adjustments may need to be made in cases of late in the year searches for Academic Professional Track (APT) faculty who need to be hired as soon as possible.)

- ✓ **Use your networks to promote the position.** Have members of the search committee use their own professional networks to contact colleagues at other institutions for nominations and make personal contacts with women and minority candidates.

- ✓ **Place an expanded job description on your department website.** This can include links to additional information about the community, and links to information about your department's culture, values, and commitment to diversity.

Evaluating Candidates

ESTABLISHING CRITERIA

- ✓ **Keep the job description on hand throughout the search.** To ensure a fair and equitable search, refer regularly to the job criteria stated in the position description.
- ✓ **Develop a rubric for evaluating candidates at the beginning of the search.** The committee should develop a rubric that corresponds closely with “required” and “desired” criteria listed in the job ad. Criteria can be given different weights, as necessary. Using a rubric ensures that the same criteria and standards are used to review all applications, and the relative strengths and weaknesses of each applicant should emerge.

During the evaluation of candidates, it is essential that members of the search committee (and all members of the department) take steps to minimize the influence of implicit bias to ensure that all candidates are reviewed fairly and equitably.

To get an idea of what to include in a rubric, see these [sample rubrics](https://advance.charlotte.edu/programming/programs/faculty-recruitment/resources-search-committees-including-evaluation-rubrics):

<https://advance.charlotte.edu/programming/programs/faculty-recruitment/resources-search-committees-including-evaluation-rubrics>

The consistent use of a rubric should prevent informal practices that give advantages to certain candidates. For example, consider a search where white male candidates are evaluated on “promise” while all others, of comparable education and accomplishments, are evaluated on “achievement.”

- ✓ **The rubric should be used to evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of each applicant.** Candidates who do not meet the “required” criteria should be removed from consideration during the first review of applications.
- ✓ **Avoid ranking candidates in the early stage of the search.** The first review of applications is based on incomplete information about each candidate. Therefore, it is important to avoid the tendency to rank candidates at the beginning of the search, or to select early “favorites.” The ranking of candidates (prior to final selection) can inadvertently influence interactions with candidates during interviews and thus impact

the final outcome of the search and/or candidate perceptions of working at Texas A&M.

MINIMIZE IMPLICIT BIAS IN THE REVIEW OF APPLICANTS

- ✓ **Make sure search committee members review implicit bias training material before reviewing applications.** Research finds that implicit bias can influence how reviewers evaluate CVs, reference letters, and other job application materials. Something as simple as a candidate's name can trigger implicit biases associated with gender, race, and ethnicity. The prestige of the candidate's PhD institution, former advisor, references, and/or current institution can also influence the review of other materials. For more information, see the handout, "Key Research Findings. Unintentional Bias – Gender, Race, Sexual Orientation & Religion."
- ✓ **Avoid asking for reference letters too early.** It is recommended that the committee wait to ask for reference letters. For arguments against asking for letters up front, see "Is It Time to Eliminate Recommendation Letters" in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/is-it-time-to-eliminate-recommendation-letters-hint-yes>). When letters are used, readers should be sensitive for signs of implicit bias in the letters. Studies find the content of reference letters can favor members of advantaged groups in subtle ways.
- ✓ **Allow sufficient time to do the review.** Keep in mind that implicit bias is most likely to operate when people work quickly or under time pressure. Be sure to take time to review each application carefully. This might mean spending 15-20 minutes on each application. Avoid practices that might seem like a good idea because they will save time, such as creating "yes/no" piles based on a quick review of applications (from qualified applicants) or having a single search committee member make the first cut. (If it is clear that a candidate does not meet the minimum required qualifications, the application can go into the equivalent of a "no" pile.) Instead, have multiple faculty members review the application and use an evaluation rubric.
- ✓ **Stick to the criteria started in the position description.** Remember that implicit bias is also likely to creep in when search committee members consider information that isn't relevant to the position. The

final decision should be made based on a “fit” with the job requirements, not a “fit” with individual personalities or an elusive “department culture.” The use of unstated criteria is much more likely to benefit members of advantaged groups.

- ✓ **Avoid making assumptions about whether a candidate is interested in the position.** Implicit bias plays a role when search committees make assumptions about job candidates. Search committees may assume that candidates from non-traditional trajectories are not really interested in an academic position, whether it is a lecturer position or a tenure-track assistant professor position. If somebody applies for the job, it should be assumed they are interested in the position.

Faculty members (including search committee members) should also work hard to avoid discussions about whether or not a candidate is likely to accept an offer. Although faculty may be eager to have a successful outcome to the search, such factors are not relevant to the final decision.

- ✓ **Avoid making judgments based on a candidate’s interest in the local community.** It is hard to imagine a faculty position at Texas A&M-College Station that requires a faculty member to live in Bryan-College Station. Therefore, it should be considered irrelevant and inappropriate to discuss whether or not a candidate (for the TAMU-College Station campus) has talked about the possibility of living in Houston or Austin. For some candidates, there may be perfectly valid (and personal) reasons for living outside of the BCS area. If a department lets this discussion bias the final decision, they may lose out on an opportunity to hire a woman or minority candidate, or a candidate who does not have a spouse/partner. For an individual perspective on why some minority candidates, in particular, may want to live in a larger metropolitan area, read this article by Rachel Harris in *Inside Higher Education* on “The Overlooked Diversity Issue”: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2019/08/01/small-college-towns-can-be-unsuited-some-faculty-members-diverse-backgrounds>
- ✓ **Give candidates a chance to explain their interests and demonstrate their potential to succeed.** Search committees may also assume that applicants who graduated from and/or teach at lower-ranked

universities are not as talented or as productive as faculty from higher ranked universities. This may inadvertently disadvantage faculty from underrepresented groups who were excluded from higher ranked graduate programs due to implicit bias in their admissions review. Search committees might also make assumptions about the research productivity and potential of an applicant (for a tenure track position) if the applicant's first post PhD job is at an institution with a high teaching load and fewer resources than Texas A&M. Instead, imagine what that person might be able to accomplish with more resources! Conversely, for teaching-intensive positions, search committee members might assume that an individual with multiple research publications might not be interested in a position that is solely focused on teaching. Instead of assuming that a candidate is not a good match, give them a chance to explain why they are interested in the position as advertised.

- ✓ **Beware of other forms of bias.** For example, the committee should wait until the deadline to review applicants in order to avoid “early bird” bias. Similarly, they should be careful to discuss the challenges of evaluating “internal” candidates. They should also beware of biases that might arise when reviewing applicant with similar research areas.

SELECTING SEMI-FINALISTS AND FINALISTS

- ✓ **Take steps that are likely to increase the number of semi-finalists and finalists from groups that are underrepresented in your department.** Search committee members are more likely to focus on relevant criteria (and therefore less likely to focus on the candidates' demographic attributes) when there are multiple candidates from underrepresented groups. For tenure-track/tenured faculty hires, search committees may want to schedule a preliminary round of interviews with 10-12 candidates.

For searches that involve campus interviews, the committee may want to increase the number of finalists that are invited for campus interviews. Although your department is likely to have budgetary constraints for the search, keep in mind that a job search is a long-term investment, and the funds (and the time) required to bring an additional finalist (or two) to campus is small compared to long-term costs of making a hire. Studies have found that departments are much more likely to select a finalist

from an underrepresented group when more than one individual from underrepresented groups are invited for campus interviews. So, consider adding one or two more finalists than your department typically invites.

- ✓ **Recognize that interviews scheduled at conference sites (at a candidate's expense) can be inequitable.** In some disciplines, it is customary for the first round of interviews to be held during annual conferences. In recent years, that practice has gone out of favor with the realization that not all job applicants can afford to attend the annual conference, and thus the practice gave an unequal advantage to some candidates (i.e., those from elite schools that had more resources, those who could afford to pay out-of-pocket for a conference, those who didn't have to worry about the added cost of childcare expenses while attending a conference, etc.) It is therefore recommended that preliminary interviews be conducted using conference phone calls and/or videoconferencing technology (e.g., Zoom, Skype, etc.)

- ✓ **Schedule the final evaluation meeting as soon as possible after the completion of interviews.** There are two reasons for this. First, this helps ensure that information is fresh in people's minds. Some sources recommend that the search committee should meet at the end of each candidate's visit for this reason. (In the case of ATP searches, this might be at the end of each phone or Zoom interview). An alternative practice is for search committee members to take notes after each interview. In either case, the evaluation should focus on that particular candidate. It is important to avoid making comparisons between candidates until all interviews have been completed. Second, it prevents delays in the search process that could frustrate candidates, including candidates who may be receiving offers from other institutions.

- ✓ **In final discussions, ensure that all faculty remain focused on relevant criteria.** In the final discussions, it is crucial that discussions of "good fit" continue to be consistently focused on the original selection criteria for the position. Members of the search committee should interrupt any discussions that bring in implicit bias (such as discussions about whether a candidate is likely to accept an offer due to a personal characteristic.)

- ✓ **Consider sending an unranked recommendation to the head or dean.** As discussed above, each unit should follow any agreed-upon process for making the final decision. This may or may not involve a faculty or search committee vote. The final recommendation should list the strengths and concerns for all finalists. One option is to send an unranked list of “acceptable” candidates that signals departmental preferences without reducing the appeal of an outstanding candidate who might have been “ranked” second. (This is commonly practiced for department head and dean searches.)

Interviewing Candidates

SPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHONE AND VIDEO INTERVIEWS

- ✓ **The search committee should develop a list of key questions that will be asked of each candidate.** Some searches use phone/video interviews to conduct preliminary interviews after an initial screening of applicants. In some searches (e.g., a search for a temporary lecturer), phone/video interviews may be used instead of campus interviews before making the final selection. (In some cases, such interviews might alternatively be conducted in person during a conference.)

Prior to the phone/video interview, the search committee should use a consistent set of core questions that relate to the evaluation criteria developed for the position. The questions should provide a means to supplement information obtained from the CV and cover letter. It is okay for search committee members to follow up with additional questions based on responses.

While interviewing candidates, it is essential that individuals who interact with candidates consistently demonstrate that Texas A&M University is strongly committed to creating and inclusive and welcoming environment for all faculty, staff, and students.

As a general practice, interviews should end by asking the candidate if they have any questions. This allows candidates the opportunity to assess whether or not the position is a good fit.

- ✓ **The search committee chair should provide each candidate with information about the process before the interview.** Let each candidate know how much time is allocated for the interview, who will be participating in the interview, and directions for participating in the interview (whether it's an in-person interview at a conference or a Zoom video conferencing interview). The committee might also want to provide candidates with a heads up on the types of questions that will be asked.

The committee should not assume that all candidates can participate in preliminary interviews in the method attended. For example, the committee should not assume that all candidates are equally able to participate in a videoconference for one reason or another. Similarly, the committee should not assume that all candidates will be available for preliminary interviews at annual conferences. In either case, the search committee chair should provide applicants with an alternative method for the preliminary interview, such as a conference call phone interview.

- ✓ **See Appendix G for special guidance on using Zoom to conduct interviews (in lieu of campus interviews) during the COVID-18 pandemic.**

SPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAPUS INTERVIEWS

- ✓ **Ensure that all candidates have a similar interview experience.** Prior to campus visits, the search committee chair should work with others (including the candidate) to develop a detailed itinerary for each candidate. Certain aspects of the itinerary should be the same for each candidate (e.g., the length of the visit). Moreover, all candidates should have opportunities to present their research and/or give a teaching demonstration, meet with a group of selected students, meet with search committee members, meet with department faculty, and meet with college administrators (based on standard procedure for your college for your particular type of search).
- ✓ **Interview itineraries, however, can be tailored to each candidate.** Some aspects of the itinerary should be customized for each candidate. Candidates should have the opportunity to add meetings with any individuals or groups on campus, including potential or existing collaborators in other departments. Candidates should also have the

opportunity to meet with representatives of various Texas A&M faculty organizations and/or the Coordinator of the Dual Career Program. Candidates may also want to schedule a tour with a realtor.

- ✓ **Provide candidates with options for customizing their campus visit.** One method for adding these meetings is to send the candidates a list of options and ask them if they would like for the department to arrange any particular meetings. Another method is to add some free blocks of time to their itinerary, provide them information on options, and allow candidates to schedule their own meetings. The latter may be appealing to candidates who want to keep preferences for some meetings confidential. For example, some candidates may not want the department to know that they have a partner who will need to find a job in the community.
- ✓ **Choose realtors carefully (if you include real estate tours in the itinerary).** If you choose to add a meeting with a realtor for the interview schedule (which isn't a bad idea), be mindful of the person you select for this job, and the information they may convey to prospective applicants. The criteria for an "ideal neighborhood" might vary quite a bit from one person to the next depending on personal circumstances. Realtors should also be provided with a copy of permissible and inappropriate questions, as these questions apply equally to realtors. Departments should not request or expect any feedback from realtors about personal information that a candidate might share during the realtor tour.
- ✓ **Consider the comfort and convenience of your candidates when developing the itinerary.** The following things help signal that the department is a good place to work:
 - Staff scheduling visits may want to politely ask if there are any special accommodations that the department should know about prior to the candidate's arrival. This would include dietary issues, mobility issues, etc.
 - Some candidates may need extra time between meetings. Sufficient time should be allocated in the schedule to get from one meeting to the next, and to allow for occasional bathroom breaks. A longer break should be schedule before the job presentation. Escorts should eb arranged to ensure that meetings start on time.

- Candidates should be asked ahead of time if they prefer to drive or walk between events and meetings (when the option is possible).
 - Candidates should be offered water and other refreshments throughout the day.
 - Information about dietary needs should be obtained and taken into account when scheduling meals.
 - Faculty accompanying faculty to dinner meals should include at least one person who does not drink alcohol (so candidates do not feel obligated to drink.)
 - Faculty hosting candidates should not make assumptions about a candidate's religious practices (i.e., candidates should not be asked if they want to pray before a meal; comments about meal options should not include any mention of religious restrictions on food).
- ✓ **Communicate clearly with candidates about the interview process.** Make sure each finalist receives the same information about the allotted time for a job talk, department norms for the presentation (e.g., use of PowerPoint or not), and likely audience.
 - ✓ **Take steps to mitigate any potential issues that are likely to bring discomfort to candidates from underrepresented groups.** For example, avoid scheduling one-on-one meetings with faculty who have a prior history of saying inappropriate things and/or being hostile to hiring women and/or minorities. There is no policy on campus that every faculty member has to have an individual meeting with every job candidate in their department.

If a candidate is confronted with any discriminatory comments during the interview (e.g., racist, sexist, homophobic remarks, etc.), be sure to take positive and assertive steps to defuse the situation. Remaining silent in such situations signals that the behavior is acceptable and a normal part of the department or university culture.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL INTERVIEWS

- ✓ **When interviewing members of underrepresented groups, make it clear that you are interested in their scholarship, experiences and skills.** Be mindful of statements that might suggest or imply that the department is interested in a particular candidate due to some

demographic attribute. Nobody wants to feel like they were selected primarily because they check off a box. Candidates should leave the interview feeling reassured that they were selected as a finalist because of their scholarship, teaching, and service contributions. This is true whether or not they are interviewing for a position that targets a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, such as the ACES Fellows Program.

- ✓ **Make sure everybody who has contact with candidates knows the list of inappropriate and illegal questions.** Either the search committee chair or the department head should circulate the list of inappropriate and permissible questions prior to the first interview. (See Appendix B.) These rules apply at all times, including meals. Asking inappropriate questions is likely to leave a negative impression and can potentially have legal consequences.
- ✓ **Throughout the search, maintain professional and polite contacts with all prospective applicants.** Provide updates to all applicants as your search progresses through each stage. As you determine that certain group of candidates have been ruled out of consideration, you should go ahead and send them a polite update letting them know the status of the search. At the final stage of the search, ideally, the department waits until a finalist has accepted an offer to inform other candidates. However, if an offer is out and another finalist needs to know the status of the search due to an existing offer from another institution, it is best to be open and transparent and let them know that an offer was made, but they are still being considered for the position.

There are also circumstances that might significantly delay the top candidate's decision (such as partner placement issue). In those cases, the search committee chair and/or department head will need to consider when and what information should be conveyed to other viable candidates. If there is an extended delay for this reason, it is probably best to be honest with any alternates, letting them know that an offer has been made while reassuring them that they are still being considered for the position.

Remember that it is important for all applicants to have a positive experience with Texas A&M University, even if they are not chosen for the

position. Providing informative updates on the search, including polite notes to rejected applicants, reflects positively on the university. Even if applicants are not chosen for your particular position, they may be competitive for a different position in the near future, and/or they may have friends and acquaintances who are applying for other positions at Texas A&M. We want to make sure that all candidates have a positive view of the university at the end of the search process.

- ✓ **Each finalist for a position should be provided with information about the department, Texas A&M University, and the local community.** Some departments may want to provide a packet of information to each semi-finalist. Alternatively, candidates can be directed to the “Resources for Job Candidates and New Faculty” page of the ADVANCE website [https:// advance.tamu.edu/Resources/Resources- for- Job-Candidates-and-New-Faculty/](https://advance.tamu.edu/Resources/Resources-for-Job-Candidates-and-New-Faculty/).

If packets are provided, each finalist should receive an identical packet. The packing might include the following items (and/or links to this information):

- Dual Career Program
- Texas A&M Universities family friendly policies (<https://advance.tamu.edu/Resources/Resources-for-Job-Candidates-and-New-Faculty/Family-Friendly-Policies-and-Practices>)
- Internal research funding opportunities (T3, PESCA, etc.);
- Department, college, and/or university mentoring programs (such as the mentoring program offered by the Women’s Faculty Network)
- Programs offered by the Center for Teaching Excellence
- Information about Faculty Development Leave
- Information about Promotion & Tenure
- Information about a diverse range of faculty networks
- Student resource centers on campus (e.g., the Women’s Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center; Disability Services, and Veterans Resource and Support Center)
- Information about the local community where the position will be based (i.e., events, neighborhoods, schools, religious organizations & institutions, etc.)

Recruiting (and Retaining) the Finalist

- ✓ **Seek approval before making an offer.** After a decision has been agreed upon, the department head needs to get the dean's approval to make an informal (oral) offer and then negotiates with the candidate in consultation with the college on the terms of the contract (including salary and startup costs). Final offer letters must be approved by the dean prior to extending a formal (written) offer. All new hires need to follow processes outlined by the Faculty Affairs Office (<https://facultyaffairs.tamu.edu/Hiring>). Generally speaking, this handbook focuses on the search process as it pertains to search committee members (not the hiring process as it pertains to administrators). However, there are a few areas that pertain to department climate that are worth noting.
- ✓ **Make offers promptly.** Once the decision to make an offer has been approved, the finalist should be contacted. Timely and professional contact signals that the department is eager to make the hire. Candidates who do not hear from a department in a timely manner may question whether or not the department is still considering their candidacy.
- ✓ **Allow sufficient time for candidates to make a decision (assuming the position will not start immediately).** The finalist will need time to consider all of the factors that go into their decision to accept an offer (including negotiations over the terms of the contract, accommodations for partners, competing offers from other institutions, etc.) Forcing a candidate to make a decision quickly can send a bad signal. Two weeks is a reasonable time between offer and the initial decision (i.e., to accept a conditional offer and start negotiating the terms of the contract). More time may be necessary to complete negotiations and make a final decision. Departments that rush a candidate into making a decision could risk losing that candidate to another department that seems more considerate of their needs.
- ✓ **Remind candidates of resources and services offered by the Dual Career Program at TAMU-College Station campus.** These services can be used for partners for all faculty positions. Additionally, the Faculty

"Diversity is being invited to the party; Inclusion is being asked to dance."

-Verna Myers, Diversity and Inclusion Expert

Affairs Office provides bridge funds to support the creation of temporary positions for the partner of tenure-track/tenured faculty members. Some candidates may not want to discuss partner needs for employment until an offer has been extended. This may extend the time it takes for a candidate to conclude negotiations and accept an offer.

- ✓ **After an offer has been extended, encourage faculty in your department to contact the finalist and welcome them to the department.** This simple gesture provides an additional signal that the department provides a welcoming and inclusive environment. Existing faculty should continue to be welcoming after the new hire arrives.
- ✓ **Consider adding the cost of adding an external mentor to the startup package.** Funds could be used by the new hire to support a few mutual visits with his/her external mentor. This was one of several components of the initial ADVANCE Scholar Program that was found to be an effective tool for mentoring junior faculty and establishing professional networks.
- ✓ **Make sure the candidate continues to have a positive experience after an offer has been made.** Department climate can play a key role in recruiting (and retaining) faculty. During a campus visit, candidates are likely to pick up on any tensions within the department. Departments that frequently have problems attracting top candidates, especially candidates from underrepresented groups, may want to reflect on things they can do to improve their departmental climate.
- ✓ **Make sure all new hires are provided with the resources they need to succeed.** Some considerations may fall beyond the scope of the search committee but are worth mentioning here. The retention process is initiated when the offer is accepted. Long-term retention may become an issue if a new faculty member, for whatever reason, does not feel that they were treated well during the first six months of their hire. The terms of the offer need to be comparable to other faculty in similar positions. This is an equity issue. This includes office space, lab space (if applicable), computer and equipment. Any differences in start-up packages, salary, space allocations, or other accommodations for comparable positions in recent years should be explainable by objective factors (not skills in negotiation). New faculty should also be provided with access to mentors and a work climate where all faculty feel welcome and included in decision-making.

Appendix A. Recommendations for Deans and Department Heads

- ✓ Deans and department heads should always express the twin goals of (1) excellence in scholarship, teaching, and service and (2) diversity in faculty hiring. Encourage confidence that the two goals are mutually compatible and indeed mutually reinforcing.
- ✓ Deans and department heads should encourage the adoption of “open searches” (i.e., broadly defined searches) and remind faculty that they can be used to enhance both the diversity and excellence of applicant pools and subsequent applicant hires.
- ✓ Deans should publicly praise and consider rewarding departments or other units that succeed in increasing the diversity and excellence in their faculty. They should share information on best practices as a way to encourage others.
- ✓ Deans should provide resources for hiring that may be needed to increase diversity. This might include additional funds to support travel for one (or two) additional finalists, especially if multiple candidates are from underrepresented groups. This might also include funds to support the creation of an additional position if the department can make a compelling case for why two hires would increase the excellence and diversity of the department.
- ✓ Department heads (and deans, as applicable) should establish search committees that are diverse in terms of demographic characteristics and expertise but homogenous in commitment to proactive, fair, and equitable processes.
- ✓ Deans should ask search committees to document the procedures they use to maximize the diversity of the applicant pool, the fairness of their procedures, and their outcomes. They should also ask questions in cases where it is not apparent that the department followed recommended practices.

Adopted from Abigail J. Stewart and Virginia Valian 2018. An Inclusive Academy Achieving Diversity and Excellence. The MIT Press Pp. 192-193, 235.

Appendix B. Inappropriate vs. Permissible Questions

Protected Class	Examples of Inappropriate and Illegal Questions	Examples of Permissible Questions
Age	<p><i>Any inquiries that might indicate that there is an age preference for the position.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What year were you born? • What year did you graduate from high school (college)? • When do you plan to retire? • What lovely gray hair. Is that natural? 	None
Gender	<p><i>Any inquiry concerning sex assigned at birth or transgender identity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How shall I refer to you as a he or a she? • As a woman [or man], how do you feel about _____? • Your style of dress seems rather unusual for a woman [man]. Why do you dress that way? 	<p><i>Pronouns are not always indicators of gender identity. It is permissible to ask candidates about their pronouns if you ask all candidates the same question and you ask in a consistent, respectful, and non-discriminatory way. You can start by providing your own pronouns. By asking pronouns, you are creating a respectful and inclusive environment for all.</i></p>
Sexual orientation	<p><i>Any inquiry regarding sexual orientation or sexual identity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you tell me about any significant other in your life? 	None

Protected Class	Examples of Inappropriate and Illegal Questions	Examples of Permissible Questions
Marital status	<p><i>Any inquiry about the applicant's marital status whether an applicant is married, single, divorced, separated, engaged, widowed, has same sex spouse, etc. Any form requesting identification by Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. status.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does your spouse [partner] do? • Will your spouse [partner] be coming with you if you take this job? • Is that an engagement or wedding ring that I see? • How does your spouse feel about your job? 	<p>None</p>
Family status	<p><i>Specific inquiries concerning spouse, spouse's gender, spouse's employment or salary, children, childcare arrangements, or dependents.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you pregnant? • Do you have children? • Do you plan to have more children? • What are your childcare arrangements? 	<p><i>If certain work hours are required for the job and you pose the question to all finalists, you may ask candidates if they can meet specified work schedules or whether they have activities, commitments, or responsibilities that may prevent meeting work attendance requirements (as long as you don't ask whether they have children).</i></p> <p><i>If travel is required for the position, you may ask about candidate's ability and willingness to travel.</i></p>

Protected Class	Examples of Inappropriate and Illegal Questions	Examples of Permissible Questions
Race	<p><i>Any inquiries regarding a candidate's complexion, hair, skin color, or eye color.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your ancestry? • Are both of your parents [members of a specific race]? 	None.
National origin	<p><i>Any inquiry into applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, birthplace, native language, or national origin of an applicant's parents or spouse.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your ancestry? • In what country were you born? • Are both of your parents [members of a specific nationality]? • How long has your family been in this country? • That's an interesting name. What are its origins? • Where did you get that accent? • What's your native language? 	<p><i>If proficiency in a specific language is a requirement for the job, you may inquire into the person's ability to read/write/speak foreign language. However, you must ask all candidates about their proficiency level.</i></p>
Citizenship status	<p><i>Any inquiry into citizenship that would tend to divulge applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, or birthplace.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you a U.S. citizen? • Where were you born? 	<p><i>You can ask candidates if they are legally authorized to work in this country (as long as you ask all candidates the same question).</i></p>

Protected Class	Examples of Inappropriate and Illegal Questions	Examples of Permissible Questions
Religion	<p><i>Any inquiry concerning religious preference, denomination, affiliations, church, parish, pastor, or religious holidays observed.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you attend church (or any other religious service)? • Which holidays will you be celebrating? • Did you go to public or religious schools? 	<p><i>If weekend work is required for the job, and you pose the question to all finalists, you may ask questions such as “Can you work on weekends?”</i></p>
Disability of Physical Challenges	<p><i>Any inquiry about nature, severity, or extent of a disability or whether an applicant requires reasonable accommodation prior to a conditional job offer. Whether an applicant has applied for or received worker’s compensation. Any inquiry that is not job related or consistent with business necessity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any physical disabilities? • Do you always need to use your walker, wheelchair, or other accommodation? 	<p><i>If you pose the question to all finalists, you may ask questions such as “Will you be able to perform the essential functions of this position, either with or without reasonable accommodations?”</i></p>
Pregnancy	<p><i>Any inquiry related to pregnancy, medical history concerning pregnancy, and related matters.</i></p>	<p><i>If you pose the question to all finalists, you may ask about any intended absences from the job.</i></p>

Protected Class	Examples of Inappropriate and Illegal Questions	Examples of Permissible Questions
Medical history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any pre-existing medical conditions? • What medications do you use? • Do you use drugs or alcohol? Do you smoke? • How did you get that scar? • Do you exercise regularly? • Do you need to visit doctors frequently? 	<p><i>If you pose the question to all finalists, you may ask questions such as “Will you be able to perform the essential functions of this position, either with or without reasonable accommodations?”</i></p>
Veteran status	<p><i>Any inquiry about military service in a country outside of the U.S.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was your discharge from the military honorable or dishonorable? • Do you have any lingering effects from your service? • How do you alleviate the anxieties and pressures that stem from your military service? 	<p><i>If it is relevant to the job, you may ask about special training and skills the candidate developed while in the military.</i></p> <p><i>If the candidate has self-disclosed that she/he served in the military, you may ask in which branch the candidate served.</i></p>
Criminal history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been arrested? • Have you ever been pulled over for drunk driving? • Have you ever spent a night in jail? 	<p><i>You can inform candidates that Texas A&M University routinely runs background checks on finalists before an offer is finalized. [Departments do not receive copies of the report.]</i></p>

Appendix C. Sample Confidentiality Agreement

Serving on a faculty search committee is an important responsibility. It is similar to being in a titled leadership role where my words and actions – even subtle actions such as body language and tone of voice – may carry more influence than I would normally expect. As such, it is important to always act in a way that is ethical and appropriate.

As a member of the committee, I may be given access to or updates on information that should be treated as confidential. It is my responsibility to maintain confidentiality in these areas, which include:

- Information about the identity of candidates who applied
- Scores candidates received
- Impressions/feedback of the candidate’s interview
- Updates on the identity of the finalist
- Status of ongoing negotiations or verbal acceptance by a candidate

I will avoid expressing my personal opinions about a particular candidate, their interview, or the possible outcome of the search to others within the organization. Individuals hearing these comments may believe that I am speaking on behalf of or as a reflection of the committee perspective.

Recognizing that talking about my perspective can help to organize my thoughts or reach a subconscious realization, it is acceptable for me to debrief or share my thoughts with another search committee member or a member of the relevant leadership team. However, I will make sure I do so in a setting that is private and that the discussion cannot be overheard by others. I will stress that my observations are my own and that they may or may not reflect those of others on the committee.

If a search includes someone with whom I have a prior or close relationship and I cannot engage in a neutral, unbiased manner, I will rescue myself from my Search Advisory Committee role as it presents the perception of undue influence and possible conflict of interest. This would include not scoring the candidates or serving as a Search Committee escort during the interview.

I acknowledge having received and read this statement of expectations regarding the confidentiality and ethics of serving on the Search Advisory Committee. Failure to meet these expectations may result in my dismissal from the Committee prior to the completion of my term.

(continued)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Note: This sample confidentiality agreement comes from the Texas A&M University Libraries.

Appendix D. Statements Indicating a Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- ✓ **Search committees may want to ask all applicants (or all semi-finalists) to write a statement indicating a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).** Search committees may include this in the initial job ad, or request such as a statement after semi-finalists have been identified for the position. Adding something like this to your job ad sends a signal that diversity and inclusion is a core value for your department and college.
- ✓ **Requests for these statements should allow for a broad variety of responses.** The statement requires candidates to write about their past and future experiences and activities that demonstrate their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Responses may vary significantly from one applicant to the next, and that's okay. For example, candidates may be asked to comment on their demonstrated ability to mentor and support students from diverse backgrounds, their experience with different teaching strategies and learning styles, methodological or pedagogical approaches that demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusivity, their experiences mentoring and recruiting students from underrepresented groups, a research agenda that addresses issues that involve or affect diverse groups, and/or their experiences working with underrepresented communities.

This sample wording is used for the Texas A&M ACES Postdoctoral Fellowship Program:

- *“Please provide a 1-3 page statement explaining how your scholarship, teaching, and/or other experiences have demonstrated a commitment to diversity and how that commitment may benefit Texas A&M University.”*
- ✓ **Search committees should decide in advance how much weight to assign to a candidate's statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion.** Candidates do not need to be a member of an underrepresented group to write a strong statement. A strong statement will include specific and detailed examples. For example, an applicant could write about how they routinely add scholarship from members of underrepresented groups in their courses.

- ✓ **Keep in mind the differences between a strong statement and a weak statement.** Among other things, relatively strong statements demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the key DEI issues in academia as experienced by members of underrepresented groups and provide detailed descriptions of activities and plans. In contrast, relatively weak statements tend to demonstrate a simplistic understanding of DEI issues in academia and provide vague descriptions of activities and plans.
- ✓ **Consider setting a minimally acceptable score for the DEI commitment statement.** Candidates who do not meet that requirement would not advance forward in the search process. Such a procedure would ensure that candidates have already developed a commitment to DEI and would avoid the tendency to rationalize a weak case.
- ✓ **Consider the context of each candidate.** Candidates who are at an earlier career stage (i.e., recent PhD graduates) may not have as strong of a track record with DEI work as a candidate who has already been employed as a professor, yet they may still be able to identify some experience in this area and identify future plans and activities. Candidates from non-U.S. institutions might have statements that are quite different from U.S.-based candidates.
- ✓ **Minimize implicit bias in the evaluation of the DEI commitment statements.** Search committee members should use the same expectations for all candidates, regardless of whether or not they belong to a particular group or hold particular viewpoints. Individuals from underrepresented groups should not be scored higher simply because they are from an underrepresented group. In other words, a candidate's demographic characteristics should not be used as the justification for moving that candidate to the next stage of a search. The corollary is also
- ✓ **The interview process should also give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to DEI.** Search committees should keep in mind that the job application is not the only opportunity to assess a candidate's commitment to DEI issues. The search committee should consider adding questions that gauge a candidate's interest and knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. For example, candidates may be asked to share any experiences they have learning about diversity-related issues; creating inclusive learning environments, mentoring students from underrepresented groups, and/or working with people who have a different background.

Appendix E. Inclusive Advertising

In addition to posting your job ads in the “usual” places for your discipline, consider posting your ad in places that target underrepresented groups.

This is a partial list of sites that might be applicable to your search:

- ✓ Association for Women in Science
<http://www.awis.org/>
- ✓ Insight into Diversity Job Board
<https://careers.insightintodiversity.com/>
- ✓ IMDiversity: Where Careers, Opportunities and Diversity Connect
<https://IMDiversity.com>
- ✓ SACNAS, Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science
<http://careercenter.sacnas.org>
- ✓ Diverse: Issues in Higher Education.
<http://diverseeducation.com/>
- ✓ The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education
<http://www.hispanicoutlook.com>
- ✓ American Indian Science & Engineering Society
<http://www.aises.org>
- ✓ Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists
<http://mymaes.org>

Appendix F. Rubrics for Evaluating Candidates

Sample rubrics for evaluating candidates for faculty positions can be found on the ADVANCE site at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte:

<https://advance.uncc.edu/programming/programs/faculty-recruitment/resources-search-committees-including-evaluation-rubrics>

Appendix G. Guidance for Interviewing During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- ✓ Refer to Texas A&M Covid-19 information page for up-to-date guidance on travel restrictions.
<https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/travel.html>

- ✓ **Consider the equity implications of having candidates travel to participate in interviews.** Plans to conduct on-campus interviews can introduce an equity issue. One or more job candidates, for example, might not be able to participate in on-campus interviews due to travel restrictions at their home locations. This is especially relevant for international applicants. In addition, not all job candidates will feel comfortable traveling during a pandemic due to personal circumstances. Asking candidates about their comfort level with a campus visit (specifically due to the pandemic) is potentially problematic as they may not want to disclose personal circumstances. If one or more semi-finalists have a campus visit and other do not, this is problematic due to an inequitable interview experience.

- ✓ **Consider the other downsides of having candidates travel to participate in interviews.** Individual assessments of risk from COVID-19 are impacted by personal risk factors, and have shifted over time with new developments, including the increased availability of vaccines and the emergence of new variants. Asking candidates to travel during the middle of a pandemic can potentially send the wrong signal to candidates about the work environment at Texas A&M University.

- ✓ **Discuss the trade-offs of doing on-campus interviews before making a decision, factoring in specific risks at any given moment in time.** On the one hand, scheduling Zoom-based interviews (in place of campus visits) are the best option to ensure an equitable interview process. The selected finalist can be provided with an opportunity to visit campus before conditionally accepting an offer. On the other hand, there may be circumstances where campus visits are critical aspects of a process, and/or circumstances where the health risks associated with campus visits are acceptable. Your department head may want to consult administrators who handle hiring in your unit (e.g., associate dean for faculty affairs) when making the decision.

- ✓ **If candidates do not visit campus, send short videos of your department and facilities to candidates who may have been short-listed for your position.** Use these videos to showcase classroom space, lab facilities, etc.

- ✓ **If you use Zoom for interviews, make sure the host and the candidate are comfortable using Zoom prior to the interview.** Make sure your job candidate is a “cohost” of the meeting so they can share their screen. Offer to do a practice run so they can practice using the share screen function (if using PowerPoint), and/or practice any other Zoom features they might use during their jobtalk lecture (i.e., polls, chat, etc.)

- ✓ **Be as professional as possible in virtual spaces.** Faculty conducting interviews should take steps to ensuring that lighting is ideal for the web camera and that voices are audible. Faculty interviewing candidates should use their full names as username and mute themselves when not speaking (if there are background noises).

- ✓ **Understand the potential implicit bias of Zoom interviews AND the inherent inequities of Zoom virtual backgrounds.** Implicit bias may be at play when candidates interview via Zoom, as interviewers might pick up on social cues and codes in the background (i.e., the appearance of somebody’s home office, children, partners, pets). To mitigate against this, some candidates may choose to use a virtual background in an effort to appear more professional and/or to block out aspects of their personal life. Search committees should realize that the face-detection algorithm that Zoom uses does not work as well for people of color. (Specifically, portions of heads are more likely to disappear.) Allow candidates to decide on their own whether or not to use a virtual Zoom background but be mindful of why some candidates may opt against using a virtual background and be careful to avoid forming any opinions based on any real-life backgrounds.

- ✓ **Retain essential aspects of the finalist interviews, but factor in Zoom fatigue and work life balance issues when scheduling Zoom alternatives for campus visits.** Job candidates typically have fully packed schedules for campus visits. This makes sense when you are trying to fit a lot of activities into a short visit. It is less practical for a Zoom-based interview, as job candidates are likely to have home responsibilities that they need to balance with the interview (including childcare). In addition, participating in one Zoom meeting after another is likely to be more tiring than a typical campus visit.
- ✓ **Record essential aspects of the interview to allow greater participation in the process.** If interviews are conducted via Zoom, it is easy to record the job talk lecture (or open forum for administrative hires) to share with individuals who are unable to participate.
- ✓ **Be creative in creating the Zoom interview itinerary.** Find ways for finalists to meet a mix of people, including students, staff, and faculty. Avoid using open time slots for anybody to pop in. Instead, arrange specific Zoom meetings, such as a meeting with a select group of students. Ask students to prepare questions for the candidates.
- ✓ **Be prepared to address concerns about the financial security of the institution.** This is a stressful time for everybody, and candidates are likely to be wondering whether it is a good time to relocate. There are likely to be real financial impacts of the pandemic at ALL institutions of higher education. Relatively speaking, large public universities like Texas A&M are likely to “weather the storm” better than other institutions due to relatively stable enrollments and high levels of investment from endowments funds. As a state institution, however, Texas A&M may face some budget cuts as the state responds to the pandemic.
- ✓ **Consider inviting the finalist to visit campus after an offer has been made.** If your department decides against having campus visits, this option will still provide candidates with the (optional) opportunity to visit the campus and the community, and to ask additional questions in person before accepting an offer.

Appendix H. Additional Resources

All of the materials in this guidebook have been adapted and modified from existing sources. The following sources have been used extensively in putting together this handbook.

Academic Impressions. 2019. *Recruiting, Onboarding, and Retaining Underrepresented Faculty. Conference Program*. October 21-23, 2019. Savannah, Georgia.

American Association of University Professors (AAUP). 2014. *Affirmative-Action Plans: Recommended Procedures for Increasing the Number of Minority Persons and Women on College and University Faculty*. AAUP Reports and Publications. Available online at: <http://www.aaup.org/report/affirmative-action-plans-recommended-procedures-increasing-number-minority-persons-and-women>.

Buller, Jeffrey L. 2017. *Best Practices for Faculty Search Committees: How to Review Applications and Interview Candidates*. Jossey-Bass.

Fine, Eve and Jo Handelsman. 2012. *Searching for Excellence and Diversity: A Guide for Search Committees*. Second edition. Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute (WISE-LI). University of Wisconsin- Madison.

Gvozdanovic, Jadranka and Katrien Maes. 2018. *Implicit Bias in Academia: A Challenge to the meritocratic principle and to women's careers – and what to do about it*. League of European Research Universities (LERU). Advice Paper No. 23. January 2018.

National Research Council (NRC). 2009. *Gender Differences at Critical Transitions in the Careers of Science, Engineering and Mathematics Faculty*. Washington, D.C. National Academy Press.

Stewart, Abigail J. and Virginia Valian. 2018. *An Inclusive Academy: Achieving Diversity and Excellence*. MIT Press.

University of North Carolina-Charlotte. 2019. "Resources for Search Committees Including Evaluation Rubrics and Link to Project Implicit."

Available online at:

<https://advance.uncc.edu/programming/programs/faculty-recruitment/resources-search-committees-including-evaluation-rubrics>.

University of Oregon. 2019. "Expected Practices for TTF Searches."

Available online at: <https://provost.uoregon.edu/expected-practices-ttf-searches>.

Some Additional Resources Specific to Interviewing during COVID-19:

Bryan A. Banks, Stacy Blersch, Patty Chappel, Amanda Rees, and Eric Spears

"Keep Calm and Hire On" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (May 6, 2020)

Kim Brettschneider, "How to Ace the Virtual Interview" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 22, 2020)

Brian T. Edwards, "The Job Season Without In-Person Interviews" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 8, 2020)

Lucy Leske and Ann Yates, "As Classrooms Go Virtual, What about Campus- Leadership Searches?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 19, 2020)

Julia Piper, "When COVID-19 Makes Campus Visits Impossible, How are Colleges Hiring?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 6, 2020)

For links: <https://advance.tamu.edu/Resources/Resources-for-Faculty/COVID-19-and-Academia>



Programs

ACES Fellows

ADVANCE Scholars

Diversity Matters Seed Grants

Enhancing Diversity Seminars

Office for Diversity Funding

Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program

Texas A&M University's Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program is a faculty pipeline initiative that connects those advancing outstanding scholarship with relevant disciplinary units on campus.

In recognition of Texas A&M University's [Diversity Plan](#), the ACES Fellows Program promotes the research, teaching, and scholarship of early career scholars who embrace the belief that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence. From this experience at Texas A&M, fellows should develop an understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion and the power that it holds for students, faculty, and staff to enrich their lives.

As a Tier 1 research and land-grant institution, Texas A&M upholds its responsibility to accountability, campus climate, equity, and scholarship by maintaining a campus that affirms equity and fosters inclusion and belonging. ACES Fellows are afforded access to invaluable academic and professional development experiences to advance their careers as scholars.

For 2020 (with Fellows to begin fall 2021), the ACES Fellows Program is funded by the [Office of the Provost](#), and administered by the Office for Diversity at Texas A&M in partnership with five colleges: [The Bush School of Government and Public Service](#); the [College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#); the [College of Education and Human Development](#); the [College of Geosciences](#); and the [College of Liberal Arts](#).

[Eligibility and application information for the 2020-2021 ACES Fellows Program](#)

ADVANCE Scholars Program

The ADVANCE Scholars Program is a faculty mentoring program designed to promote and advance the success of tenure-track faculty who have been historically underrepresented at Texas A&M University and in higher education. This Program is anchored in our Aggie Core Values that continuously challenge us to embrace, value, and integrate diversity and inclusion as the roadmap to achieving academic and institutional excellence. As such, the ADVANCE Scholars Program is a key component of our efforts at Texas A&M University to support the recruitment, retention, and academic success of our faculty. Through systemic approaches to increasing their professional advancement, this Program contributes to the development of an exceptional and more diverse faculty.

Participants are afforded access to invaluable academic and professional development experiences to advance their careers as scholars. The Program focuses on cultivating opportunities for personal and professional growth by addressing issues that adversely affect satisfaction, effectiveness, and retention of historically underrepresented groups in higher education. Texas A&M University recognizes that creating a more equitable climate contributes to a positive environment for the students we serve, and the university as a whole.

[ABOUT THE 2019-2021 ADVANCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM](#)

Diversity Matters Seed Grant Program

The Diversity Matters Seed Grant program supports research projects designed to make a positive impact on Texas A&M University's [Diversity Plan](#) goals of accountability, campus climate, and equity. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss proposal topics with their relevant [Diversity Operations Committee representative\(s\)](#) prior to submission.

 **Seed Grant Recipients**

[2018-2020 Funded Seed Grant Proposals](#)

[2017-2018 Funded Seed Grant Proposals](#)

[2016-2017 Funded Seed Grant Proposals](#)

[2015-2016 Funded Seed Grant Proposals](#)

Enhancing Diversity Seminars

The *Enhancing Diversity Seminars* are designed to engage the campus community in dialogue around topics and issues related to diversity, campus climate, equity, and inclusion. The Office for Diversity has invited Texas A&M students, faculty, and staff to present their research to the campus community. A list of past *Enhancing Diversity Seminars* is available [here](#).

Because of the diversity in experience, motivation, and knowledge in the campus community, the Office for Diversity offers sessions for participants with a variety of skill levels and knowledge about diversity. To help participants find presentations that match their interests and facilitate their personal and professional development, presenters have indicated experience and knowledge level(s) for their sessions:

1. **Novice** - Limited or no experience, training, and/or personal reflection discussing racism, privilege, and other social justice issues and identifying personal biases, prejudices, and identity.

2. **Intermediate** - Some to moderate experience, training, and/or personal reflection identifying and recognizing personal bias and prejudices, how power and authority are distributed within organizational systems, and forms of privilege, oppression, and discrimination.
3. **Advanced** - Substantial experience, training, and/or personal reflection resulting in a willingness to engage in respectful discussions and discourse about power, privilege, oppression, and discrimination; the ability to function effectively in a multicultural society; the ability to understand conflict from multiple viewpoints; and the willingness to explore personal bias and prejudices.

Presentations are structured to encourage participants to engage in self-reflection and to interact with peers and the presenter(s). Please check with your supervisor to determine whether any presentations count towards your specific training and professional development requirements.

Spectres from the Past: Slavery and the Politics of "History" in West African and African American Literature

Presenter: Dr. Portia Owusu, Visiting Assistant Professor

College of Liberal Arts, Texas A&M University

Date: Thursday, April 15

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm CDT

Location: Zoom details will be provided in the reminder email on 04/14/21

This presentation considers modes of remembering slavery in African and African American cultural contexts. Its focus is on twentieth century "back to Africa" ideologies and its impact in the lives of individuals who adhered to it. The paper offers a reading of Ama Ata Aidoo's *Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965), a play that explores the politics of history in a marriage between an African and African American, to argue that these ideologies historicize slavery in ways that account exclusively for the experience of those in the West. A consequence of this single focus is a misunderstanding of how Africans remember and historicize slavery. It is also fraught personal relationships – underpinned by differences in cultures and modes of memory - between Africans on the continent and those in the diaspora.

Audience Knowledge Ranking: Novice – Limited or no experience, training, and/or personal reflection discussing racism, privilege, and other social justice issues and identifying personal biases, prejudices, and identity.

[Registration for campus and community members](#)

[TrainTraq link for registration for Texas A&M Employees](#)

Enhancing minoritized scholars' professional visibility

Presenters: Dr. Asha Ganesan, Postdoctoral Researcher & Dr. Adrienne Carter-Sowell, Associate Professor

College of Liberal Arts, Texas A&M University

Date: Wednesday, April 28

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm CDT

Location: Zoom details will be provided in the reminder email on April 27, 2021

Being visible is beneficial for career advancement and can enhance positive experiences on the job. Roles as a ghost writer, silent partner, and anonymous donor imply that no negative consequences accompany being present but not accounted for in the workplace. However, research shows being an "invisible" worker matters. Alternatively, being visible also can be detrimental for one's identities too (McCluney & Rabelo, 2019). Data were collected in a series of studies, using mixed methods, from participants belonging to varying majority and minority groups. Results differentiated between self-reported visibility experiences and (1) willingness to disclose personal information/identities, (2) status among group members, and (3) perceived pain induced by recurring thoughts. In sum, factors related to intersectional identities influence differences in stepping out of a perpetual, professional blind spot. Implications of public "inclusion pledges" will be discussed too.

Audience Knowledge Ranking: Novice – Limited or no experience, training, and/or personal reflection discussing racism, privilege, and other social justice issues and identifying personal biases, prejudices, and identity.

[Registration for campus and community members](#)

[TrainTraq link for registration for Texas A&M Employees](#)

Requesting Funding from the Office for Diversity

[Office for Diversity Guidelines for Funding Requests](#) -- Funding requests will be considered for their potential to significantly and positively impact the University's Diversity Plan goals:

- **Accountability** -- Programs that enhance or establish structures and processes that promote accountability for achieving our diversity goals.
- **Campus climate** -- Programs that promote or enhance an inclusive working and learning environment that fully recognizes, values, and integrates diversity.
- **Equity** -- Programs that promote a campus culture that is free from discrimination and harassment and one that is committed to valuing diverse skills, knowledge, and experience.

If you have any questions or concerns accessing this [application](#), please feel free to contact us by phone (979-458-2905) or by email (diversity@tamu.edu).

✳ /

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Knowledge Center - Funding and Benefits

QUICK LINKS >

The Dr. Dionel E. Avilés '53 and Dr. James E. Johnson '67 Graduate Fellowship Program

No image selected



Dr. James E. Johnson '67

About the Award

The Dr. Dionel Avilés '53 and Dr. James Johnson '67 Graduate Fellowship Program, previously named the Graduate Diversity Excellence Fellowship, seeks to increase diversity in the graduate and professional student population at Texas A&M and support the development of high achieving scholars who show promise of distinguished careers for the benefit of all students.

The Avilés-Johnson Graduate Fellowship Program provides four years of funding for domestic doctoral or two years of funding for domestic students enrolling for the first time in a master's program.

To be eligible for the Avilés-Johnson Graduate Fellowship Program, prospective students must be nominated by their admitting department. **Student self-nominations will not be considered.**

For more information about the Avilés-Johnson Fellowship Graduate Fellowship Program or other funding opportunities, visit our [Funding Your Education](#) page.

Guidelines

Please review the Nomination Guidelines for the 2023-2024 Avilés-Johnson Fellowship Program.

NOMINATION GUIDELINES >

Eligibility

Nominees must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents who will earn bachelor's or master's degrees no later than August 2023 and have applied for graduate admission to Texas A&M University (TAMU) for the Summer or Fall 2023. While it is not required that nominees be admitted at the time of nomination, the nominating department is expected to offer admission to nominees and execute an "admit" decision code in the admission portal should they be awarded the fellowship. **Master's students currently enrolled at TAMU are eligible for doctoral nominations.**

Nominees should have a superior academic record and meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Belong to gender, racial or ethnic groups that have been historically under-represented in graduate study in their discipline, in the United States, or at TAMU;
2. Have attended a minority serving institution for at least two years of their undergraduate degree or have an undergraduate degree conferred from a minority serving institution, as defined by the [U.S. Department of Education](#);
3. Have a disability defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, as described in [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#), as amended;
4. Be a veteran of the U.S. military; or
5. Come from a disadvantaged background, as defined by the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), for those who meet *two or more* of the following criteria:
 - o Were or are currently homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act;
 - o Were or are currently in the foster care system, as defined by the Administration for Children and Families;
 - o Were eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program for two or more years;
 - o Have/had no parents or legal guardians who completed a bachelor's degree;
 - o Were or are currently eligible for Federal Pell grants;
 - o Received support from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as a parent or child;
 - o Grew up in one of the following areas*:
 - A U.S. rural area, as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer, or
 - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services-designated Low-Income and Health Professional Shortage Areas (qualifying zip codes are included [here](#)).

**Only one of the two possibilities can be used as a criterion for the disadvantaged background definition.*

Nominations must include a diversity statement and relevant supporting data and narrative, correlating with criteria items (1) - (5), about the basis of the nominee's eligibility. For example, if females are underrepresented in electrical and computer engineering (criteria item (1)), data provided should show the percentage of women in electrical engineering in their department/program and/or profession.

In addition to meeting the stated criteria of eligibility, nominees for the 2023-2024 Avilés-Johnson Fellowship Program must be applying for enrollment in the following colleges/schools or interdisciplinary degree programs.

1. Colleges/Schools

- o Agriculture and Life Sciences
- o Architecture
- o Arts and Science
- o The Bush School of Government and Public Service
- o Education and Human Development
- o Engineering

- o Mays Business School
- o Performance, Visualization, and Fine Arts
- o Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

2. **Interdisciplinary Degree Programs**

- o Biotechnology
- o Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
- o Genetics
- o Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences
- o Neuroscience
- o Toxicology
- o Water Management and Hydrological Science

RESOURCES

Nomination Informational - December, 7, 2022

NOMINATION INFORMATIONAL VIDEO >

Reviewer Informational - January 25, 2023

Reviewer Rubric

REVIEWER INFORMATIONAL VIDEO >

DEADLINES FOR MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL SUBMISSIONS

Departments/Interdisciplinary Degree Programs must identify which round they wish to submit master's and doctoral nominations by Monday, January 23, 2023 at: <https://tx.ag/AvilesJohnsonRoundSelection>
Master's and doctoral nominations may not be submitted to both rounds.

Round 1 Nominations

Deadline: 5 p.m. CST, Thursday, February 2, 2023

*IMPORTANT: Due to inclement weather and cancellation of classes at Texas A&M University on February 1, 2023, the Graduate and Professional School has extended the Dr. Dionel E. Avilés '53 and Dr. James E. Johnson '67 Fellowship Program Round 1 deadline to **Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 5pm CST**. To reflect the revised timeline, soft notifications of award selections will be made by February 23, 2023. Please feel free to contact grad-award-admin@tamu.edu if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued patience and support.*

DOCTORAL NOMINATIONS >

MASTER'S NOMINATIONS >

MAYS AND BUSH MASTER'S NOMINATIONS >

Round 2 Nominations

Deadline: 5 p.m. CST, Wednesday, March 1, 2023

DOCTORAL NOMINATIONS >

MASTER'S NOMINATIONS >

MAYS AND BUSH MASTER'S NOMINATIONS >

RELATED KNOWLEDGE

How many students can be nominated for the Avilés-Johnson Fellowship Program?

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Avilés - Johnson Fellowship Program FAQs

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Grad School Associate Dean Charles Criscione Honored With 2023 Henry Baldwin Ward Medal For Outstanding Career Accomplishments In Parasitology

The award is one of the highest honors bestowed in the field.

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Blog

The Hollow Men: Avarice, Apathy, and American Society

What does it mean to be hollow? T. S. Eliot's timeless poem "The Hollow Men" remains as poignant as ever, especially when compared to the American society of today.

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Defense Announcement

Design of Extrudable Click Biomaterials for Three-Dimensional Bioprinting or Microinjection in Spinal Cord Injury

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Multicultural Graduation Celebrations

About the Celebrations

The Multicultural Graduation Celebrations, hosted by Asian Presidents' Council, Black Student Alliance Council, and the Latinx Graduation Coalition, are culturally-based ceremonies that celebrate graduation and academic success. Students who participate in one of the ceremonies can highlight their individual accomplishments, celebrate, and honor their cultural heritage and history with their family, friends, and the campus community. Each event features Former Student speakers, student organization performances, and presentation of graduates with a cultural stole, which can also be worn at commencement.

The celebrations are comprised of three cultural ceremonies highlights the respective historically underrepresented racial/ethnic student populations: Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA), Black/African American, and Hispanic/Latinx/a/o.

To join the celebration and recognition of graduating student achievements and contributions, register for the APIDA and Black Graduation Celebrations in the spring. Register for Hispanic/Latinx Celebrations for the fall and spring semesters.

Celebration Registration

Students graduating in the spring, summer, and fall of this year are eligible to register. Spots will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. To

register, follow the links to your preferred celebration.

APIDA Graduation Celebration

*April 29th, 2023 |
6:00pm | TBD*

All students will be receiving their APIDA stole during the ceremony. We will also have the celebration live streaming on Facebook. Each participant can invite four people to their in-person graduation celebration. There will be light refreshments.

[Register Here](#)

Black/African American Graduation Celebration

*April 8, 2023 | 3:00 PM
| MSC 2300B*

The goal of the Black Graduation Celebration is to create a space for graduates who identify within the Black/African American community to celebrate and honor their cultural heritage and history. Each participant can invite two guests to their in-person graduation celebration. You will receive your stole at the celebration. If you are interested in participating in the Black Graduation Celebration, please complete the RSVP form in its entirety as well as the \$30 payment. The payment will include a stole and a guaranteed spot at the ceremony.

Latinx Graduation Celebration

*May 14, 2023 | TBD |
TBD*

The celebration is a unique opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our Latinx students in Spanish and English. The purpose of this ceremony is to spread the value of inclusivity throughout Texas A&M University and ensure that all TAMU students are recognized for their accomplishments. The event is open to any graduating student. To participate in the celebration you must register and pay a \$37 fee, registration will close on April 17th, 2022. Late registration is \$45. The payment covers your stole and a spot at the ceremony. If you have any questions, please contact the Latinx Graduation Coalition at

tamulatinxgraduation@gmail.com.

Register
Here

Register
Here

+ Multicultural Graduation Celebrations
History & Context

+ Cultural Stoles

+ FAQ

Department of Multicultural Services • Suite 2200 Memorial Student Center • Texas A&M University • College Station,
TX 77843-1121

Phone: 979-862-2000 • Fax: 979-862-2640 • E-mail: dms-info@dms.tamu.edu

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Multicultural Services is housed in the Division of Student Affairs





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Trends, Tools, and Critical Considerations for
University Communicators*



Scan for the Google slides
of this presentation

Meet the Presenters

Crystal Carter, M.S., M.Ed.

She/her/hers

Paul Eaton, Ph.D

He/him/his

Jennifer Reyes, Ph.D.

She/her/hers

Lawren Walker '22

She/her/hers

NCORE Land Acknowledgement



We acknowledge the land on which we sit and occupy today as the traditional and ancestral home of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Tumwater, Watlala bands of the Chinook, the Tualatin Kalapuya, and other Indigenous nations of the Columbia River.

Without them, we would not have access to this gathering and to this dialogue. We take this opportunity to thank and honor the original caretakers of this land.

Sam Houston State University (SHSU) & Texas A&M (TAMU) Territorial Acknowledgements

Texas is the home of the Apache, Caddo, Comanche, Kiowa, and Wichita nations; the Tonkawa, Tawakoni, Hueco, Sana, Wichita, Coahuiltecan peoples; the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas; the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas; the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo; the Lipan Apache Tribe; and the Texas Band of Yaqui Indians.



Learning Outcomes

1. Take tools, insights, and perspectives
2. Identify actionable plans or strategies
3. Discuss negotiating shifting laws and institutional policies

Scan for the
Google
slides of this
presentation



Ground Rules

- Respect confidentiality
- Don't hold people in place or time – grace for learners
- Challenge the idea, not the person
- Share time & space – lean into the space
- Be open to exploring your identities and identities you do not hold
- Be comfortable with discomfort and silence

Institutional Characteristics

Sam Houston State University

- Huntsville, Texas: 41,664
- Undergraduates: 18,790
 - 1% American Indian/Alaska Native
 - 2% Asian
 - 18% Black/African American
 - 26% Hispanic/Latine
 - 49% White
- Public, 4-year, R2

Texas A&M University

- College Station, Texas: 115,802
- Undergraduates: 55,568
 - 0.2% American Indian/Alaska Native
 - 9% Asian
 - 3% Black/African American
 - 25% Hispanic/Latine
 - 59% White
- Public, 4-year, R1, HSI

Meet the Audience

Make some noise if you...

- Are attending NCORE for the FIRST time IN PERSON
- Are an undergraduate student
- Are a graduate or professional student
- Are faculty
- Are staff
- Are working in an Office for Diversity
- Are working in a Division of Student Affairs
- Have marketing and communication responsibilities in your title and/or job description

DEI, Marketing & Communication Definitions

Diversity

- Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement
- Compositional/ structural diversity
- Sociological diversity

Equity

- Committing to DEI publicly & in practice
- Identifying barriers
- Eliminating barriers

Inclusion

- Bringing authentic self (ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives) to teams & business
- If it's not accessible, it's not inclusive.

Conventional vs. DEI-Centered Marketing



1. Reputation
2. Brand



DEI-Centered Marketing

- Represents the campus community
- Markets to specific demographics without relying on stereotypes
- Takes a progressive stand on issues of social justice

The Balancing Act: Challenges & Strategies

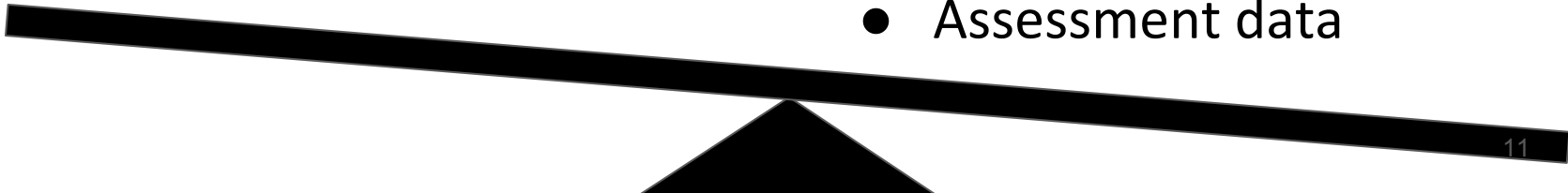


Challenges

- State politics
- Institutional practices
- Institutional privilege & power
- Navigating crisis

Strategies

- Engaged, supportive leadership
- Alignment with research & scholarship
- Alignment with institutional mission & goals
- Assessment data



DEI-Centered Marketing Toolkit

- Always be developing your pool of colleagues
- Know the laws about accessibility
- Honestly reflect your campus community
- Address current, significant nationwide issues
- Know and use current terminology
- Provide materials in multiple languages
- Align with institutional goals and ASSESS!

Toolkit: Do your own work.

- Talk about improving representation in your marketing
- Review your storytelling practices
- Know the laws and practices regarding accessibility
- Engage & keep track of current events
- Develop your own competencies around social justice and DEI
- Identify and reflect on your own biases, beliefs & values

A note on a decision we made...



In this presentation, we use images and language selected from print media, newspapers, social media, and many from our own institutions.

Many of the examples illustrate dehumanizing language, images, and practices that depict stereotypes, violence, and tropes.

A note on a decision we made...



We are using the images and language for two reasons:

1. To illustrate how prevalent the dehumanizing images and symbols are in marketing and communications
2. To identify strategies to confront and dismantle implicit and/or explicit racism, discrimination, and/or privilege

Dual Pandemics: COVID-19 & Systemic Racism

Covid 'hate crimes' against Asian Americans on rise

© 21 May 2021



Coronavirus pandemic



<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-56218684>

In 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement shook the world

Local BLM organisers reflect on a year that rocked the United States, and chart their priorities for 2021.



Demonstrators protest on June 6, at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, over the death of George Floyd, a Black man who was in police custody in Minneapolis [File: Alex Brandon/AP Photo]

By Laurin-Whitney Gottbrath

31 Dec 2020



<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/12/31/2020-the-year-black-lives-matter-shook-the-world>

Dual Pandemics: COVID-19 & Systemic Racism

POLITICS // TEXAS POLITICS

Ted Cruz doubles down on 'invasion' rhetoric espoused by accused Buffalo shooter



Benjamin Wermund, Washington Bureau

May 18, 2022 | Updated: May 18, 2022 2:01 p.m.

https://www.houstonchronicle.com/politics/texas/article/Ted-Cruz-doubles-down-on-invasion-rhetoric-17181675.php?utm_campaign=premiumchron_breakingnews_20220518&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email



yahoo/news

Texas educators fear Abbott's effort to kick undocumented children out of school



Carmen Valencia · Producer

Thu, May 19, 2022, 2:30 PM

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/texas-educators-fear-gov-abbotts-effort-to-kick-undocumented-children-out-of-school-193041531.html>

Diversity Training, Critical Race Theory, & Book Bans

MONEY

Donald Trump executive order banning diversity training blocked by federal judge

Jessica Guynn USA TODAY

Published 6:40 p.m. ET Dec. 23, 2020 | Updated 5:49 p.m. ET Dec. 24, 2020

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2020/12/23/trump-diversity-training-ban-executive-order-blocked-federal-judge/4033590001/>

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick proposes ending university tenure to combat critical race theory teachings

Patrick's declarations come days after the UT-Austin Faculty Council approved a measure reaffirming instructors' right to teach about racial justice and critical race theory in the classroom.

BY **KATE MCGEE** FEB. 18, 2022 12 PM CENTRAL

<https://www.texastribune.org/2022/02/18/dan-patrick-texas-tenure-critical-race-theory/>

Diversity Training, Critical Race Theory, & Book Bans

POLITICS

Critical Race Theory Is Banned in These States

BY JACK DUTTON ON 6/11/21 AT 6:57 AM EDT

<https://www.newsweek.com/critical-race-theory-banned-these-states-1599712>

POLITICS & POLICY

In a Houston Suburb, Book Bans Fuel a Bitter School Board Race

Two right-wing activists in the high-performing, highly diverse Katy Independent School District aim to unseat incumbents in Saturday's election.

By Michael Hardy

May 4, 2022

3

<https://www.texasmonthly.com/news-politics/katy-book-bans-fuel-bitter-school-board-race/>

LGBTQ+ Rights & Reproductive Rights

LOCAL // HOUSTON

Aggies are fighting over Texas A&M's soul. One conflict? A campus drag show.



Samantha Ketterer, Staff writer

April 24, 2022 | Updated: April 26, 2022 3:20 p.m.



<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Aggies-are-fighting-over-Texas-A-M-s-soul-One-17122385.php>

Texas can continue investigating families seeking gender-affirming care for their transgender children, state Supreme Court says

By [Alisha Ebrahimji](#), [Ashley Killough](#) and [Raja Razek](#), CNN

🕒 Updated 3:26 PM ET, Fri May 13, 2022

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/13/us/texas-supreme-court-overturms-transgender-investigations/index.html>

LGBTQ+ Rights & Reproductive Rights

THE LANCET

Volume 399 - Number 10238 - Pages 1845-1916 - May 14-20, 2022

www.thelancet.com

"If the US Supreme Court confirms its draft decision, women will die. The Justices who vote to strike down *Roe* will not succeed in ending abortion, they will only succeed in ending safe abortion. Alito and his supporters will have women's blood on their hands."

See Editorial page 1845

<https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanet/issue/current#fullCover>

Comment

Improving health in immigration detention and promoting alternatives to detention
See page 1845

Articles

Algorithm-based care after pancreatic resection
See page 1867

Articles

Long-term secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease with Mediterranean and low-fat diets
See page 1876

Articles

Addition of androgen deprivation therapy and pelvic lymph node treatment to prostate bed salvage radiotherapy
See page 1896

Seminar

Suicide and self-harm
See page 1901

Emerging Trends in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- Decolonizing practices/land acknowledgments
- The language of anti-racism/shifting racial and ethnic dynamics
- POC and BIPOC Multiracial Perspectives
- Debates on Racial/Ethnic Naming (i.e., Latinx, Latin*, Latine)
- Shifting gender dynamics
 - Gender Pronouns
 - Intersectional Feminism(s)
 - Transgender
 - Two-Spirit

Emerging Trends in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- Virtue Signaling
 - Do we market, communicate, and post with true values leading our decisions? Are we attempting to signal moral correctness? Is our marketing genuine and authentic?
- Intersectionality
 - How do we present intersectional perspectives?
 - How do we do so without stereotyping?

Relationships to Social Movements

#metoo

#blacklivesmatter

#decolonizing

#racismattamufeelslike

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

- Algorithms of Oppression
- **What is our relationship to counter-perspectives?**

Anti-Black Stereotypes, Tropes & Biases



Anti-Black Stereotypes, Tropes & Biases



"SHE HAS AN ATTITUDE" HAS BEEN USED AS A DOG WHISTLE IN SILENCING BLACK WOMEN'S RIGHT TO FEEL FRUSTRATED. IT CAN INSTANTLY CREATE RACIST STEREOTYPES OF THE "ANGRY BLACK WOMAN."



Anti-Asian Stereotypes, Tropes, & Biases



<https://www.adl.org/blog/coronavirus-sinophobia>



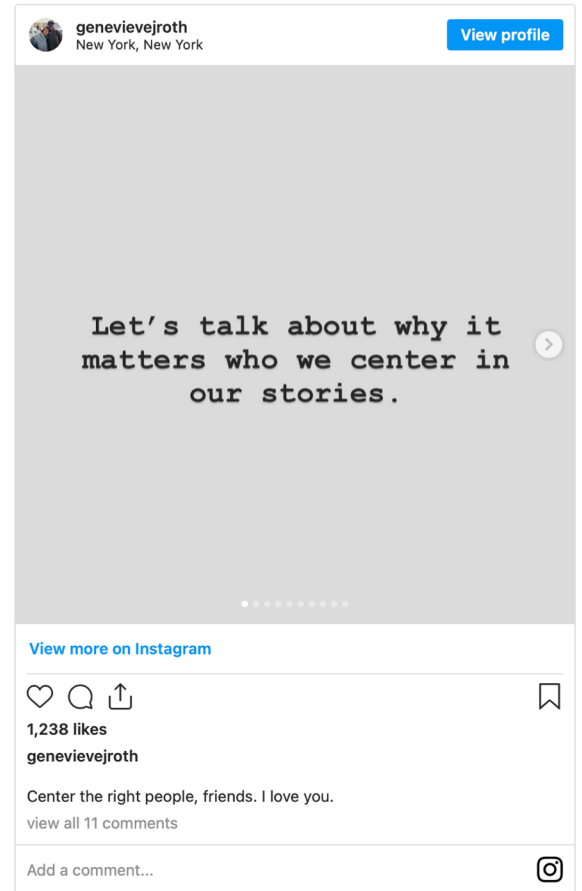
<https://aaww.org/yellow-peril-scapegoating/>

Centering whiteness

**White centering
is a form of
privilege.**

@changecadet

**STOP
CENTERING
WHITENESS
IN RESPONSE
TO BLACK PAIN**



Assessment in the DEI-Centered Marketing

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

“Goal setting can be daunting but can be key when executing a project. Once accomplished, goal setting provides a place for reflection and to identify areas for future growth or change.”

Individual Post Benchmarks

Earned Benchmarking: Comparing campaign or promotional efforts against a standard for success.

Goals	Metrics for December	Metrics for May
To learn from previous social media campaigns. To provide data to inform social media strategy.	Instagram: 30 Likes & 205 Insights Twitter: 0 Retweet 4 Likes & 255 Impressions Facebook: 5 Likes & 36 Reach	Instagram: 21 Likes & 146 Insights Twitter: 1 Retweet 7 Likes & 613 Impressions Facebook: 2 Likes & 99 Reach

How we do it...



- The plan/measures/outcomes
- Social Media Analytics Presentations

Common Themes

- Cultural Awareness
- Student Resources/Professional Development Opportunities
- Hashtags and People are Important
- Social Justice

Where we started...

May 2020

SCHOOL	TWITTER	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM
Texas A&M University @AggieDiversity	129	112	362
University of Kentucky @UofKoID	182	306	none
University of Georgia @UGADiversity	470	449	901
Louisiana State University @LSUDiversity	none	1,518	none
University of Texas @Diversity_UA	3,521	2,435	846

Where we are...

April 2022

SCHOOL	TWITTER	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM
Texas A&M University @AggieDiversity	573 (545)	436 (425)	1,089 (1,058)
University of Michigan @UMichDiversity	3,528 (3,473)	468 (394)	none
University of Georgia @UGADiversity	499 (500)	491 (475)	1,276 (1,214)
University of South Carolina @UofSCDiveIn	854 (803)	none	1,108 (1,075)
University of Alabama @Diversity_UA	148 (146)	none	1,344 (1,326)

Representation in Social Media

× Tweet Analytics

 Office for Diversity TAMU @AggieDiversity · Mar 31



On May 27th, 1967, Dr. Shanti A. Kudchadker from Bombay, India became the first woman to graduate with a Ph. D from Texas A&M! She went on to become the CEO of Anhaleena Engeneering Information Services. #I-Week #WomensHistoryMonth #ThrowbackThursday @TAMU_ISA


164


56


2

Impressions ⓘ

21,803

Engagements ⓘ

634

Detail expands ⓘ

262

New followers ⓘ

0

Profile visits ⓘ

44

 Office for Diversity TAMU
@AggieDiversity

On May 27th, 1967, Dr. Shanti A. Kudchadker from Bombay, India became the first woman to graduate with a Ph. D from Texas A&M! She went on to become the CEO of Anhaleena Engeneering Information Services. #I-Week #WomensHistoryMonth #ThrowbackThursday @TAMU_ISA





Discussion of DEI-Centered Marketing Toolkit

- Representation
- Language
- Division-Wide/University-Wide
- Communications Planning
- Storytelling Tools

Guiding Questions for Case Study Discussions

1. What are your biases, values, judgements, assumptions, and beliefs that are immediately triggered?
2. What are the relevant community, campus, and/or national events?
3. What are the cultural/institutional stereotypes, tropes, or biases that are being depicted?
4. What/who is being included and excluded in the context of diversity, equity, and inclusion? What is being perceived?
5. What is the potential harm (e.g., recruitment, retention, sense of belonging)?
6. What are alternative ways of representing or telling the story (language and image)?

Language Matters Case Study

Ahora aceptamos solicitudes para nuestra cohorte 2020

*Experiencia para Académicos
Emergentes de la División J de AERA*

**BREGANDO CON NUESTRO POR
QUÉ COLECTIVO: EL CULTIVO
DE COMUNIDADES ACADÉMICAS
QUE SE AFIRMAN Y SE AMAN**

Enlace a la solicitud: <http://bit.ly/aeradivjes2020>

Fecha de entrega de solicitud: 15 Octubre, 2019



अब हमारे 2020 कोहॉर्ट के लिए आवेदन स्वीकार कर रहे हैं

**एईआरए डिवीजन ज इमर्जिंग स्कॉलर्स
एक्सपीरियंस**

**ग्रेपलिंग विथ आवर कलेक्टिव व्हाई:
कल्टिवेटिंग अफिरमिंग एंड लविंग स्कॉलरली
कम्युनिटीज**

ऑनलाइन अर्जी कीजिए: <http://bit.ly/aeradivjes2020>

आवेदन की अंतिम

तिथि: 15 अक्टूबर, 2019



Taking a Progressive Stand Case Study



HB 3979-CRT- University Response from Chief Diversity Officer

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, June 25, 2021 8:13 AM
To: [redacted]

Subject: HB 3979-CRT- University Response from Chief Diversity Officer

Good morning All,

I spoke with [redacted] this week regarding HB 3979 and its impact on the College of Education. Here's what I learned from the conversation. Please read below:

While Texas has recently passed laws that prohibit the use of **critical race theory** (CRT) in K-12 classrooms, Sam Houston State University remains committed to DEI initiatives and encourages faculty/staff to continue teaching DEI efforts in the classroom. Even though this is only a state law, Sam Houston State University encourages faculty/staff, in particular, to avoid using the terminology, "**critical race theory**" in any educational context (e.g., grant writing, teaching, and/or workshop format). Here are some other theoretical frameworks that are acceptable to use in educational spaces: equity-minded framework, inclusive excellence framework and the organizational change model.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Take care,
[redacted]

Stereotypes/Tropes Case Study



Texas A&M Division of Student Affairs

October 1, 2020

Stigmatization is cruel and counterproductive. Stand up for cultural diversity in Aggieland. We are all challenged by COVID-19. We are all different. We are all Aggies. Stop xenophobia and spread our core value of respect. #FightXenophobia #TAMU

Texas A&M University Office for Diversity TAMU

[Video description: Stuck to a window facing Kyle Field, groups of colored Post-it notes (orange, purple, lime green, pink, and blue) are scattered around the definition of xenophobia printed on paper affixed to the window: "intolerance, dislike, distrust, or prejudice against those from other countries." The Post-it notes slowly move from the edges toward the center of the paper to cover the xenophobia definition. Once they come together, the individual colors slowly morph into one color: maroon. Then, the Texas A&M logo zooms in from within the maroon area. Then the background transitions to solid maroon. Beneath the logo text appears: "We are all different. We are all Aggies." The logo and text disappear and additional text appears, "Stop xenophobia. Spread our core value of respect." The next slide shows the Don't Pass it Back logo. The last slide shows the TAMU Division of Student Affairs logo.]



You and 5 others

3 Shares



<https://fb.watch/cPKILFCWwP/>

From: Reyes, Jennifer McGee <jlreyes@tamu.edu>

Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 5:08 PM

To: Sondra White <swhite@vpsa.tamu.edu>; Carter, Crystal Spruill <c.carter@tamu.edu>

Subject: RE: New activity in Xenophobia Stop Motion

Hello Sondra and Crystal –

Thank you so much for sharing this early draft. The image on the window, with a cloudy day, and Kyle Field in the background is very attractive. I do have some concerns:

Historically, the US rhetoric and propaganda around China has included derogatory and dehumanizing phrases and symbols using the color and word "red." And, currently, with COVID-19, xenophobia has been anti-Asian. So, yes you need to re-shoot, without the color red. Or yellow because US history and propaganda with "yellow" is parallel to red and China.

Additionally, the very first move of the red notes was away from the group. Do any of the notes need to be pushed away? Can we have them all just join in to cover "Xenophobia"?

The color and motion maybe be subtle to some, but this is really a teaching moment about stereotypes, historical context, current events, diversity, and inclusion. The video has the potential to be conceptual and artistic even. Are there plans to add the final text -- "Every Aggie is different. Spread our Core Value of Respect."?

Thank you again for including us in this important and challenging project.

Sincerely,
Crystal and Jennifer

Centering white Case Study

< Tweet



Texas A&M University 
@TAMU



10:21 AM · 11/19/19 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

Tweet your reply



Natalie @mamared82 · Nov 19, 2019



Replying to @TAMU

I'm not so crazy that the deeper the color the more on the fringe the graphic has them. I would like to see it redone with a mosaic of colors all mixed in hues. That would be beautiful and more represented than with white in the middle.



4



3



37



Alissa Beebe @AlissaBeebe · Nov 19, 2019



I believe they were simply recreating a design that was already done before...



24



Red Foreplay @ForeplayRed · Nov 19, 2019



Replying to @TAMU

Of course the black hands are on the outside. Racist.



2



Storytelling Case Study



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Office for Diversity



Sam Collins '93



Sam Addington '20

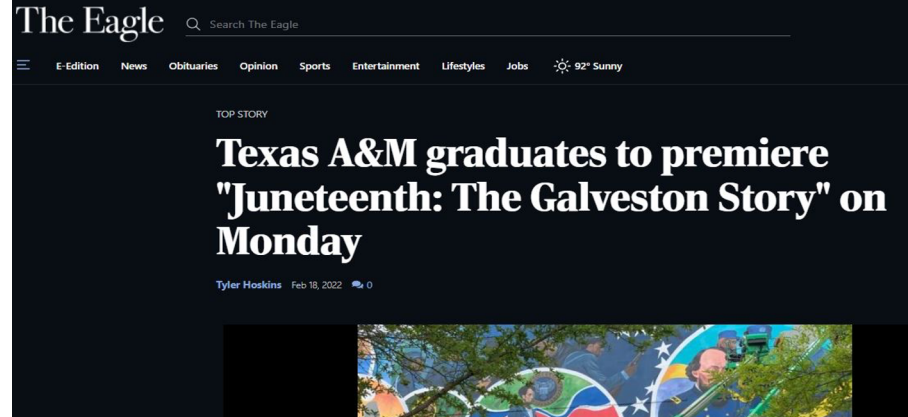
Juneteenth: The Galveston Story Documentary Screening & Panel Discussion with Producers

February 21, 2022 | 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM CT | Virtual Event

Juneteenth originated in Galveston, Texas. Hear the stories as told by some of the family members of the people who were there in 1865, along with others. Learn what part they played in the shaping of Galveston and Texas history.

Sam Collins '93, Wild Lion Productions
Sam Addington '20, Sam Addington Media Productions

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY | OFFICE FOR DIVERSITY
(979) 458-2905 | [DIVERSITY.TAMU.EDU](https://diversity.tamu.edu)



Aggies to show story on slavery

'Juneteenth' documentary product of A&M graduates

TYLER HOSKINS
tyler.hoskins@theeagle.com
Months after earning official federal holiday status, Juneteenth will be recognized on



Current Events Case Study



Office for Diversity TAMU

Published by Hootsuite · May 25 at 4:53 PM ·

The Office for Diversity joins the larger Texas A&M community in mourning the tragic loss of life in the horrific mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Read the full letter with resources for the campus community. <https://tx.ag/052522res>



The Office for Diversity joins the larger Texas A&M community in mourning the tragic loss of life in the horrific mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas. The Uvalde killings come just 10 days after 10 African Americans were killed in a mass shooting in Buffalo, New York. As we mourn those that lost their lives, let us also reflect on ways that we can use our voices to promote understanding and acceptance within and across our communities and to help drive progress for the communities we serve. My May 25 letter provides campus support resources for faculty, staff, and students.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can email us at diversity@tamu.edu or call (979) 458-2905.

- Dr. Annie McGowan
Interim Vice President and
Associate Provost for Diversity

@Aggiediversity

45
People reached

6
Engagements

-
Distribution score

Boost post



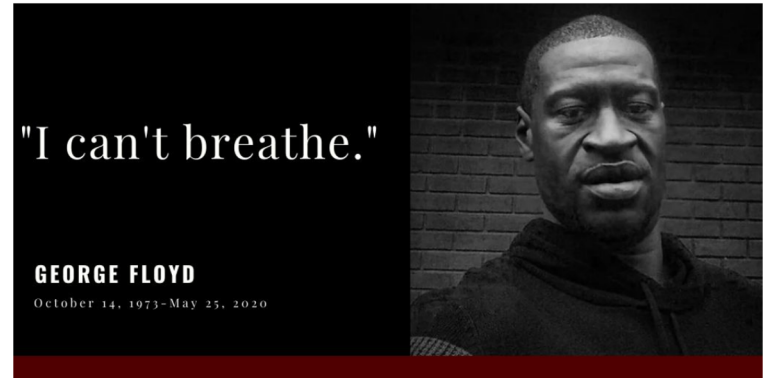
4



Office for Diversity TAMU

Published by Hootsuite · May 25 at 5:15 PM ·

May 25, 2022 marks the 2nd anniversary of George Floyd's murder. Resources for racial healing and mental health are available at @TAMU_CAPS & @AggieDiversity <http://u.tamu.edu/toolkit> <https://diversity.tamu.edu/Resources#toolkits> @GFMFoundation





Always keep in mind...

- The more you keep DEI work at the center of your approach, you will be a better, more competent professional, and you'll become a better advocate for your students and the campus community.
- DEI work is a never-ending pursuit. Always evaluate the risks for you, for your career, for your emotional well-being, and your physical health & safety as you navigate power and privilege.



Acknowledgments

Thank you to our colleagues Justin Ipko, Sondra White, Veronica Hoff, Redeem Francis, Vanessa Garcia, and Manas Gokhale

References

- Diawara, M. Black spectatorship: Problems of identification and resistance. *Screen* 29.4 (1988): 66-76.
- Jezebel. May. 2008 “Is Vogue’s “LeBron Kong” Cover Offensive?” Jezebel
<<http://jezebel.com/368655/is-vogues-lebron-kong-cover-offensive>>

Contact Information

- Crystal Carter; c.carter@tamu.edu
- Paul Eaton; pwe003@shsu.edu
- Jennifer Reyes; jlreyes@tamu.edu
- Lawren Walker; lwalker113@tamu.edu

- Website: diversity.tamu.edu
- Social media: @AggieDiversity

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Google
slides of this
presentation



Please evaluate this session using the NCORE Conference App. You may find this session by Index # 3626.

Thank you for your feedback. It is a valuable resource to our presenters and shapes future programming.

Enjoy the rest of your sessions!

AACDC Equity Matrix—Revised Matrix (Updated November, 2018)

Applicable groups from the Historically Underrepresented Groups: gender, ethnicity, and age

Dimension	Issue	Question	Possible Measure	Comments	Target Timeframes/status (subject to change)
Advancement and Promotion	Access	Are there gaps in use of existing career ladders/paths that leave employees from historically underrepresented groups with fewer opportunities for advancement?	Review of the existing career ladders/paths applicable to division employees to determine whether there are some groups (gender, age, and ethnicity) not using these to a greater degree than other groups.	Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee examined this and recommendations were approved by the leadership in November 2015. However, the Fall 2016 implementation of the System Pay Plan's ladders and career paths has caused this effort to be put on hold.	The leadership in October 2018 asked for the concept of career ladders to be explored for potential inclusion in a promotion report to be created in Fall 2019.
Advancement and Promotion	Performance evaluations	Are there historically underrepresented groups who are disproportionately blocked from advancement despite good performance?	Review performance evaluations for a random sample of Academic Affairs employees at all levels over a 5-year period. What is the correlation between advancement/promotion and age, gender, race/ethnicity for employees receiving the various rating categories on performance evaluations (e.g. Exemplary, Exceeds Expectations, Achieves, etc.)?	AACDC was unable to obtain performance evaluation data for the division from Human Resources; therefore a division level review will not be done at this time. Individual units within the division can opt to review their areas since they have access to this information within their work areas.	Not Applicable (see comments)

Advancement and Promotion	Performance evaluations	Are members of historically underrepresented groups disproportionately represented in any of the performance evaluation rating categories?	Review performance evaluations for a random sample of Academic Affairs employees at all levels over a 5 year period. Is there a negative correlation between performance and age, gender, or race/ethnicity?	AACDC was unable to obtain performance evaluation data for the division from Human Resources; therefore a division level review will not be done at this time. Individual units within the division can opt to review their areas since they have access to this information within their work areas.	Not Applicable (see comments)
Hiring Practices	Attracting applicants from diverse groups	Do NOVs use language that encourages diverse candidates to apply?	Review a representative sample of NOVs for analysis.	Fall 2013 results were reported at the Supervisor's meeting in Summer 2014. A follow-up review was conducted in Fall 2016 to compare results. 2016 Hiring Process Report submitted to leadership in May 2017; recommendations approved in October 2018.	Implementation of recommendations is in progress. Progress will be revisited in November 2019 diversity report
Hiring Practices	Access	How diverse are our applicant pools before interviews begin?	Review EEO data from a representative sample of NOVs from the division. Examine the length of time the NOV is posted.	Fall 2013 results were reported at the Supervisor's meeting in Summer 2014. A follow-up review was conducted in Fall 2016 to compare results. 2016 Hiring Process Report submitted to leadership in May 2017;	Implementation of recommendations is in progress. Progress will be revisited in November 2019 diversity report

				recommendations approved in October 2018.	
Hiring Practices	Awareness, Climate, Attracting applicants from Diverse Groups	Do hiring processes utilize nationally endorsed human resources practices to address diversity experience or issues?	Review a representative sample of division hiring files to determine whether the interview questions, hiring matrices, and reference check questions address diversity issues	Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Women in IT, and Texas A&M Human Resources were consulted about these issues. Fall 2013 results were reported at the Supervisor's meeting in Summer 2014. A follow-up review was conducted in Fall 2016 to compare results. 2016 Hiring Process Report submitted to leadership in May 2017; recommendations approved in October 2018.	Implementation of recommendations is in progress. Progress will be revisited in November 2019 diversity report.
Hiring Practices	Barriers	What barriers, real or perceived, do supervisors see related to increasing diversity in applicant pools?	The planned AACDC supervisor survey will address this	Supervisor survey was conducted in May 2014. Results were shared in the Supervisor Meeting in Summer 2014. Recommendations for action were made by supervisors and shared broadly among them.	
Hiring Practices	Barriers	Are there division practices or processes that may create perceived or real inequities in the hiring process?	Add questions in the next iteration of the division climate survey related to these issues. These may be related to satisfaction	Climate Survey with this question was conducted in Fall 2014; results show that there is a perception of barriers. Summer supervisors meeting shared	Update of information from the first Red Flag Report is being prepared for leadership; other recommendations are in progress of being

			levels, in addition to other factors.	<p>climate survey data and the Provost asked each unit to have discussions with their staff by September 1, 2016; this was accomplished.</p> <p>Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee made recommendations to track red flags because of these perceptions in their November 2015 report. The first red flag report was provided in to the leadership in February 2017</p>	implemented. Progress will be revisited in November 2019 diversity report
Advancement and Promotion	Barriers	Are there division practices or processes that may create perceived or real inequities in advancement and promotion?	Add questions in the next iteration of the division climate survey related to these issues. These may be related to satisfaction levels, in addition to other factors.	Climate Survey with this question was -conducted in Fall 2014; results show that there is a perception of barriers. Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee made recommendations to track red flags because of these perceptions in their November 2015 report. The first red flag report was provided to the leadership in February 2017. AABS and REBS are working on implementing recommendations approved to create a new management report for	Progress will be revisited in November 2019 diversity report.

				<p>department heads in Fall 2019, using updated data.</p> <p>Survey of division supervisors in summer of 2016 found that a majority of supervisors felt processes in their units were not equitable for advancement, promotion, merit, and awarding of administrative leave. A pilot with AS was initiated in Fall 2016 to address the issues. AS transparency project pilot was successful, resulting in a 2018 increased understanding among supervisors in AS on these issues.</p>	
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O:AACDC:Equity:Equity Matrix Revised updated October 2018.

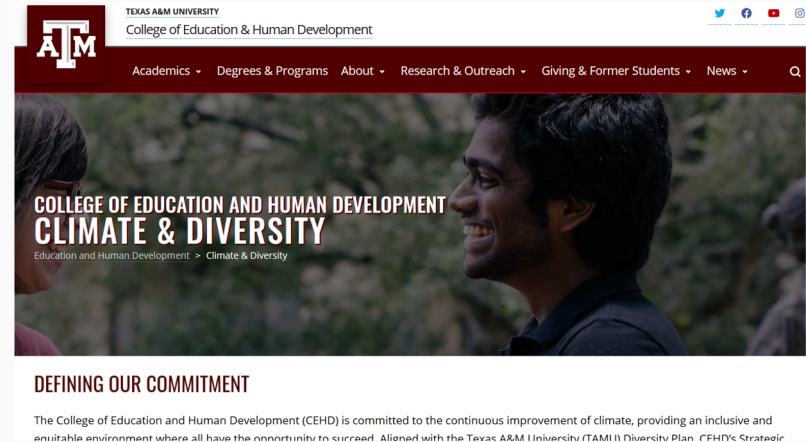
Office of Organization Development and Diversity Initiatives

CEHD New Faculty Orientation

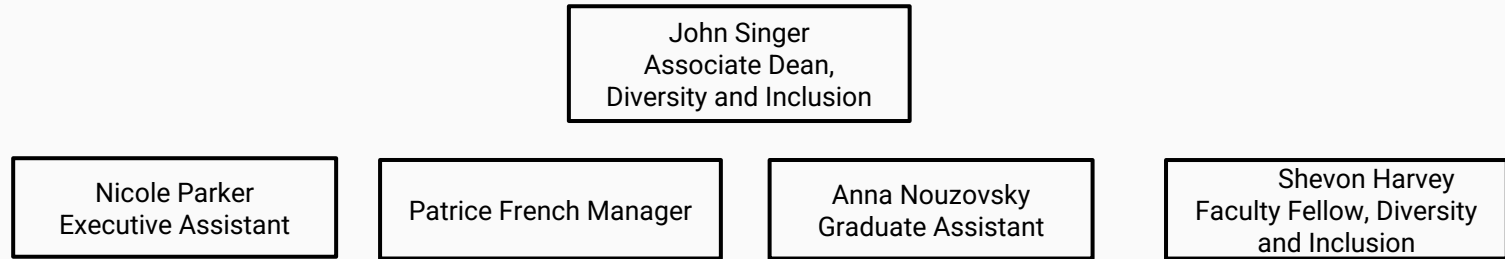


Overview

The Office of Organization Development and Diversity Initiatives (ODDI) **provides strategic oversight for initiatives** that create an **equitable and inclusive environment for students, staff, and faculty** within the College of Education and Human Development. The charge of ODDI is to **develop and implement a sustainable college infrastructure** that supports the **accountability, leadership, collaboration, and communications** efforts toward creating a culture of excellence.



Organizational Chart





Examples of Work within ODDI Include:

- Writing the CEHD Annual Diversity Accountability Report
- Offering professional development opportunities through trainings, guest lectures, and workshops
 - Dr. Edna Chun and David Owen Diversity and Equity Workshops
- Providing strategic oversight to CEHD diversity and inclusion goals
 - Launch of the Equity and Social Justice Collective
 - Departmental level SWOT Analysis
- Supporting and enhancing recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty, students, and staff
- Tracking and responding to issues of bias and discrimination

Ways ODDI Supports Faculty

- Share and connect you with diversity, inclusion, and social justice resources
 - [Anti-Racism Resources: Articles, Videos, Podcasts](#)
- Facilitate programs, partnerships, and initiatives to advance climate, diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice work within units, departments, and at the college level
- Provide supportive collaborations between and among individuals across CEHD doing equity and social justice minded work
- Produce technical, practical, and emancipatory knowledge that can help inform policy, processes, and practices related to racial and other forms of justice in CEHD and beyond

Questions?

Contact Information:

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Patrice French, Office of Organization Development and Diversity Initiatives | pfrench@tamu.edu



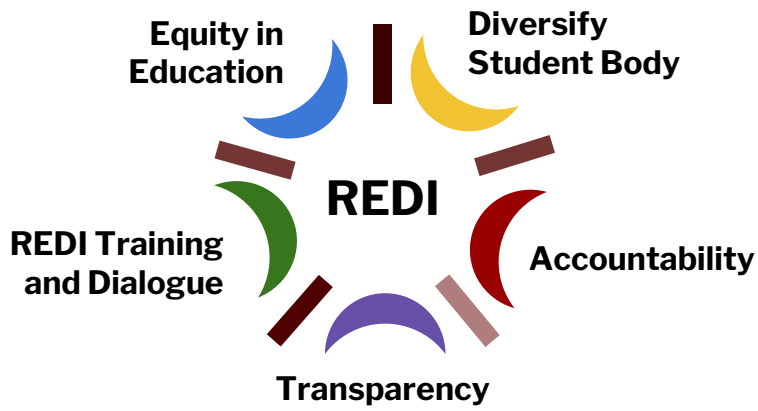
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Department of
Biomedical Engineering



Respect, **E**quity, **D**iversity, and **I**nclusion Committee

"Resources for Equity in Education"
REDI Committee Presentation
BMEN 153, November 28th, 2022

Why REDI?

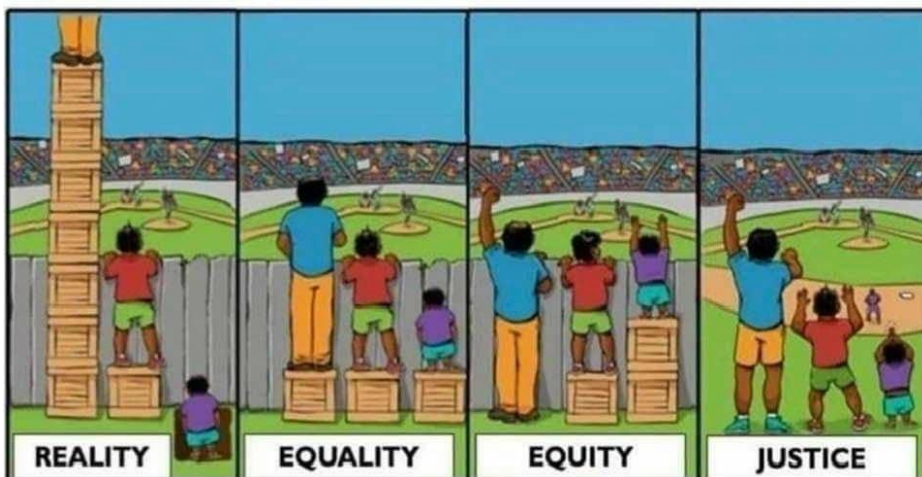


**“Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion”
TODAY: Resources for Equity in Education**

Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI)



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Department of
Biomedical Engineering



"Privilege simply means that under the exact same set of circumstances you're in, life would be harder without your privilege" - Phoenix Calida

**ACTIVITY - Equity in Education** [[LINK](#)]

From the list below, what are the top three privileges you find most important and why?
Discuss with your group. (~15 minutes)

- 1. English is your first language.**
- 2. At least one of your parents graduated college.**
- 3. You have existing connections that could get you an internship/job.**
- 4. You are a US citizen.**
- 5. You do not have any college loans or other financial stressors.**
- 6. You are naturally gifted at math and do not have test anxiety.**

***If you do not have access to these privileges or advantages, a REDI member can provide you with TAMU resources...or refer to the next slide...*



Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI)



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Department of
Biomedical Engineering

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION WITH REDI REPS - RESOURCES (~15 minutes)

1. If English IS NOT your first language...

- a. [University Writing Center](#) | [Academic Success Center](#)

2. If you are a FIRST GENERATION Aggie...

- a. [TAMU First Generation Center](#) | [First Gen Mentorship Program](#)

3. If you need a job, internships, or connections...

- a. [TAMU Career Center](#) | [Make a LinkedIn](#)

4. If you ARE NOT a US Citizen...

- a. [TAMU International Student Services](#) | [Multicultural Services](#)

5. If you have college loans or financial stressors...

- a. [Money Wise Aggies](#) | [Financial Aid](#) | [University Scholarships](#)

6. If you have math or test anxiety...

- a. [TAMU Math Learning Center](#) | [TAMU CAPS](#) | [Academic Success Center](#) | [Disability Services](#)

REDI Group Leaders

- Job and Finances: Travis, Travis
- English & Math Anxiety: Sarea, Annie
- First Gen Aggie: Olivia, Victoria
- International Students: Shreya/Alex, Angela



Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI)



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Department of
Biomedical Engineering

BMEN 153 - REDI Presentation Reflection (~10 minutes)

Our Website:

<https://engineering.tamu.edu/biomedical/respect-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-committee.html>

STRONGER TOGETHER



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

A Report by the Commission on
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

January 2021

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LETTER TO THE COMMISSION FROM JUSTIN ROMACK, TEXAS A&M STAFF MEMBER

My name is Justin Romack, and I was born with glaucoma, which has always impacted my eyesight, but only to the effect of total blindness in 2008. I celebrate and value the ways in which I perceive the world because it gives me unique perspectives as I communicate and share alongside the remarkable work being done by our university and its many collaborators.

I know it would be a safe assumption to believe my greatest challenges are due to this dark veil obscuring my eyesight. But in reality, the biggest barriers I battle have been constructed, often unknowingly, by society. These include the attitudinal, communication and information access, technological, environmental and systemic policies which are designed for people with functional eyesight.

My story is not unique, however, as it is estimated one in five individuals who engage with our campus has one or more disabilities which impact a major life activity, like hearing, seeing, walking, concentrating, processing and more. But as a White male, I often traverse many barriers and am afforded access through other apparent attributes, so it is crucial to stress how intersectionality promotes even greater friction for those with a variety of other marginalized identities.

Unlike many other marginalized identities, disability can be acquired at any point in one's life. In fact, it is likely we will all encounter disability as we age, either personally or through shared experience with a loved one.

I tell students often and always how the Office of Admissions does not make mistakes. These students have earned every ounce of opportunity throughout their time at Texas A&M. It should be our imperative to welcome, celebrate, value and represent the broadest possible spectrum of identities, lived experiences and perspectives shared across the Aggie family and the global economy.

If we fail in this, we rob our institution of sharing the broadest examination and education of the world around us, and cast aside students who have earned the right to their time as contributors to this community. In doing so, we also fall short of our mission to prepare students to assume roles in leadership, responsibility and service through the highest quality educational experiences and the pursuit of life-long learning.

It is why, in this moment, we must look intently from left to right, ensuring we have the widest representation of voices, lived experiences and identities present in our board rooms, committees, policy meetings, think tanks and executive teams. We do not know the things we have not experienced, and because of this, we must ensure our decision-making groups have representation from individuals who are living, breathing and scaling barriers of which we may be entirely unaware or immune.

Diversity is about a deep awareness of the world around us, an intent and humility to listen and elevate marginalized and underrepresented voices, and ensure we make way at the table for those who have gone unnoticed or unheard throughout history.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 13, 2020, Texas A&M University President Michael K. Young announced the membership and charge of a comprehensive Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

This 45-person commission of students, faculty, staff and former students was charged to provide findings — not recommendations, opinions or conclusions — related to diversity, equity and inclusion at Texas A&M through research and discourse across topics of racial intolerance, university policies and practices, and historical representations such as statues.

THE COMMISSION'S SPECIFIC CHARGES INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

- **Engage the university community** through public forums to solicit input and information from the broader university community, including students, faculty, staff and former students.
- **Assess relevant data and literature** (reports, policies and practices) related to diversity, equity and inclusion at Texas A&M and the Bryan and College Station communities.
- **Explore institutional alignment of policies and procedures** with the land-grant mission, goals and Core Values of Texas A&M.
- **Review information** across academic and non-academic units affecting the culture, climate and well-being of impacted campus communities.
- **Provide a final report with findings** to Texas A&M System's Board of Regents and President Young no later than Oct. 30, 2020.¹

"You can pick up your marbles and leave and throw in with some other school. Or you can suck up your guts and work to make A&M great. Those that choose to defect should know they leave A&M in the hour of her greatest need."

J.E. Rudder

Commission members undertook this charge with an awareness of the complex history of diversity and inclusion at the university.

Texas A&M has made many strides toward addressing diversity, equity and inclusion over its history. Examining our past teaches us of exclusion and discrimination, but also showcases an evolution and improvement toward inclusion and diversity bound by dedication to the Aggie spirit.

There is perhaps no better example than Texas A&M President James Earl Rudder's leadership in diversifying Texas A&M by opening its doors to Blacks and African Americans and by formally admitting women. Since that time, Texas A&M has flourished to become one of the nation's premier research universities, with campuses across Texas and around the world.

1. The original timeline was amended.



Still today, some students, faculty and staff from marginalized groups encounter negative experiences from intolerance, racism and other prejudices. These impede their ability to thrive in Texas A&M's learning and working environment. Even one incident of prejudice, discrimination or antagonism in Aggieland based on an individual's race, gender, religion, ability or sexual identity is too many.

There is a deep affection and pride for Texas A&M among students, faculty, staff, former students and other stakeholders. All want to see the university continue to grow in stature. This sentiment typically bookended all discussions, conversations and listening sessions hosted by commission members, even from those who had significant criticisms. Members of the Aggie family indicated a readiness to help bridge the gap between the university's aspirations for more diversity, equity and inclusion, and the sometimes difficult daily reality of incivility, racism, intolerance and disrespect.

"Throughout our evolution, our success and contemporary significance have been underpinned by strategically planning our direction and focus to always position Texas A&M ahead of the curve."

Texas A&M University 2020-2025 Strategic Plan

The data and discussions of the commission show that Texas A&M has reached an inflection point, and it is time for Aggies to do what Aggies do best: lead and serve. Deep discussions and empathetic conversations can refresh the current Aggie experience while holding true to the best traditions of the past. As one former student noted, "History should inform, but not determine, our destiny."

Our work as a commission revealed that there remains within the Aggie community a strong desire to show bold leadership in support of diversity, equity and inclusion; to commit to improving our campus climate; to trust one another; to have difficult conversations; and to ensure that ALL Aggies are welcome and respected at the school we think so grand.

We are the Aggies, the Aggies are we.

KEY COMMISSION FINDINGS

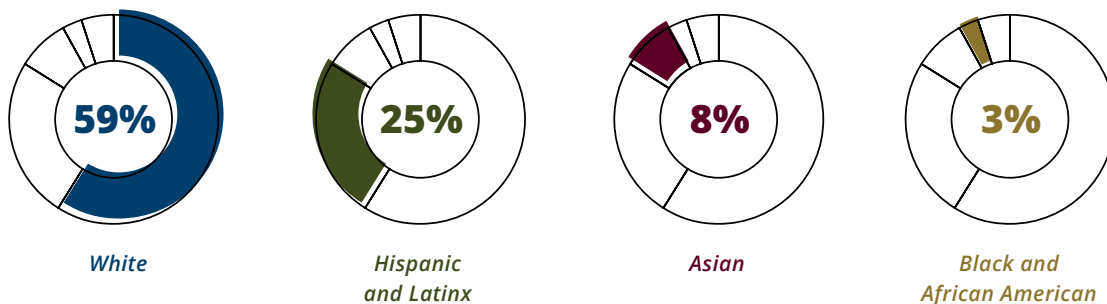
DEMOGRAPHICS

Texas A&M began admitting women and African American students nearly 60 years ago. Since then, the university has strived toward a more diverse and inclusive campus, while also rising in prominence as an academic university. Nevertheless, like other land-grant universities, it is not meeting its goal to have a student body that reflects its state's demographics.

To gain an initial understanding of the student demographics at Texas A&M, the commission benchmarked undergraduate student enrollment against 59 comparable land-grant universities. As a first exercise, data were gathered to contrast the makeup of the overall undergraduate student populations.

When compared in this way, Texas A&M largely appears average. For example, Texas A&M has a slightly lower White undergraduate student enrollment percentage than the average (Texas A&M stands at 59% while the average is 61%). Also, Texas A&M has a slightly lower Black and African American undergraduate student enrollment percentage than the average (Texas A&M stands at 3% while the average is 4.3%).

TEXAS A&M UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT



One exception to this average performance, however, is the enrollment of Hispanic and Latinx undergraduate students. Here, Texas A&M is an outlier in the positive sense. Texas A&M ranks third highest of the 59 universities, with 25% enrollment. The two schools higher than Texas A&M have percentages of 26% and 27%.

A notable goal of land-grant universities is to have a student body that reflects the demographics of the states they serve. It is therefore useful to look at undergraduate student enrollment as compared to state demographics. When benchmarked against the 59 land-grant universities in this manner, Texas A&M performs below its land-grant peers. Texas A&M enrolls a larger percentage of non-marginalized students than its state's population, to the point that the university is second highest in this regard; and Texas A&M enrolls a smaller percentage of Black and African American and Hispanic and Latinx undergraduate students than its state's population, to the point that it is one of the worst-performing schools in this regard.²

2. Demographic data for each of the universities are from the fall 2019 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) gathered by the National Center for Education Statistics, and the 2021 *U.S. News & World Report* on Campus Ethnic Diversity. Demographic data for each state are from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Data analysis should always be done in context. When contrasting the undergraduate student enrollment percentages of land-grant universities with their respective states' demographics, it is important to note that states with highly homogeneous populations can fare better than states with more diverse populations even if the true numbers are low. For example, land-grant universities in states with small Black and African American populations (e.g., Montana at 0.6%) can be more representative of their state's demographics even if they admitted no minorities. In comparison, Texas A&M is in a diverse state, so even if Texas A&M admits large numbers of minorities in those groups, its percentage may still be lower.

Notably, in terms of real numbers, Texas A&M admits more minority students than many of the comparison universities. Despite what the real numbers or percentages indicate, Texas A&M embraces its land-grant mission and can do better.

Aggies do not just aim to be average, or even above average — they aim for Excellence.

By further increasing minority enrollment, the university will have greater competitive advantage by preparing its students for a diverse and global workforce. Additionally, studies show that diverse organizations are more profitable and successful over time.

BENCHMARKING

Texas A&M has grown in stature over the past 60 years, as evidenced by the university's admission into the Association of American Universities (AAU) in 2001. The AAU is composed of America's leading research universities and is an important group to benchmark against, particularly as Texas A&M has additional duties as a land-grant university.

When benchmarked against the 63 AAU members in the United States, Texas A&M tends to perform below its peers. The percentage of White undergraduate students (59%) at Texas A&M ranks 12th highest of the 63 universities. Texas A&M does score comparatively well in its percentage of Hispanic and Latinx undergraduate students (25%), placing the university considerably above average.

Unfortunately, the percentage of Asian and Black and African American undergraduate students is about half of the average of AAU members. The percentage of Asian undergraduate students at Texas A&M is 8%, whereas the AAU member average is 17.1%; and

the percentage of Black and African American undergraduate students at Texas A&M is 3%, whereas the AAU member average is 5.4%.

Ethnically diverse college campuses offer students the ability to study and learn with undergraduates from racial and ethnic groups that are different from their own. Thus, another useful indicator of school diversity is the diversity index used by *U.S. News & World Report (USNWR)*.

The USNWR index is a probability measure that any two people chosen at random from a given school are different due to race and national origin. Based on this index, Texas A&M ranks higher than average when benchmarked to a pool of 111 comparable universities. Using this same index, Texas A&M scores third among schools in the Southeastern Conference and third among schools in the Big 12 Conference.

RACE AS A CONSIDERATION IN ENROLLMENT

With all these data in mind, it is useful to consider enrollment at Texas A&M. Texas A&M embraces Texas's top ten percent plan, which provides students in the top ten percent of their high-school classes with automatic admission to any public university in the state. Texas House Bill 588, which instituted this rule, was created as an answer to the restrictions of the *Hopwood v. Texas* appeals court case banning the use of race as a factor in deciding which applicants to admit in order to achieve a diverse student body.

Throughout history, racial classifications, specifically for Black and African American people, were directly used to hinder access and establish barriers to higher education. Acknowledging this truth, Texas A&M potentially may use race as a consideration in student admission as a narrowly tailored means of pursuing greater diversity if it can meet the fact-specific standards articulated in the 2013 *Fisher v. University of Texas* case. However, as evidenced by continuous federal litigation, it can be difficult to support and defend this type of admission policy under the rigorous standards of Equal Protection.

ENROLLMENT AND RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

A notable positive enrollment trend pertains to Hispanic and Latinx undergraduate students. At Texas A&M, this group has increased by 292.9% since 1999, bringing the university to the cusp of designation as a Hispanic and Latinx Serving Institution. (The designation requires 25% sustained enrollment percentage of Hispanic and Latinx students, whereas the university's current enrollment percentage stands at 24.9%.)

Data show that recruitment of the Black and African American population has been a persistent issue. For example, data on undergraduate student enrollment show that while total student numbers have increased, the percentage of Black and African American students enrolled at Texas A&M has remained mostly unchanged since at least 1999. Black and African American students accounted for 2.66% of the undergraduate student population in 1999 and 3.15% in 2019.

The Regents' Scholars Program has been a positive step toward bringing socio-economic diversity to Texas A&M. This four-year scholarship program, established in fall 2004, is designed to help first-generation college students achieve their educational goals at Texas A&M. This program provides assistance to approximately 850 students each year, and racial and ethnic minority students represent 89% of the 2019 academic year freshman cohort.

In the summer of 2020, the Texas A&M University System board of regents voted unanimously to boost the effort by creating a \$100 million scholarship fund to address diversity issues on the system's 11 campuses. The program is aligned with the board's strategic plan that articulates clearly the system's commitment to ensuring its institutions serve a diverse student body and better represent the population of the state.



THE REGENTS' SCHOLARS PROGRAM

850
Students Served Annually

Founded in
2004

Up to \$24,000
in Scholarships per Student

The program provides \$10 million annually over 10 years for scholarships to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, particularly to low income, first-generation students and students from geographically underrepresented regions of the state.

RETENTION AND STUDENT SUCCESS

While enrollment is a critical component for student diversity, so too are retention and student success. Texas A&M's retention rates for American Indian and Alaskan, Black and African American, Hispanic and Latinx, and Asian students are at or below the first quartile when compared to other AAU institutions.

Furthermore, Texas A&M significantly lags behind peer institutions (i.e., University of Texas at Austin, University of Florida, University of Michigan and University of California, Los Angeles) in its six-year graduation rate of Black and African American undergraduate students.

As an example, a recent cohort study of Texas A&M had a 61% graduation rate for its Black and African American population, whereas the peer institutions had graduation rates ranging from 74% to 81%. When compared to land-grant universities, however, Texas A&M has an equal or higher retention rate of undergraduate students in all ethnic categories than the average of those universities.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Another significant factor for achieving a diverse student population is having diverse faculty and staff. Data indicate that the percentage of faculty and staff of color remained relatively flat from 2015 to 2019 despite policies and training (e.g., STRIDE) to help faculty search committees be more conscious of implicit bias regarding race, ethnicity and other forms of diversity.

Some explanations for the shortcomings include a lack of accountability to ensure policies for recruiting and hiring diverse faculty and staff are successful, as well as a need for additional resources related to increasing diversity.

ACES FELLOWS PROGRAM

Texas A&M is exploring several programs to address this shortfall, including the Accountability, Climate, Equity and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program. This faculty pipeline initiative promotes the research, teaching and scholarship of early career scholars who embrace the belief that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence.



In 2019, the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Education and Human Development participated in the program, and four faculty were hired. In 2020, seven faculty were hired through the program. “As of December 2019, 435 applications had been submitted to the ACES program, proving that Texas A&M can attract promising, diverse early career faculty.”³ In 2020, two additional colleges are scheduled to join the program. Pipelines like these may need to be expanded to be truly impactful.

A more welcoming and inclusive campus climate that reflects and represents the various populations at Texas A&M is strongly desired by members of traditionally marginalized groups, as well as by many others.

3. <https://diversity.tamu.edu/Diversity/media/diversity/PDF/State-of-Diversity-06-23-20-final2.pdf>

CAMPUS CLIMATE, SYMBOLS AND ATTITUDES

Evidence collected from individual accounts, surveys and reporting mechanisms (such as StopHate and TellSomebody) indicate that some students, faculty and staff from marginalized groups are the recipients of speech and behaviors from some members of the Aggie community that make them feel isolated and excluded.

Many students, faculty, staff and former students possess a posture of listening to, or exhibiting empathy toward, marginalized groups, and support initiatives toward diversity, equity and inclusion. Unfortunately, there are vocal groups that believe diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives are neither beneficial or needed, and this contributes to both a perception and reality that the university is not doing enough to welcome marginalized groups. The struggle is that some in the Aggie community view inclusion to mean joining the existing Aggie culture, whereas others view inclusion to mean expanding attitudes and activities as part of the Aggie experience.

Commission conversations and listening sessions revealed that each person has their own unique definition of what it means to be an Aggie, and each definition is likely shaped by one's experience with the university. The characteristics defining an Aggie were generally positive, and centered around the Aggie family and being part of something larger than themselves.

The conversations and listening sessions also revealed, however, the existence of rigid stereotypes surrounding the Aggie definition, leading some individuals on today's campus (especially those from marginalized groups) to find the historical identity of "Who is an Aggie" to be limiting and not reflective of their experience.

The six Core Values of Respect, Excellence, Leadership, Loyalty, Integrity and Selfless Service are well-known. At the same time, they are not defined, understood, adopted or uniformly lived by university stakeholders.

This is especially true of Respect. The commission found that there is an opportunity to revisit and fully define these Core Values to ensure their integration into the Aggie identity and their practice by all members of the Aggie family.

"Factors that would positively impact the campus climate would be one in which all forms of hate, racism, bigotry, etc. are not tolerated whatsoever. One in which Aggies can call each other out on such acts and are willing to stand up against such actions as they are not representative of who we are — really holding each other accountable and up to high standards."

Listening session participant

The Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue is a source of deep emotions and strongly polarized views, with proponents and detractors divided mainly along racial and age demographic lines. The commission's study of 19 other universities found that not addressing the attention or controversy surrounding symbols, names and iconography will likely result in additional reputational damage, and continue strife indefinitely.

While it is beneficial for leadership to fully address this two-sided issue, it is important to understand that legislative approval may be required to alter, move or remove the monument.

PERCEPTIONS, SUCCESSES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The university has made efforts to achieve an equitable, diverse and inclusive campus climate for Texas A&M's students, faculty and staff.

PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON CLIMATE AND DIVERSITY

Of note is the work of the President's Council on Climate and Diversity, whose purpose is to provide counsel to the President, Provost and Executive Vice President on methods to attract and retain culturally diverse students, faculty and staff to Texas A&M, as well as to strengthen, sustain and promote the diversity efforts in support of Vision 2020 goals.

DEANS CARE

Another more recent effort, originating from the Council of Deans, is the Deans Committed to Anti-Racism Efforts (Deans CARE). The Deans CARE initiative aims to engage in sustained, systemic, collective action for anti-racism efforts at Texas A&M and beyond, and to assist Texas A&M in making steady progress on its goals, as outlined by university leaders and as articulated by documented metrics.

LOUIS STOKES ALLIANCE FOR MINORITY PARTICIPATION

Schools in the Texas A&M System have had a direct impact on increasing the number of underrepresented minority students who complete baccalaureate and doctoral degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields through the Texas A&M University System Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (TAMUS LSAMP) program.

The TAMUS LSAMP program is a partnership composed of four system schools committed to increasing the number of underrepresented students participating in STEM fields, and it is part of the larger LSAMP program of the National Science Foundation founded in 1990. In its first eight years, it helped increase the number of degrees awarded to minority students by a factor of five (to more than 20,000).



HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER AT MCALLEN

The Higher Education Center at McAllen is part of Texas A&M University and was established to provide higher education opportunities for residents of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. The center sits in Hidalgo County, where only 18% of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

The center received its first students in fall 2018 and is committed to supporting the educational needs of its students by providing top-tier programs to fulfill student career goals, enhancing economic development of the region and producing a skilled workforce.

PERCEPTIONS, THEMES AND ACTION ITEMS

In spring of 2020, in response to reports about racism at Texas A&M, leadership accepted and triaged a collection of proposals from students, faculty and staff containing remedies to concerns stemming from local, regional and national events that have negatively impacted our communities.

Leadership identified common action items and organized proposed remedies by themes. Five key themes were identified comprising a total of 16 action items, such as providing funding and erecting the Matthew Gaines statue by the spring of 2021, revising the script used during student tours, funding identity-specific cultural resource centers on campus, and developing and enforcing a systemwide anti-racism policy for students, faculty and staff.

Each action item was given attention. Some items were completed, while others are in progress. A full list of the themes, action items and assessments, an outline of the actions taken to date, and contact information can be found in the appendix.

Despite Texas A&M's efforts to improve, a perception commonly expressed to the commission is that leadership has not taken any significant actions or made any meaningful changes to support diversity, equity and inclusion. This is despite having received a number of reports, recommendations and suggestions (sometimes supported by the data found in this report) from past committees and commissions that were tasked with a similar charge as this commission. It is viewed that these types of activities, initiatives, commissions and reports lead to inadequate action or follow-up.

When individuals were asked what they wanted to see from Texas A&M right now, there was an overwhelming response for more swift, frequent and effective communication and action about diversity, equity and inclusion.

THREE THEMES COMPRISING THE LISTENING SESSIONS' FINDINGS EMERGED

THEME 1: CAMPUS CAMPAIGN

First, there is a strong desire for an authentic priority campaign centered on the university's actions, commitment and responsibility in creating an inclusive campus climate where all Aggies can thrive. The university has been successful in these types of campaigns before, like Texas A&M's COVID-19 safety awareness campaign called "Don't Pass it Back" or the "Step In. Stand Up." sexual harassment and sexual violence campaign.

Texas A&M has an opportunity to lead university institutions by example through its sustained and demonstrated commitment to achieving diversity, equity and inclusion.

THEME 2: ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ISSUES

Second, there is a strong desire for Texas A&M leaders to actively and authentically acknowledge issues around racism and talk directly about broader diversity, equity and inclusion issues. As one student noted, "I'm so sick of bland statements!"

THEME 3: COMMUNICATING SUCCESS STORIES

Third, there is a strong desire for a central and comprehensive communications and marketing strategy to highlight the many diversity, equity and inclusion success stories at Texas A&M. These include the recent Texas A&M Athletics "Aggie Commitment" initiative that was created in conjunction with student athletes and coaches, and the creation of the \$100 million scholarship fund to address diversity issues and assist first-generation students.





IN CONCLUSION

The commission deviates from the charge to provide findings with a singular recommendation: That this report be only the beginning of the Aggie community's shared responsibility and commitment to continued conversations, forward progress, and renewed commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion for all Aggies.

COMMISSION APPROACH AND PROCESS

The commission utilized a framework of empathy and problem definition. Commission members were asked to set aside their personal assumptions in order to gain insight into others and their needs, using an empathetic, listening posture. Secondly, each group was challenged to rigorously define the problem we are trying to solve through a series of steps.

The commission convened for their first meeting on July 27, 2020, and met regularly through August, September and October. At the outset, four subcommittee groups were formed to conduct the commission's work in the principal areas of mission and values, campus culture and climate, data and policies, and community engagement. The commission conducted its research through a review and study of literature, media and data, including climate surveys and university reporting mechanisms like StopHate and TellSomebody.

Additionally, the commission solicited and received input from more than 450 individual participants through hundreds of hours of discourse, including small-group and one-on-one conversations, as well as open community listening sessions. Input was also received through a commission email, an online form, letters and phone calls.

The commission completed its research on November 6, 2020, completed a draft report on November 30, 2020, and submitted a final report in January 2021.

MEMBERSHIP

The commission was co-chaired by John E. Hurtado '91 and Jimmy Williams '83, and the full list of commission members is shown below.

BOARD OF REGENTS AND DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Elaine Mendoza	'87, Chair, Board of Regents, The Texas A&M University System
Bill Mahomes	'69, Member, Board of Regents, The Texas A&M University System
Ruth Simmons	President, Prairie View A&M University

CURRENT STUDENTS

Chante Anderson	'21, Black Graduate Student Association
Iman Ahmed	'22, Student Senate
Corniyah Bradley	'21, Black Student Alliance Council
Alexandra Campbell	'21, Texas A&M Panhellenic
Tanner Cedrone	'21, Corps of Cadets
Matthew B. Francis Jr.	'22, TAMU NAACP
Ritika Gangarapu	'21, Asian Presidents' Council
Maximiliano "Max" Lopez	'21, Hispanic Presidents' Council
Eric Mendoza	'21, Student Body President
Kellen Mond	'20, Student Athlete, Football
Fawaz Syed	'23, Class Councils, Sophomore Class
Jack Tucker	'21, Texas A&M Foundation Maroon Coats
Uthej Vatipalli	'21, Graduate & Professional Student Government
Sean Waters	'22, International Student Association

FORMER STUDENTS

Randall Cain	'82, Former Chair, 12th Man Foundation, Texas A&M Foundation
Adrian Cornelius	'93, TAMU Black Former Student Network
Erica Davis-Rouse	'95, Intervene
John F. Dickerson	'87, Association of Former Students Board of Directors
David Dunlap	'83, 12th Man Foundation Board of Trustees
Willie T. Langston	'81, Avalon Advisors, LLC

FORMER STUDENTS (CONT.)

Monica Menzel	'93, TAMU Hispanic Network
Stephen Ruth	'92, U.S. Army
Tiana J. Sanford	'04, Attorney and Association of Former Students Class Agent
The Honorable Ingrid M. Warren	'93, Dallas County Judge
Jimmy Williams	'83, Carnegie Mellon University
Shariq Yosufzai	'74, Accordant Advisors

FACULTY AND STAFF

Francis Achike	College of Medicine
Kristina Ballard	College of Engineering
Vernon Camus	'18, University Staff Council Galveston
David Chapman	'67, University Libraries (Retired)
Mary Ann Covey	'92, Counseling & Psychological Services
Leroy Dorsey	College of Liberal Arts
Julie Harlin	'93, Faculty Senate
Cynthia Hernandez	'94, Division of Student Affairs
John Hurtado	'91, College of Engineering
Ben Kalscheur	'13, Office of Sustainability
Serge Razafindrakoto	Division of Information Technology
Dorothy Shippen	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
R.C. Slocum	Office of the President, Former Texas A&M Football Coach
Christine Stanley	'85, College of Education and Human Development
Arthur Watson	'15, Transition Academic Programs
Karen Wooley	College of Science

Other team members included Cady Auckerman '00, who served as the commission project manager, and Grace Tsai '19 and Kevin Johnson '84, who served as graduate student assistants.

I.

INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

“As a state-supported institution, Texas A&M must represent Texas in our faculty, staff and students. But also to make sure that those who come feel welcome, respected and accepted. We must talk honestly and openly...and find a way to acknowledge past transgressions or failures.”

Listening session participant

IA. COMMISSION APPROACH AND PROCESS

On July 13, 2020, Texas A&M University President Michael K. Young announced the membership and charge of a comprehensive Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This 45-person commission of students, faculty, staff and former students was charged to provide findings, not specific recommendations; to evaluate diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at Texas A&M through research and discourse across topics of racial intolerance, historical representations (such as statues), policies and practices.

The commission utilized a framework of empathy and problem definition. Commission members were asked to set aside their personal assumptions in order to gain insight into others and their needs, using an empathetic, listening posture. Secondly, they were challenged to rigorously define the problem we are trying to solve through a series of steps.

The commission convened for its first meeting on July 27, 2020, and met regularly through August, September and October. At the outset, four subcommittee groups were formed to conduct the commission’s work in the principal areas of:

- mission and values
- data and policies
- campus culture and climate
- community engagement

The commission conducted its research through a study of literature, media and data, including climate surveys and university reporting mechanisms like StopHate and TellSomebody.

Additionally, the commission solicited and received input from more than 450 individual participants through hundreds of hours of discourse, including small-group and one-on-one conversations, and open community listening sessions.

Input was also received through a commission email, an online form, letters and phone calls. The commission completed its research on November 6, 2020, and completed its draft report on November 30, 2020.

The primary focus of this effort centered on the College Station campus, while realizing that Texas A&M branch campuses such as Galveston, McAllen and Qatar and statewide professional schools in Dallas, Houston and beyond have their own unique campus cultures and needs that may not be directly reflected in this report.

“Empathy is ... communicating that incredibly healing message of ‘you’re not alone.’”

Dr. Brené Brown

IB. DEFINING A LAND-GRANT INSTITUTION

“The land-grant university system is being built on behalf of the people, who have invested in these public universities their hopes, their support, and their confidence.”

President Abraham Lincoln, 1862

Texas A&M University (originally named the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas) was the state’s first public institution of higher education. It was organized by the state legislature in 1871 under the provisions of the Morrill Land-Grant College Act of 1862. The first students were enrolled in 1876. The Morrill Act donated public lands to the states and territories to create colleges for teaching agriculture, “the mechanic arts,” military tactics, science and classical studies to the nation’s working-class citizens.

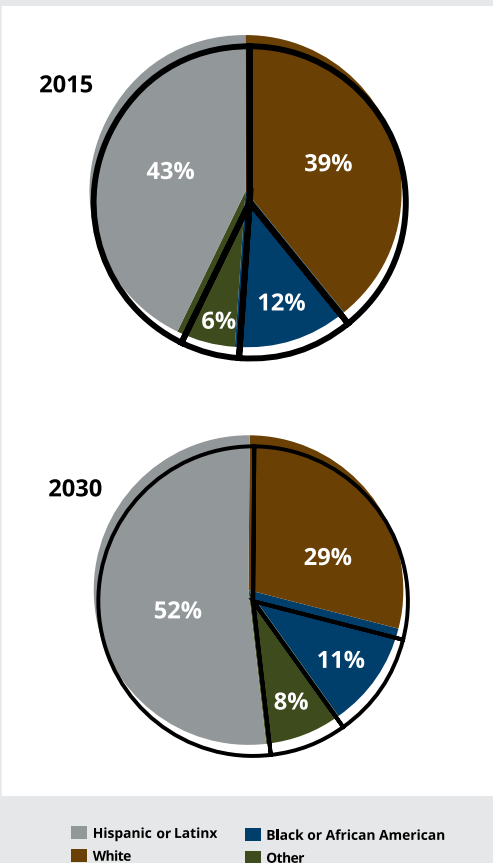
Admission at Texas A&M was initially limited to White (including White Hispanic and Latinx) males, and all students were required to participate in military training. Nearly a century after its establishment, Texas A&M opened its doors to African Americans, began admitting women and changed its name to Texas A&M University.

Today, land-grant institutions share a mission to serve all qualified students regardless of class, ethnicity, race or gender while aiding their respective states’ citizens through teaching, research, extension and public service. As such, the student bodies at land-grant institutions should reflect each state’s demographics.



2015-2030 TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION PLAN

FIGURE 1. Race/ethnicity distribution of projected Texas population, ages 25-34.



“Texas has become increasingly engaged in a global economy dependent on skilled and knowledgeable workers. Most of those workers must come from higher education. Although Texas is improving at increasing college completions for students from groups that traditionally have not earned certificates or degrees in large numbers, the state has not improved quickly or broadly enough to keep up with changes in demographics. Completions in higher education in Texas must reflect the population as a whole.”

Given that the workforce will be more diverse in the future (Figure 1), the challenge is clear: Students of all backgrounds must complete certificates or degrees in larger numbers if the 25- to 34-year-old workforce of Texas is to be globally competitive in 2030. Failure to educate students of all backgrounds in larger numbers will result in lower incomes and a lower percentage of educated Texans in 2030 than in 2015. Those losses will spell a decline in the economic future of Texas and the opportunities available to its people. Without bold action, Texas faces a future of diminished incomes, opportunities, and resources.”

<https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agency-publication/miscellaneous/60x30tx-strategic-plan-for-higher-education/>

Texas A&M has strived to create a more welcoming and diverse campus through its university mission, Vision 2020, diversity plan and 2020-2025 strategic plan. DEI drives excellence, and to deprive students of a diverse learning environment amounts to shortchanging them in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to excel in the emerging national and global workplace. Additionally, the same goes for our faculty and staff in traditionally marginalized groups, who will be more successful in an environment where there is a strong sense of belonging.

The university recognizes that fulfilling the land-grant mission is not to simply “check the box” of its obligation as a land-grant institution, but that there is a moral and ethical imperative to do this.

One example of Texas A&M’s statewide outreach is the Higher Education Center at McAllen. The center is part of Texas A&M University and was established to provide higher education opportunities for residents of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. The center received its first students in fall 2018 and is committed to supporting the educational needs of its students by providing top-tier programs to fulfill student career goals, enhancing economic development of the region and producing a skilled workforce.

The center sits in Hidalgo County, which is 91% Hispanic or Latinx. Only 18% of residents in Hidalgo County have a bachelor's degree or higher, whereas the state percentage is 29%. Some 30% of the county's population lives in poverty, whereas the state percentage is 13.4%.

Texas A&M is not immune from the racism, sexism, ableism, religious intolerance and homophobia that exists in our country and state. Evidence collected from climate surveys, campus reporting mechanisms (e.g., StopHate, TellSomebody, etc.), and individual reports indicates that students, faculty and staff from marginalized communities are the recipients of speech and behaviors by members of the Aggie community that contribute to feelings of exclusion and isolation and create a less optimal learning and working environment at Texas A&M.

Our institutional history of exclusion and lack of public DEI acknowledgements fuels the perception that Texas A&M attracts, and at times condones, this racist and intolerant culture (e.g., Keep College Station Normal, Highway 6 runs both ways, #RacismAtTAMUFeelsLike, #HateistheHiddenCoreValue, #beingapocattamu).

"As an African American former student, I want to see a legitimate attempt to try to create an opportunity to mirror the diversity of the state of Texas. Especially as it relates to African Americans... that would mean a lot to me."

Former student



"To effectively address racism in your organization, it's important to first build consensus around whether there is a problem (most likely, there is) and, if so, what it is and where it comes from.

If many of your employees do not believe that racism against people of color exists in the organization, or if feedback is rising through various communication channels showing that Whites feel that they are the real victims of discrimination, then diversity initiatives will be perceived as the problem, not the solution.

This is one of the reasons such initiatives are frequently met with resentment and resistance, often by mid-level managers. Beliefs, not reality, are what determine how employees respond to efforts taken to increase equity. So, the first step is getting everyone on the same page as to what the reality is and why it is a problem for the organization."

[Robert Livingston, Harvard Business Review, Sept/Oct. 2020 "How to Promote Racial Equity in the Workplace".](#)

IB. BENCHMARKING COMPOSITIONAL DIVERSITY

Compositional diversity is the numerical and proportional representation of diverse groups on campus, and is a key factor in enhancing an institution's campus climate. Diversifying the students, faculty and staff is the first step that should be taken to develop an environment that fosters positive cross-racial interactions.¹

For several years, Texas A&M has aimed to recruit and retain historically marginalized students, faculty and staff at levels that mirror the demographics of the state of Texas. Although we have made great strides, we still struggle to meet demographic goals across all groups.

The commission's benchmarking efforts suggest that Texas A&M has further opportunities to more closely match the demographics of Texas and strategically address our gap behind comparable universities in minority enrollment and retention.

A sample size of 111 universities consisting of Association of American Universities (AAU), land-grant universities (excluding tribal and Historically Black Universities [HBU]), Southeastern Conference (SEC) universities, Big 12 Conference institutions, military universities that also admit civilians, and comparable Texas universities were included in this analysis, which can be found in the appendix.

While various institutional categories were included in this sample size of 111 schools, the AAU institutions (n=63) and land-grant institutions (excluding HBU and tribal schools) (n=59) were primarily used to benchmark Texas A&M because 1) AAU schools are Tier-1 leading research universities in North America that are comparable academically, and 2) land-grant institutions share the common goal of serving the population of the state in which they are located and therefore the obligation to reflect state ethnic demographics.

Demographic data for each of the universities came from the fall 2019 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) gathered by the National Center for Education Statistics and the 2021 *U.S. News & World Report* on Campus Ethnic Diversity. Demographic data for each state were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau.

THE FINDINGS ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW:

1. Compared to other AAU schools, Texas A&M's Hispanic and Latinx enrollment percentage is very high and marks the top of the 4th quartile. (Figure 2)
2. Texas A&M's White enrollment percentage is also above average at the 3rd quartile compared to other AAU institutions. (Figure 2)
3. Among the AAU institutions, both Asian and Black and African American enrollment percentages lag behind other universities in this category, falling at or below the 1st quartile. (Figure 2)
4. Compared to other land-grant institutions, Texas A&M is approximately average in the Asian, Black and African American, and White enrollment percentages. (Figure 3)
5. The Hispanic and Latinx enrollment percentages at Texas A&M is one of the highest among land-grant institutions. (Figure 3)
6. Texas A&M's enrollment rate for Hispanic and/or Latinx and Black and/or African American percentages are 14.7% and 9.9% below Texas's demographic for each ethnic group respectively (Figure 4)

1. Hurtado, S., Maestas, R., Hill, L., Wathington, H., Meador, E.W. 1998. *Perspectives on the Climate for Diversity: Findings and Suggested Recommendations for the Texas A&M University Campus*. Ann Arbor: Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education.

7. In relation to state demographics, the Hispanic and Latinx enrollment rate at Texas A&M is far below average and a statistical outlier compared to other land-grant institutions. (Figure 4)
8. In relation to state demographics, the Black and African American enrollment rate at Texas A&M is at the cutoff between the first and second quartile compared to other land-grant schools. (Figure 4)
9. Texas A&M has 17.8% more White students enrolled compared to the state demographics for this ethnic group. (Figure 4)
10. Texas A&M ranks second highest in the percentage of White students enrolled compared to state demographics among the 59 land-grant institutions. (Figure 4)
11. Compared to AAU schools, Texas A&M's American Indian and Alaskan, Asian, Black and African American, and Hispanic and Latinx retention rates are at or below the first quartile. (Figure 5)
12. Texas A&M has a near-equal or higher retention rate than the average retention rates for land-grant schools in all ethnic categories. (Figure 6)
13. Texas A&M's diversity index is slightly above average among the entire pool of 111 comparable schools (Figure 7)
14. Texas A&M has the third-highest diversity index ranking among the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the third-highest diversity index ranking among the Big 12 Universities. (Figures 8 and 9)

The data show that compared to other AAU institutions, Texas A&M admits greater than average Hispanic and Latinx and White groups but is admitting below average in the Asian and Black and African American categories (Figure 2). When benchmarked against land-grant institutions, Texas A&M's enrollment percentages for all groups are approximately average except for Hispanic and Latinx enrollment, which is high. (Figure 3)

The enrollment percentages of Texas A&M compared to land-grant institutions alone may make it seem like we are reaching our goal. However, when the land-grant mission of matching state demographics is taken into account and is used as a part of the benchmark, Texas A&M falls behind many of its peers — particularly in the Hispanic and Latinx and Black and African American groups, which are much lower than average. (Figure 4) Meanwhile, Texas A&M is proportionally enrolling more White students compared to both Texas state demographics and other land-grant schools.

To put it in greater context, Texas A&M is behind, particularly in terms of the minority enrollment percentages compared to the state demographics, because Texas is a prodigiously diverse state. For example, Texas has a 39.7% Hispanic and Latinx population, and many states such as Vermont (2%), Maine (1.8%) and West Virginia (1.7%), among others, have far smaller Hispanic and Latinx populations. The same can be said for the Black and African American population in Texas that currently sits at 12.9%, which is much higher compared to Wyoming (1.3%), Idaho (0.9%) and Montana (0.6%). Even if universities in such states admit no minorities in either of these groups, their ranking would still be better than Texas A&M's given that the difference would produce values closer to zero.

In real numbers, Texas A&M admits more minority students than many of the comparison universities. This is partly due to Texas A&M's extensive growth since 1999 that led to a 51% increase by 2019. However, Texas A&M has room for improvement. Regardless of the different ways of organizing the data, White students are still being enrolled either at approximately average or greater than average rates, while Black and African American students are being enrolled at approximately average or below average rates in all the enrollment analyses.

Over the past five years, the percentage of Black and/or African American students admitted to Texas A&M who eventually enroll (yield rate) hovers between 41-44%. Other minority groups show similar patterns (41-47% over the past 5 years) in contrast to White students who decided to enroll at rates of 57-60% in the same time period. In commission interviews, administration officials pointed to several possible causes, including other schools offering more competitive scholarships and that Texas A&M is simply not the first-choice school for some.

“As a current and future leader of international teams, I emphasize the importance of DEI in creating a successful environment. We do a disservice to our current and future students if we do not provide this as part of the ‘other education.’ ”

Former student, currently at Shell Oil

The need for improvement is further emphasized when viewing the retention rates. Texas A&M’s retention rates for American Indian and/or Alaskan, Asian, Black and/or African American and Hispanic and/or Latinx students are at or below the first quartile when compared to other AAU institutions. (Figure 5)



Texas A&M’s diversity index among all 111 schools and retention rates in all ethnic categories compared to land-grant schools are slightly above average. (Figures 6 and 7) Furthermore, among the SEC and Big 12 schools, Texas A&M is not lagging behind in diversity. (Figures 8 and 9)

Despite having passable numbers in some of our benchmarks, Aggies do not just aim to be average, or even above average — we aim for Excellence. By further increasing minority enrollment and retention percentages, the university will have greater competitive advantage.

If we want to prepare our graduates to live, work and lead in a global community, we must teach them to work with individuals, ideas and concepts that are diverse.

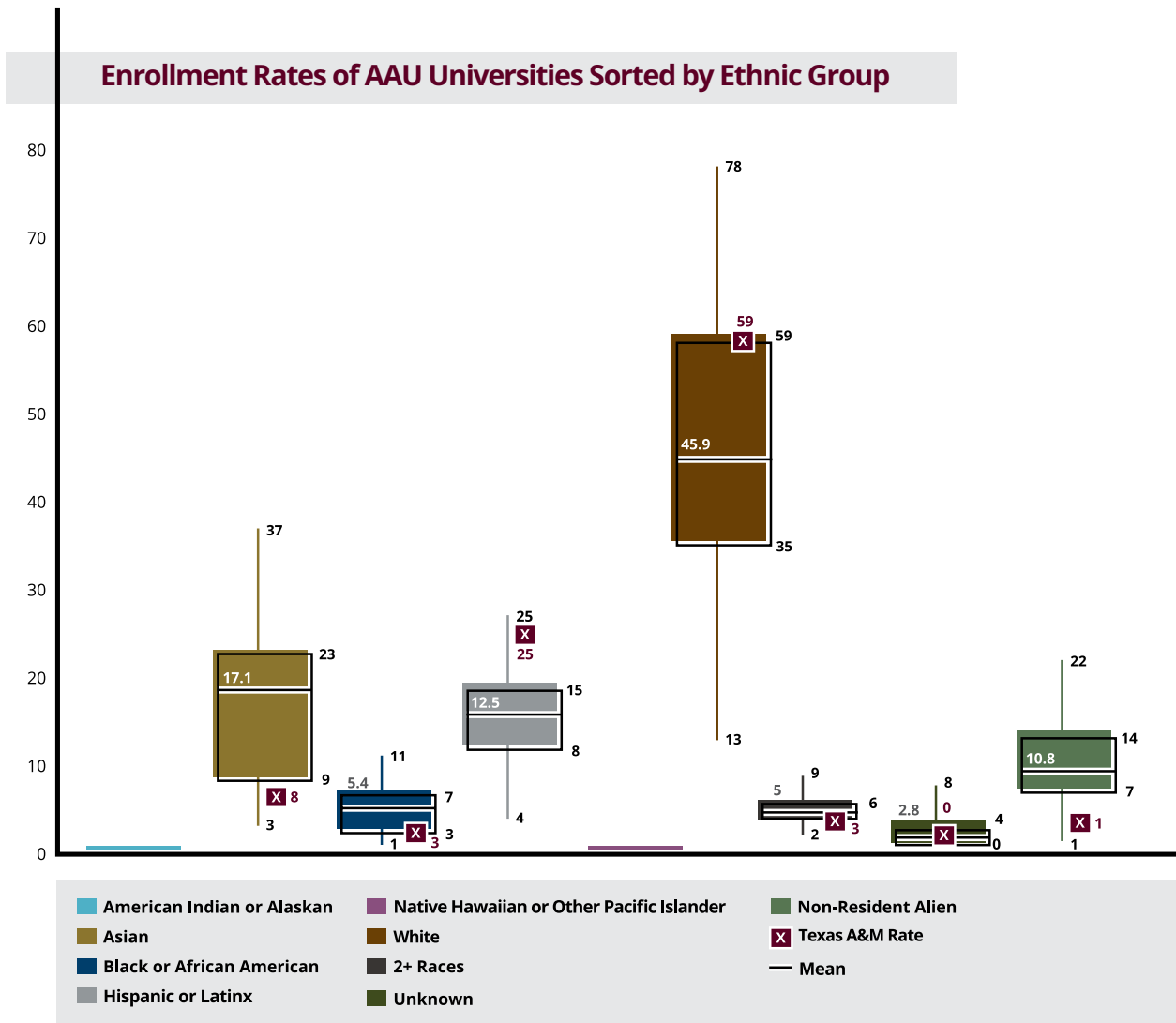


Figure 2: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s enrollment rates against other AAU institutions (n=63). The percentages were gathered from IPEDS, fall 2019 data.

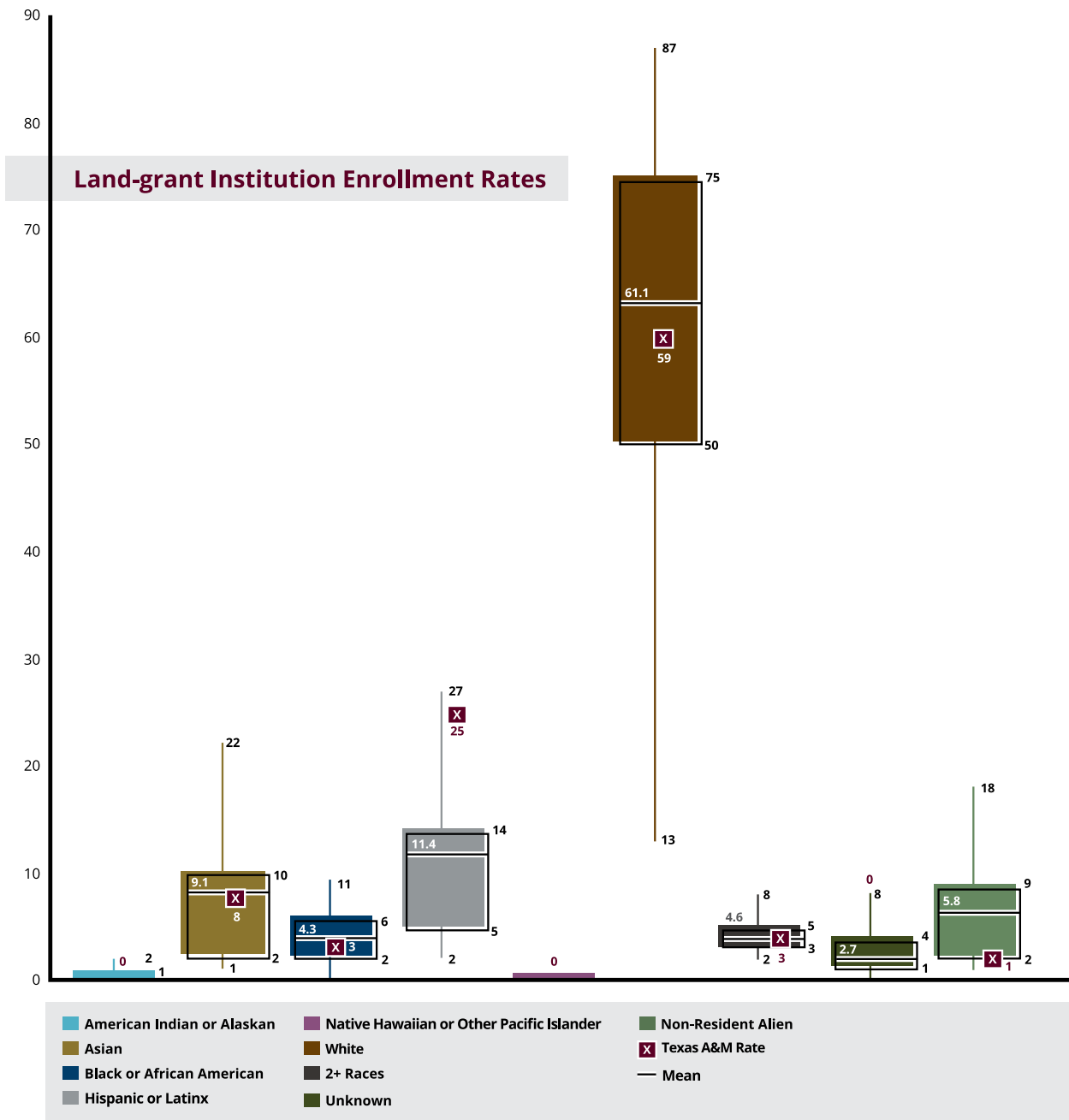


Figure 3: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s enrollment rates against other land-grant institutions (n=59). The percentages were gathered from IPEDS, fall 2019 data.

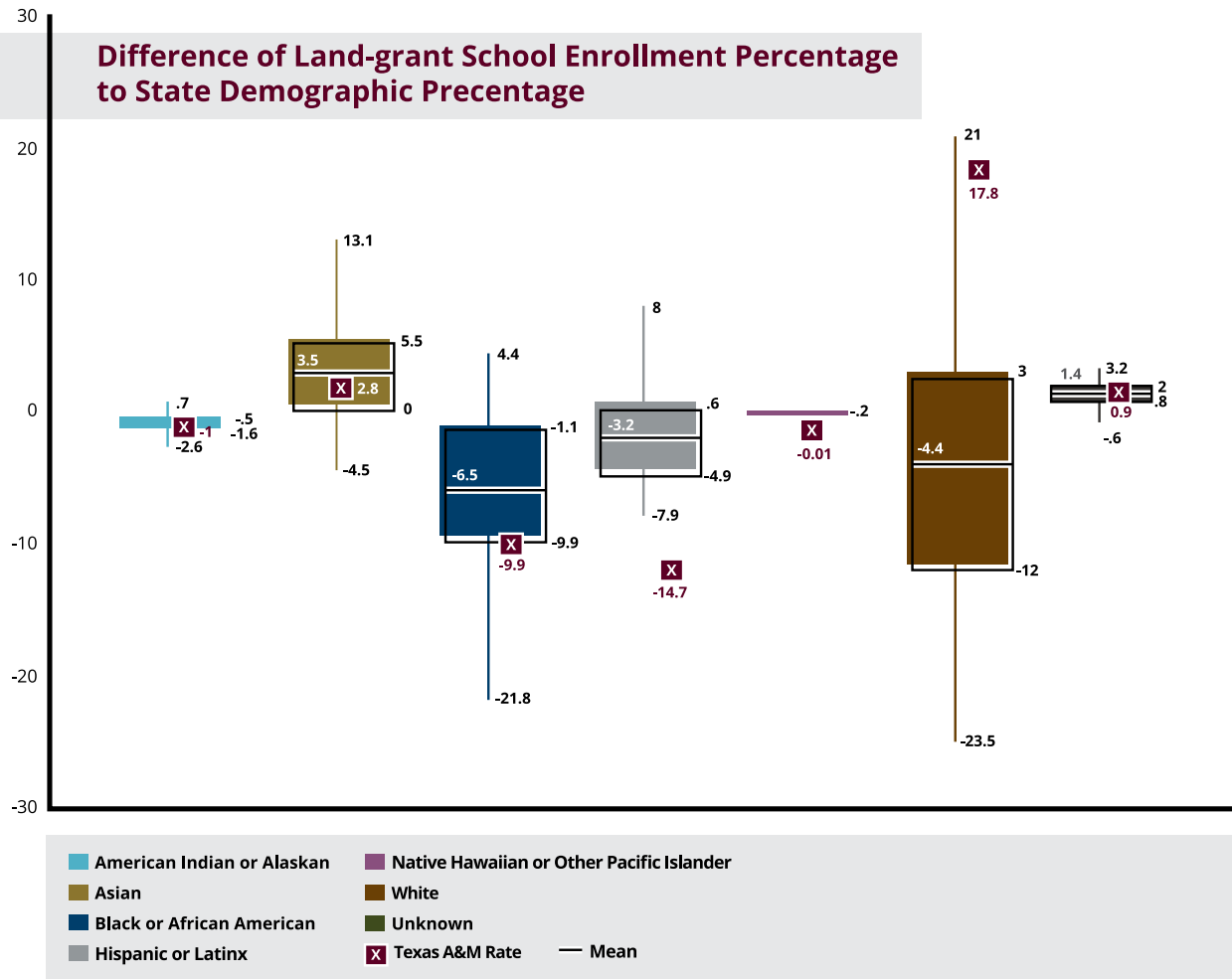


Figure 4: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s enrollment rates against land-grant universities (excluding HBU and tribal schools) (n=59). This was done by subtracting the percentage of enrolled undergraduate students in each ethnic group gathered from fall 2019 IPEDS data, and each school’s respective state’s demographics from the U.S. Census Bureau. The closer this value is to zero, the better the school reflects its state demographics.

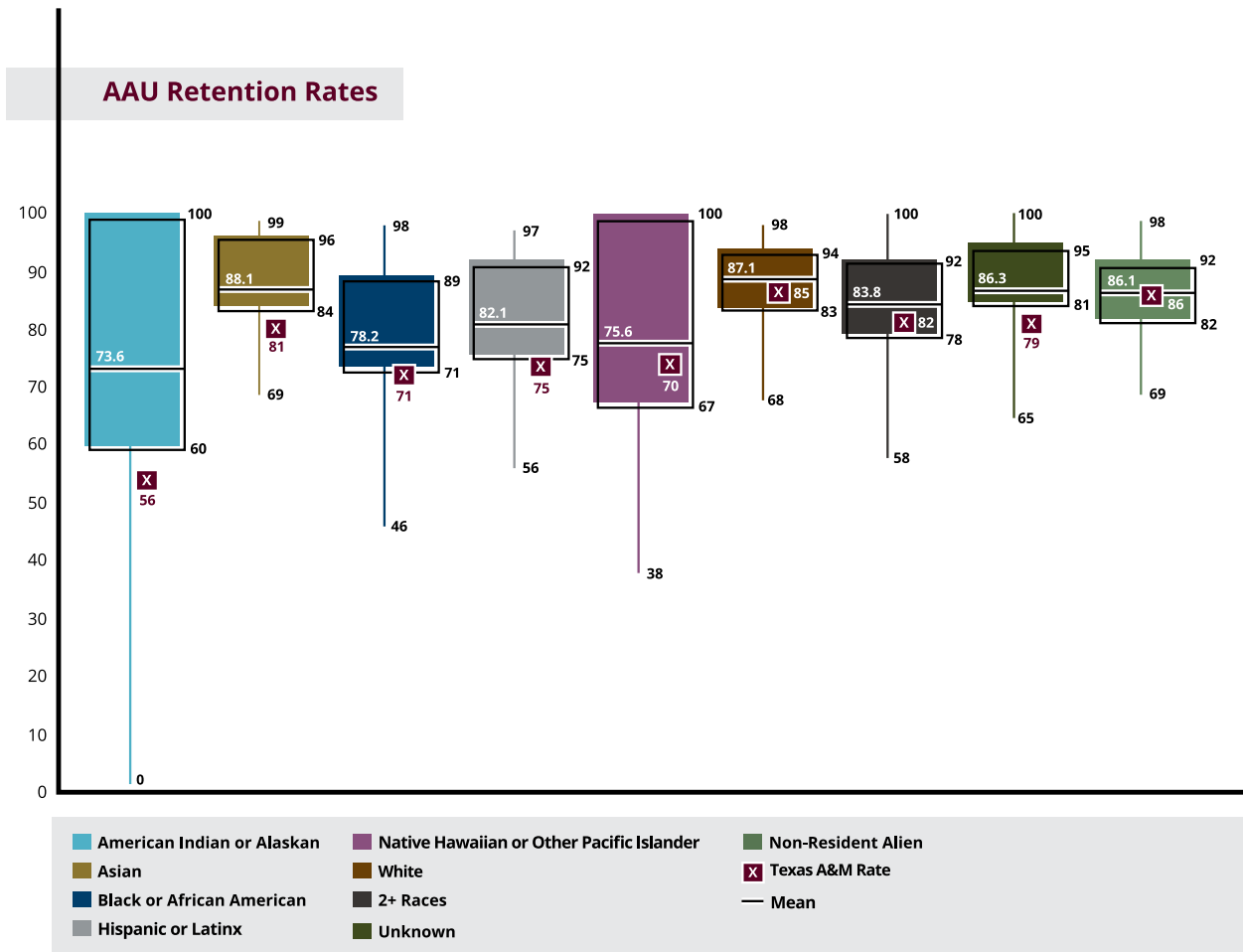


Figure 5: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s retention rates against AAU institutions (n=63) gathered from the 6-Year Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity from IPEDS, fall 2019.

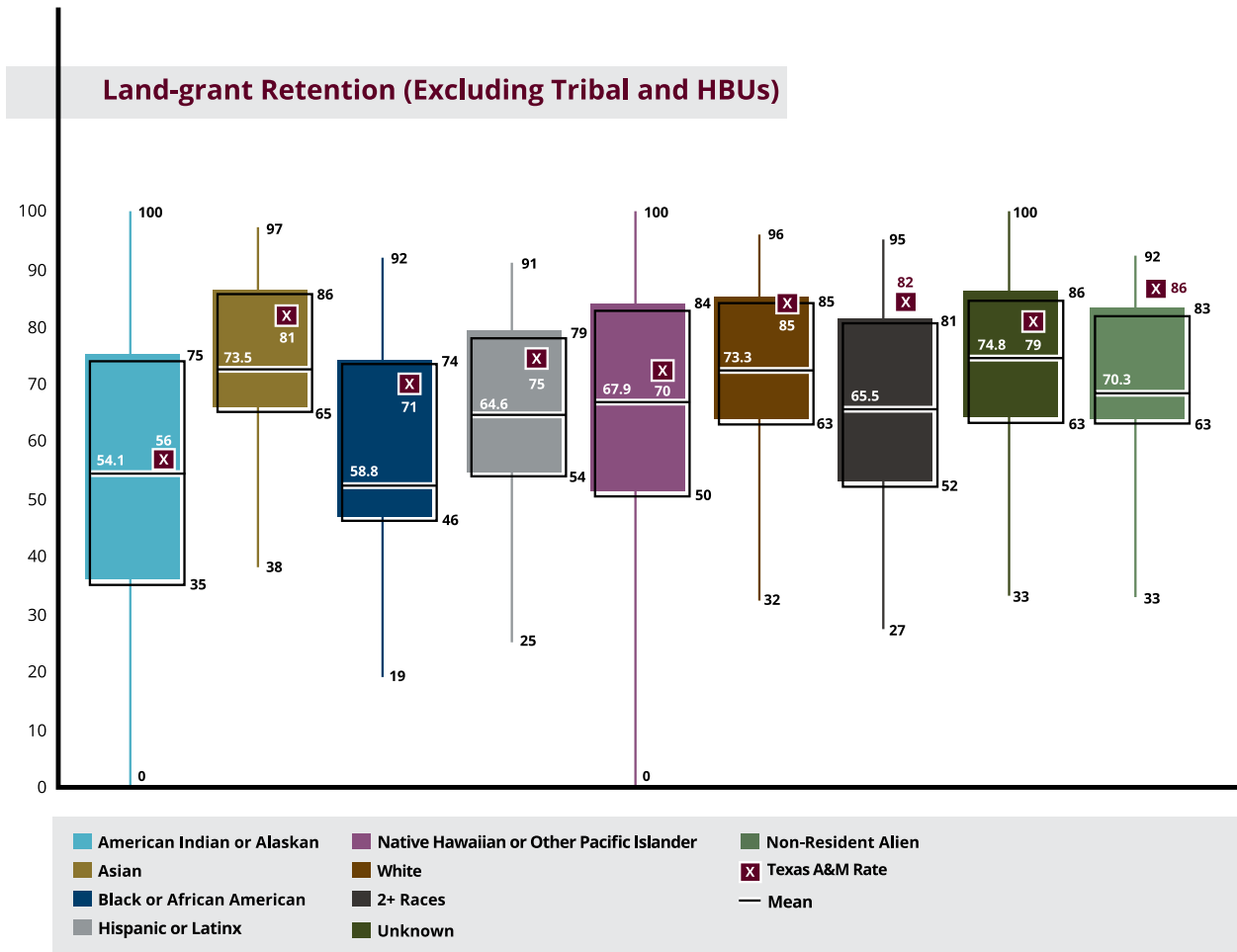


Figure 6: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s retention rates against land-grant institutions (excluding HBU and tribal schools) (n=59) gathered from the 6-Year Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity from IPEDS, fall 2019.

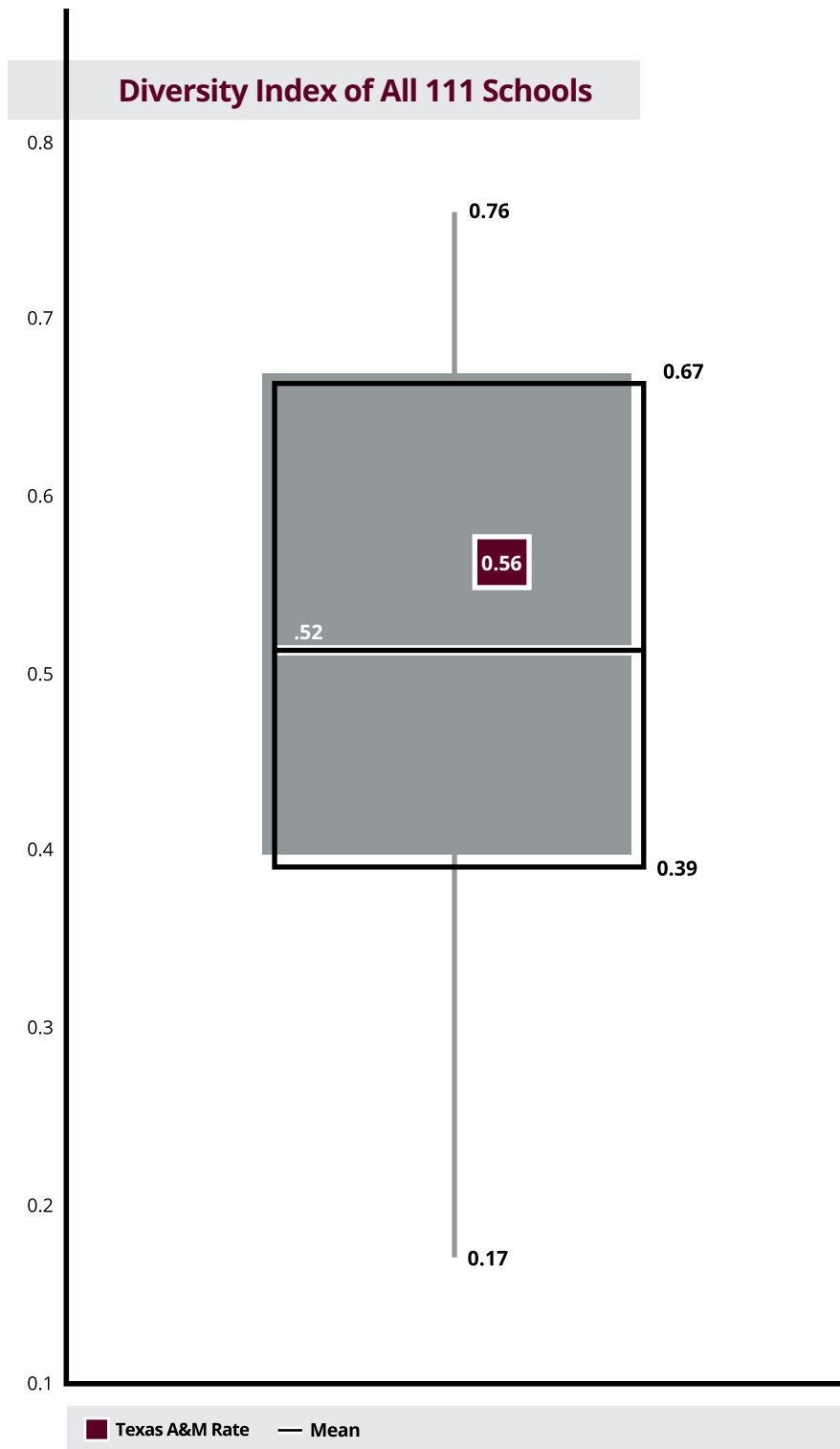


Figure 7: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s diversity index (0.56) against all universities on the list of comparable schools (n=111). This index measures the probability that any two individuals chosen at random from a school are of different ethnicity. The index ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating there is no diversity (every person on campus is the same) and 1 indicating that the entire population is heterogeneous (everyone on campus is different).

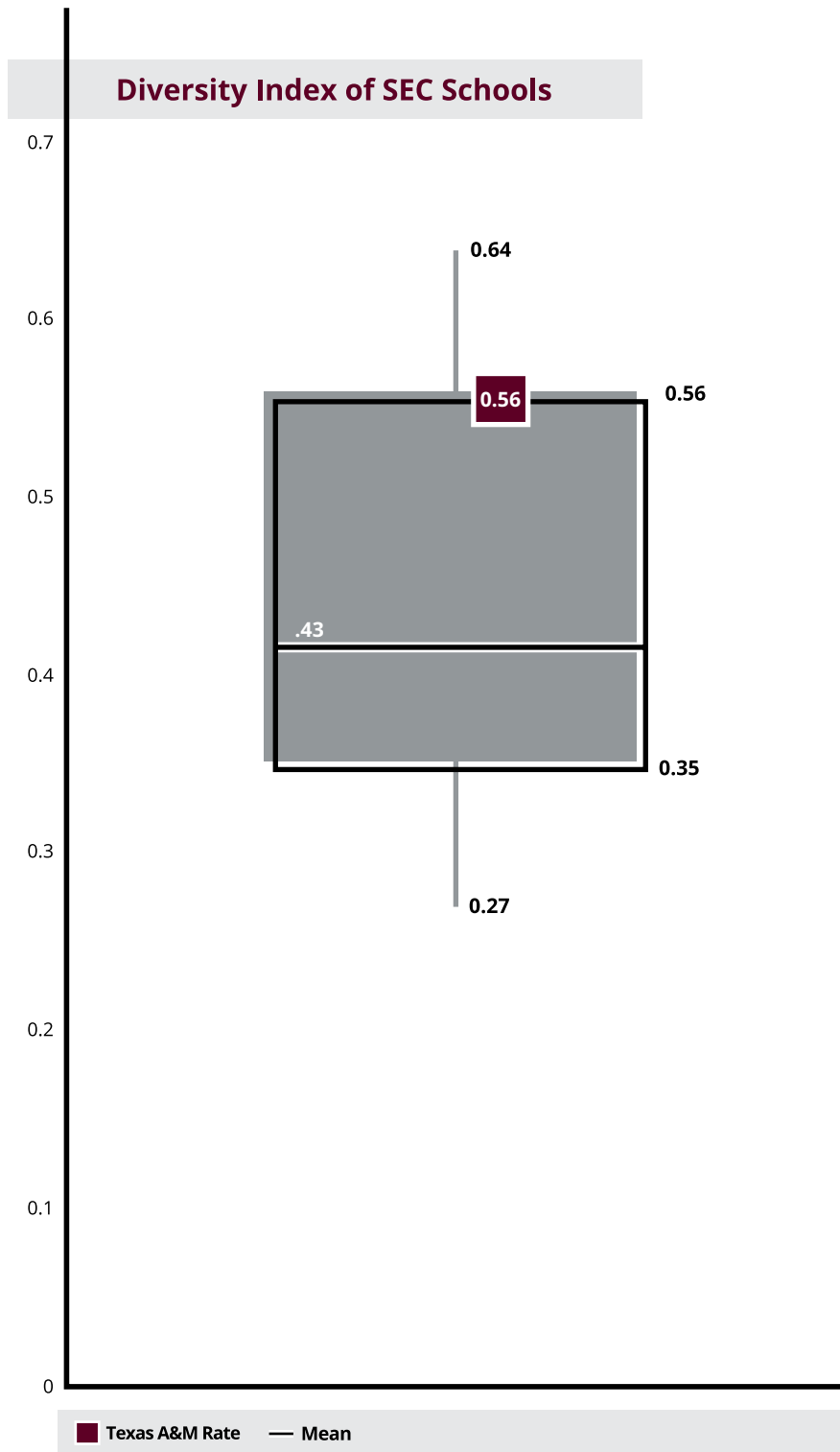


Figure 8: This benchmarks Texas A&M's diversity index (0.56) against Southeastern Conference (SEC) universities (n=14). This index measures the probability that any two individuals chosen at random from a school are of different ethnicity. The index ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating there is no diversity (every person on campus is the same) and 1 indicating that the entire population is heterogeneous (everyone on campus is different).

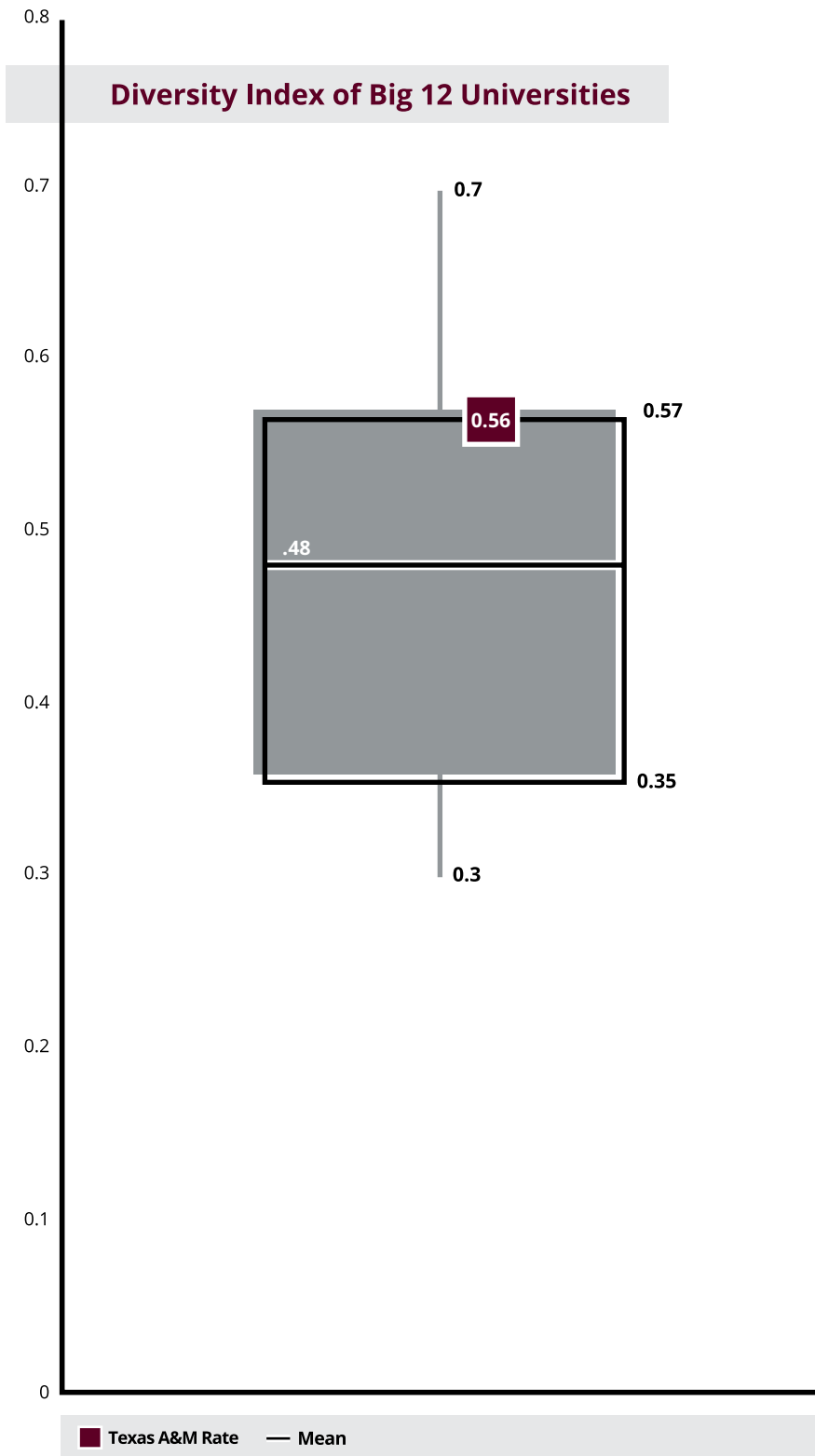


Figure 9: This benchmarks Texas A&M’s diversity index (0.56) against Big 12 universities, with the exclusion of West Virginia University* whose index was not listed (n=11). This index measures the probability that any two individuals chosen at random from a school are of different ethnicity. The index ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating there is no diversity (every person on campus is the same) and 1 indicating that the entire population is heterogeneous (everyone on campus is different).

II.

MISSION AND VALUES

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Pride, love and desire for Texas A&M to succeed were central to all commission discussions, even among those who had significant criticisms. Even the most disparate voices found common ground in the Texas A&M Core Values and Mission.

“Too often, the lived reality of students, faculty and staff from historically underrepresented and excluded groups contrasts starkly with Texas A&M’s Core Values.”

Texas A&M State of Diversity 2020 Report

IIA. TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY GUIDING STATEMENTS

Currently, Texas A&M has an official Mission Statement, a Purpose Statement, a Code of Honor and a set of six Core Values.

MISSION STATEMENT:

“Texas A&M University is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields. Its mission of providing the highest quality undergraduate and graduate programs is inseparable from its mission of developing new understandings through research and creativity. It prepares students to assume roles in leadership, responsibility and service to society.

Texas A&M assumes as its historic trust the maintenance of freedom of inquiry and an intellectual environment nurturing the human mind and spirit. It welcomes and seeks to serve persons of all racial, ethnic and geographic groups as it addresses the needs of an increasingly diverse population and a global economy. In the 21st century, Texas A&M University seeks to assume a place of preeminence among public universities while respecting its history and traditions.”

<https://www.tamu.edu/statements/mission.html>

All Texas higher education institution mission statements must be reviewed and approved first by the Board of Regents and then by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This requirement tends to make them too broad and all-encompassing to be truly useful institutional guideposts.

As a land-grant institution, Texas A&M includes in the Mission Statement language “welcoming and serving persons of all racial, ethnic and geographic groups as it addresses the needs of an increasingly diverse population and a global economy.” This sentiment is appropriate, but Texas A&M’s Mission Statement is a combination of vision, mission and action statements. This may be necessary to meet state of Texas requirements, but does not assist the university in easily communicating its mission.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PURPOSE STATEMENT:

"To develop leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good."

<https://www.tamu.edu/about/coreValues.html>

Beyond a mention on official Texas A&M websites, the Purpose Statement is often paired with discussion of the Core Values, but overall appears infrequently and almost as an afterthought.

AGGIE CODE OF HONOR:

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

TAMU Student Rules: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/aggiecode/>

The Aggie Code of Honor is an effort to unify the aims of all Texas A&M men and women toward a high code of ethics and personal dignity. For most, living under this code will be no problem, as it asks nothing of a person that is beyond reason. It only calls for honesty and integrity, characteristics that Aggies have always exemplified. The Aggie Code of Honor functions as a symbol to all Aggies, promoting understanding and loyalty to truth and confidence in each other.

The Code of Honor is used in reference to academic integrity and to inform and serve as the primary academic dishonesty rule (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, etc.). The Aggie Honor office enforces the code, and it has a well-defined communications strategy and set of rules.

TEXAS A&M CORE VALUES:

"During 2005, Texas A&M, under the leadership of the then-university president Dr. Robert Gates, conducted a study of the perceived 'brand' and value of the university; what it means to be an Aggie, and what Texas A&M means to its many different and diverse constituencies. In short, it was an exercise to define a 'core' set of values — to put words on that 'spirit can ne'er be told.' Six words ascended into a cultural doctrine for current and former students, friends, faculty and staff: Loyalty, Integrity, Excellence, Leadership, Selfless Service and Respect."

From The Association of Former Students:

<https://www.aggienetwork.com/theassociation/corevalues.aspx>

Since their initial creation, the six Core Values have permeated internal and external messaging and marketing. A few examples include the creation of the "RELLIS" acronym, the Texas A&M RELLIS Campus, monuments around the Association of Former Students, banners, signage and frequent references around Texas A&M.

However, the interpretation of these values and associated actions is left to the individual to decide. Through commission discussions and research, it became clear that the Aggie Core Values, especially Respect, are not defined, understood, adopted or uniformly lived by the stakeholders of the Aggie family, including faculty, staff, students and former students.

The absence of any one Core Value undermines the Core Values as a whole. The failure to show Respect affects the fulfillment of the other five Core Values. Top-down leadership from stakeholders and student organizations is an effective means to inculcate the Core Values on a campus as large and diverse as Texas A&M. To create change and lasting effect, Aggie Core Values must be lived out daily by all stakeholders.

"I want every Aggie to have the same positive experience I had as a student at Texas A&M... but that's not realistic, especially if the university isn't committed to listening to the concerns of students of color currently on campus.

Many former students have voiced their concerns that making Aggieland more inclusive would tarnish our beloved traditions, but I would argue that inclusivity is the foundation of our treasured traditions.

It's time to listen and move forward, while holding true to what makes us all Aggies."

Listening session participant

The Core Value of Excellence is not fully reflected in the graduation rate for Black and African American students, which is lower in comparison to our peer institutions. The values are sometimes not role modeled because they have not been adequately communicated or taken on board by all students, faculty, staff and former students. The issue is exacerbated by social media and easy access to broad media platforms where hate-filled messages can be quickly broadcast.

The Aggie experience should be broadly positive for all students. However, behaviors by some create an environment that is sometimes inconsistent with the Aggie Core Values. Some underrepresented minority groups have experiences that are disproportionately negative relative to the experiences of the majority group. This can impact the sense of belonging, fulfillment and willingness to serve the university throughout the Aggie life cycle (including future, current and former students).

As one participant noted, "Alumni and counter-protestors at BLM [Black Lives Matter] protests on campus tend to use Aggie Traditions and Aggie Values as grounds for not making changes to campus to make it more inclusive for minority students. A&M should clarify these values, and should publicly condemn comments that use keeping traditions as grounds for not engaging in inclusive, overdue change. This would at least make minority students feel more supported by the administration!"

A clear set of guiding statements paired with strong and defined Core Values provides a standard for accountability. There are several excellent examples of guiding statements from the corporate world that Texas A&M may consider as a model, such as the Chevron Way, The Southwest Airlines Way and Superior Energy core values (see appendix for examples).

The Texas A&M Human Resources and Organizational Development division also recently went through a division-wide exercise to discuss and define the A&M Core Values specifically for their unit.¹

1. <https://employees.tamu.edu/about/>



IMPLEMENTING CORE VALUES AT



"We created a series of values and statements for our company. We then launched a massive, multi-year training effort on the Core Values.

Over the course of several years, our culture emerged, and Shared Core Values became the backbone of that culture. The key to all of this was tone from the top, clear understanding, not of words, but content, and most importantly ongoing training and education.

My experience at my own company leads me to believe that we should be thinking of opportunities to initiate education and training on our Aggie Core Values for everyone on our campus. In particular, the value of Respect. I believe that this value is the center point of diversity, equity and inclusion."

Dave Dunlap '83, President and CEO



IIB. BENCHMARK: HIGHER EDUCATION GUIDING STATEMENTS

The commission benchmarked 19 universities to consider how DEI was reflected in their guiding statements.

- Twelve universities have DEI mentioned as a value or defined in the values
- Five universities do not have official core values stated but have guiding principles (e.g., “principles of community,” “statement of integrity,” “guiding principles”) that include DEI
- Two universities (University of North Carolina and University of Mississippi) do not have core values or guiding principles but have DEI in their mission statement.²

The first commonality among many of these universities is that those that list their core values either have DEI as a core value, or include mention of DEI in the definition of a core value. For example, at Princeton University, “Fairness is a core value of the University. Students, staff and faculty applicants of all backgrounds should have an equal opportunity to earn a position at Princeton, and then contribute and succeed in their future endeavors.”³

At the University of Texas at Austin, a core value is Individual Opportunity, defined as “Many options, diverse people and ideas, one university,” and “diverse” in the quote is linked to their DEI website.⁴

Texas A&M mentions DEI in its mission statement, but not in its Core Values (and does not have a list of guiding principles). Furthermore, Texas A&M does not explicitly define the core values, unlike some of the other universities. UC Berkeley provides detailed descriptions and Penn State has clear definitions, and examples of what the value looks like.⁵

Although DEI is not specifically mentioned in the core values, Texas A&M states in its mission statement that “It welcomes and seeks to serve persons of all racial, ethnic and geographic groups as it addresses the needs of an increasingly diverse population and a global economy.” However, in listening sessions, most A&M stakeholders did not know the Mission Statement, which leaves a gap in effectively communicating DEI as a priority at Texas A&M.



2. Note that having DEI mentioned is not mutually exclusive in the core values, mission statements, guiding principles or the different values in various universities or colleges. Those that tended to mention DEI as a core value tended to have it in the university mission and guiding principles if they have such statements. The categories listed are meant to indicate where DEI is not present.

3. <https://inclusive.princeton.edu/about/our-commitment-diversity>

4. <https://www.utexas.edu/about/mission-and-values>

5. <https://universityethics.psu.edu/penn-state-values>
<https://strategicplan.berkeley.edu/guiding-values-and-principles/>

	Core Values Mention DEI	Mission Mentions DEI	Guiding Principles/ Philosophy Mention DEI
Georgia Tech	■		
Ohio State	■	■	
Penn State	■	■	■
Princeton University	■		
Purdue			■
Rice University	■	■	
Texas A&M University		■	
University of California Berkeley	■		■
University of California Davis	■		■
University of California Los Angeles	■	■	■
University of California San Diego		■	■
University of Florida	■	■	
University of Illinois	■		■
University of Michigan			■
University of Minnesota		■	■
University of Mississippi		■	
University of North Carolina		■	
University of Texas Austin	■		
University of Wisconsin		■	■
Yale University	■	■	

Recently, three schools grappled with redefining or asserting their core values: The University of Florida, Georgia Tech and Pennsylvania State University. The University of Florida set its vision and strategic plan in 2015 for the next decade under which the UF Values Council was established to “document the core values of the University. These values are intended to address not just who we are, but who we want to be.”⁶ The first of seven aspirational goals is to foster a community of people with “diverse experiences and backgrounds” under which there are four main objectives, including increased diversity, inclusion, interdisciplinary education and globalization on campus.



In 2019, Georgia Tech created a working group to assess and identify the Institute’s core values after feedback from the Ethical Culture Indicator Survey indicated there was a need for the community to know the core values and act in accordance with them.⁷ The university is currently in the process of launching a new 10-year strategic plan (scheduled to launch fall 2020) that is titled “Vision 2030: Inclusive Innovation for a Better Future.”⁸

Under this new vision is a list of values (integrity, respect, community, accountability and adaptability) for the university, including new foundational principles.⁹ The third principle is titled “We thrive on diversity” covering diversity and inclusion in the community. The website on university values has not yet been updated and shows the outdated values.

6. <https://president.ufl.edu/initiatives/uf-values-council/>

7. <https://www.news.gatech.edu/2019/04/29/institute-recommends-core-values>

8. <https://president.gatech.edu/vision-values-and-beliefs>

9. <https://strategicplan.gatech.edu/values>

The working group is expected to make the core values an integral part of the campus conversation and outline ways to increase awareness of the values among faculty, staff and students, including a demonstration of the core values in the annual performance evaluation for employees. Future releases on how Georgia Tech will remain accountable to this commitment may provide guidance for Texas A&M.

Finally, Pennsylvania State University provides an example of restructuring of core values and accountability. In 2013, the university conducted the Values and Culture Survey. Key findings indicated that the university faced several challenges related to “community members’ comfort with reporting wrongdoing — including distrust of current processes, experiences with retaliation and unfamiliarity with available resources.”¹⁰ This launched an initiative to develop a unified statement of core values that was created from feedback of students, faculty and staff at all campus locations.¹¹

Various DEI and other culture and climate issues similar to what occurred at Penn State and other universities were brought up during Texas A&M’s listening sessions, including DEI concerns, a lack of civil discourse, self-censorship due to apparent homogeneity of the majority’s views and associated fear of retaliation. Furthermore, the commission listening sessions indicated that most stakeholders at Texas A&M have varying definitions and interpretations of what Texas A&M’s Core Values are (much like the universities that have recently restructured their values and principles).

IIC. FINDINGS

Today, Texas A&M has an opportunity to call upon Aggies to not only define, but demonstrate who they are as Texas Aggies. Texas A&M guiding statements (e.g., Mission, Vision, Purpose, Core Values, Code of Honor, etc.) may serve as a tool to enhance Aggie unity. Deep discussions and empathetic conversations can help coalesce the modern Aggie experience while holding true to the best of the past.

As the Texas A&M 2020-2025 strategic plan notes, “Throughout our evolution, our success and contemporary significance have been underpinned by strategically planning our direction and focus to always position Texas A&M ahead of the curve.” Continuing the community-wide conversations started by this commission allows us to discuss, explain and enhance our guiding principles.

The definition, promotion and socialization of the Aggie core values is a long-term commitment that requires sustained investment of focus, effort, leadership and resources.

- There is an opportunity to create a Vision Statement, an inspirational and aspirational picture of the desired future state, and other strong guiding statements to be the North Star that informs everything that we do, particularly for DEI.
- To fulfill the land-grant mission of Texas A&M, there is an opportunity to recognize and address that Aggie Core Values have not been fully adopted. For the university to be successful, engagement and inclusion of all faculty, staff, students, former students, the larger Bryan-College Station area and higher education community can lead to improvement.

10. <https://news.psu.edu/story/326751/2014/09/19/results-released-penn-states-values-and-culture-survey>

11. <https://news.psu.edu/story/326759/2014/09/19/community-feedback-forms-penn-state-values>

- There is an opportunity to fully define and operationalize the Aggie Core Values. Particular emphasis is needed on Respect, Integrity and Excellence. For example, regarding Excellence, only 61% of enrolled African American students graduate from Texas A&M, which is 13-20% below peer institutions.¹²

LOYALTY

RESPECT

INTEGRITY

SERVICE

EXCELLENCE

LEADERSHIP



- There are many opportunities to actively promote, socialize and implement the Aggie Core Values to be practiced in every part of the Aggie experience — not only for current students, but also for faculty, staff and former students. Leadership from student organizations and role modeling the Aggie Core Values play a critical role in the success of this initiative. Utilizing Texas A&M Core Values may be one way to unite and create accountability for our Aggie community and inculcate standards of behavior.
- Inculcating Core Values gives Texas A&M the opportunity to achieve long-term societal impacts and success. DEI are prerequisites for innovation, which is the only sustainable advantage for organizations in the long term. Diverse organizations are higher performing than those that are not, as noted in the 2018 McKinsey & Company report *Delivering through Diversity*: “Overall, companies in the bottom quartile for both gender and ethnic/cultural diversity were 29% less likely to achieve above-average profitability than were all other companies in our data set. In short, not only were they not leading, they were lagging.”¹³
- While promoting their individual missions and focusing on our unifying Core Values, student leaders and the members of their organizations can be intentional in moving beyond the spheres of their organizations, in areas such as programming, collaborations, partnerships and other initiatives. The Aggie experience can and should be personalized and inclusive. While it is natural for students of different backgrounds to compartmentalize, promoting intentional collaboration and “cross pollination” among organizations may lead to better understanding of each other and building more competent leaders.

12. <https://diversity.tamu.edu/Data#students>

13. <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>

III.

CAMPUS CULTURE
AND CLIMATE

III. CAMPUS CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Texas A&M is rich with traditions that should be accessible to all, including first-generation Aggies and historically marginalized populations. Most of the traditions that are highlighted by the university were established prior to the inclusion of several marginalized groups. As the campus community becomes more diverse, traditions and rituals on campus that create inclusive spaces can help students feel connected to the institutional culture.

Over the years, several new and positive campus traditions and rituals have emerged and evolved (e.g., Fish Camp (1954), Big Event (1982), Ring Day (2000)) as current students interpret and embrace the university's Core Values. Unfortunately, changes to traditions by student leaders to promote inclusion are sometimes met with criticism from students and former students who do not agree with the changes (e.g., Fish Camp using gender non-binary indications on its application, Class Councils changing the route of Elephant Walk to not stop at the Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue, etc.).

The question is not whether to preserve or destroy all Aggie traditions — it's a question of embracing, evolving and creating traditions that resonate with all students, staff and faculty regardless of their ethnicity, origin or financial means.

This vocal opposition is sometimes rudely expressed, contributing to a negative campus climate and feeding into a narrative that Aggies are more concerned with preserving the past than evolving to help current Aggies succeed.

IIIA. THE IMPACT OF SYMBOLS AND TRADITIONS ON CAMPUS CLIMATE

The commission examined data and spoke to various groups to identify how to create a campus culture and climate that is more welcoming and inclusive of all, regardless of identity or background.

"But then I went to the first Sully protest this summer and it really struck me that those who are there, those people who were pro-Sully, really weaponized the Aggie traditions and chants. They did the Aggie yells, did these things that are completely representative of Aggie culture to our face, and said 'we are Aggies, you guys are not' to show this is how Aggie traditions and culture are. I felt otherized."

Listening session participant

The working definition of “campus culture” is the set of ideas and behaviors shared by a university. “Campus climate” is defined as “the current perceptions, attitudes and expectations that define the institution and its members.”¹ Given that ideas and behaviors change, so can the campus culture and climate.

Unwelcoming campus climates impact the interactions between historically marginalized students and other members by reducing the frequency, quality and potential of positive interactions on campus. This in turn can inhibit students’ patterns of engagement, which can negatively impact student growth, development, persistence and graduation.²

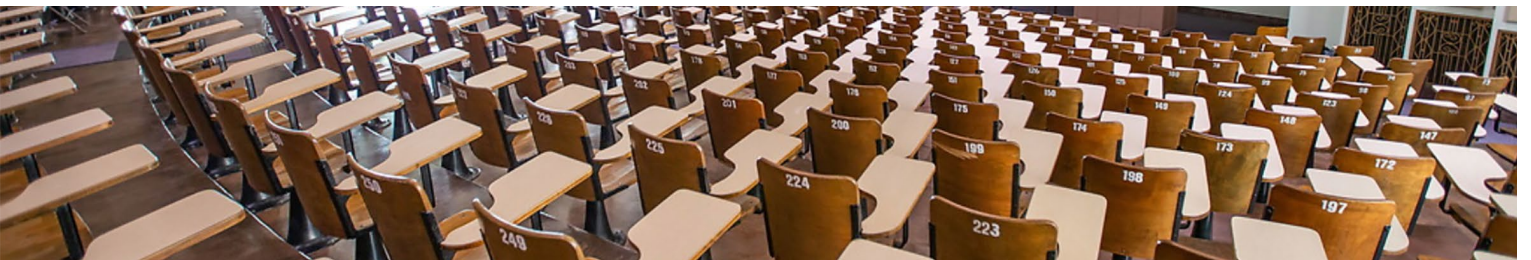
Hurtado et al. (1998) describe an institution’s diversity climate as its historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion of various racial or ethnic groups, its psychological climate (perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about diversity), its behavioral climate (how different groups interact on campus) and its structural diversity (numerical and proportional representation of diverse groups on campus).³ If campus community members feel a sense of belonging along these four dimensions, it will contribute to a positive campus climate.

“When (minority students) come to Texas A&M at the moment, it’s not because of the culture...but in spite of the culture. It’s a selling point for some, but I can’t tell you how many conversations I have when recruiting minorities that start with ‘Well, is it as bad as I hear?’ Think about how that culture is being interpreted by those who are of color. We need this conversation before you can have more representation.”

Listening session participant

Climate differs from culture in that climate is a relatively inferred aspect of the campus environment and thus an easier target for institutional efforts to get impactful results. Unfortunately, this malleability also makes efforts for improvement prone to diminishing quickly.²

For example, a university-wide campaign condemning sexual harassment can make an impact on current campus climate. However, unless the underlying culture that explicitly or implicitly promotes or tolerates sexual discrimination is addressed, the effects of the campaign may be temporary, fade or be seen as empty words.



1. Shenkle, C. W., Snyder, R. S., Bauer, K. W. 1998. “Measures of Campus Climate.” *New Directions for Institutional Research* 98: 91-99.

2. Museus, S.D., Griffin, K.A., Quaye, S.J. 2020. “Engaging students of color.” *Student engagement in higher education: Theoretical perspectives and practical approaches for diverse populations*. New York: Routledge.

3. Hurtado, S., Maestas, R., Hill, L., Wathington, H., Meador, E.W. 1998. *Perspectives on the Climate for Diversity: Findings and Suggested Recommendations for the Texas A&M University Campus*. Ann Arbor: Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education.

IIIB. SIX AREAS AFFECTING CAMPUS CLIMATE

Texas A&M is not immune to the racism, sexism, ableism, religious intolerance and homophobia that exist in the state and country. Evidence collected from climate surveys, reporting mechanisms (e.g., StopHate, TellSomebody, etc.) and individual accounts indicates that students, faculty and staff from marginalized communities are the recipients of speech and behaviors by members of the Aggie community that contribute to feelings of exclusion, isolation and a less optimal learning and working environment.

A review of the abovementioned evidence led to six categories that influence the campus climate and campus culture at Texas A&M:

1) ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEI

Despite Texas A&M's published DEI goals, there is a contingency of students, faculty, staff and former students who do not believe these goals are of benefit to the university. There has been opposition to the university's DEI goals by various constituents through social media outlets, institutional reporting sites and published articles about the university. This tenor has an impact on campus climate and culture, and ultimately on those individuals who are part of the traditionally marginalized communities.

2) LACK OF COMPOSITIONAL, ORGANIZATIONAL AND STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY

As a land-grant institution, the demographics of the Texas A&M student population should mirror those of Texas. However, we fall short, particularly with Black and African American and Hispanic and Latinx students. Increasing the diversity of various identity groups on campus leads to an environment that fosters positive cross-racial interactions. Additionally, many former students have expressed a need to diversify the leadership of the university as well. Consequently, many of the external audiences see images of Texas A&M that are largely homogeneous and that do not reflect the wide spectrum of the Aggie experience.

3) LANGUAGE AND BEHAVIORS THAT IMPACT CAMPUS CLIMATE

Data from university reporting sites (StopHate, TellSomebody, etc.) provide evidence that students from marginalized groups have been (and continue to be) victims of hate speech and both overt and covert acts of racism (and other isms) that contribute to a decreased sense of belonging. These incidents (perpetuated primarily by other students, former students and, to a lesser degree, by faculty and staff) capture the lived experiences of mostly marginalized students and greatly influence their perception of the campus climate and culture. Dismissive attitudes towards these incidents further exacerbate a negative campus experience for many communities.

4) THE IMPACT OF SYMBOLS AND TRADITIONS ON CAMPUS CLIMATE

While there are many values and traditions that contribute to a positive Aggie culture, there are also those that were created during a history of exclusion. For example, up until three years ago, women were denied access to serving as the mascot corporal for Reveille. Texas A&M should ensure that all can take part in campus traditions and seriously examine those traditions and symbols that may negatively affect the experience of marginalized groups, including the Ross statue.

5) THE CURRICULAR AGGIE EXPERIENCE FOR HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS

While Texas A&M continues to be recognized as a prominent academic university, many marginalized communities experience bias and microaggressions within their classrooms from both students and faculty. Expanding the compositional diversity of the university will help decrease feelings of isolation, and in some instances, intimidation. Additionally, more courses that focus on learning the culture and history of different identities could be beneficial to all.

6) THE CO-CURRICULAR AGGIE EXPERIENCE FOR HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Students from all identities and backgrounds value the involvement and leadership development opportunities offered by Texas A&M. Many students from traditionally marginalized groups find their sense of belonging through identity-based groups, services and spaces, which are important in fostering a welcoming environment for these students. Continuing to provide and enhance these opportunities further elevates a sense of belonging and a positive Aggie experience

IIIC. REVIEW: BARRIERS AND HINDRANCES

Commission members identified root causes of poor enrollment and retention of minority students, including:

- Many members of the Aggie community, including former students, do not perceive that there is a problem. They believe that racism is over and behind us.
- There is a lack of civility when discussing issues related to race, equity and inclusion in our community in media and social media.
- Some university-affiliated individuals and groups believe that DEI efforts and principles are not necessary at a leading research university, which is in direct contrast to the Association of American Universities' (AAU) long-held assertion of the importance of diversity to the missions of research universities.⁴
- Among some members of the Aggie community, DEI is seen to represent weakness. They believe that evolution erases history, and that one action will be the panacea to all ills.



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4. <https://www.aau.edu/newsroom/press-releases/statement-diversity-board-directors-association-american-universities>

Texas A&M can elevate its campus culture and climate to become more welcoming and inclusive of all, regardless of identity or background. Past and recent incidents and debates, both locally and nationally, have created an environment where divisiveness is pervasive, both covertly and overtly.

An inclusive culture and climate help to eliminate barriers that may be more pronounced for historically marginalized students, faculty and staff, specifically Blacks and African Americans. Texas A&M has the opportunity to sustain real change by continuously examining the current climate

and underlying culture for areas that prevent a more welcoming and inclusive campus experience for students, faculty and staff.

The desired outcome is to eliminate barriers that impede student development and success, as well as barriers that prevent faculty and staff from thriving in their careers and meeting their professional goals. Not only will current students, faculty and staff benefit from a more inclusive environment, but former students, prospective students, faculty, staff and visitors will as well.

As a land-grant institution, the demographics of our student population should mirror those of the State of Texas; however, we fall short. The following chart compares the racial demographics of Texas to those of Texas A&M:

Race/Ethnicity	State of Texas*	Texas A&M University**
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.0%	0.22%
Asian	5.2%	8.8%
Black and/or African American	12.9%	3.3%
Hispanic and/or Latinx	39.7%	22.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.06%
Two or More Races	2.1%	2.6%
White	41.2%	54.5%

*State of Texas data from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TX>;

**Texas A&M University data from <http://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics>

Note: Data percentages may vary slightly due to the reporting dates and mechanism (IPEDS, accountability, etc.).

Smaller milestones, including comparisons to our peer institutions, should be set and measured as we strive toward this goal. Creating an inclusive, welcoming environment with a culture and climate where equity abounds will allow the university to recruit a more diverse pool of students, as well as faculty and staff, moving us towards a population that is proportionate to that of the state.



Texas A&M has taken strides to facilitate a campus environment where divisive issues can be freely debated and discussed. Texas A&M was recognized

by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE⁵) with its highest rating for free speech.⁶ FIRE reviews an institution's openness to speech and assembly on various campuses. It found that our principles and policies are consistent with the highest ideals of the First Amendment and the fundamental purposes and goals of a great education. Texas A&M is one of 45

universities nationwide — and the only one in Texas — to achieve such a designation.

This independent assessment by FIRE determined that Texas A&M's written policies fully align with the First Amendment. While Texas A&M's policies have always been strong, it is critical that we leverage this in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. An open exchange of ideas is not only a cornerstone of our democracy, it is the surest path to truth, discovery and scholarly advancement.

Texas A&M hosts numerous programs, events and meetings each year on our campus. Occasionally, there is a provocative speaker that detracts from the conversation, but even those moments provide learning and engagement opportunities for our students, faculty and staff. Efforts in this area continue to inform our work of educating students so they can engage in difficult dialogues, express their ideas without fear, and be prepared to lead in their future professional and personal lives.

IID. FINDINGS

Students, faculty, staff and former students who lent their voices to this report care deeply about Texas A&M and are committed to making it better. Students feel a sense of pride having navigated Texas A&M's rigorous academic environment, and they celebrate academic success when they put on the Aggie ring and receive their diploma at graduation.

Although strides have been made over the years, students, faculty and staff from historically marginalized groups are encountering negative experiences at Texas A&M that impede their ability to successfully navigate our university's environment.

In 2017, 71% of Black and African American students (down from 82% in 2015) felt they belonged at Texas A&M as compared to 84% Asian, 88% Hispanic and Latinx, 79% International and 91% of White students. In addition, only 47% of Black and African American students felt respected on this campus based on their race or ethnicity as compared to 77% Asian, 77% Hispanic and Latinx, 78% International and 94% of White students. While the vast majority of undergraduates would still choose to enroll at Texas A&M “knowing what I know now,” Black and African American (86% to 79%) and International students (86% to 74%) saw the largest decrease from 2015 & 2017.⁷

5. <https://www.thefire.org/>

6. <https://today.tamu.edu/2019/01/10/texas-am-earns-highest-rating-for-free-speech-on-campus/>

7. Information was obtained from Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) 2015 and 2017 reports found here <https://seru.tamu.edu/Home.aspx>

IIID.1. ATTITUDES TOWARD DEI

Although many institutions struggle with similar issues, Texas A&M is committed to being a leader in creating diverse learning and working environments where all students, faculty and staff can bring their best. The university has made strides throughout the years towards achieving our DEI goals.

“Diversity at Texas A&M University is an indispensable component of academic excellence.”

2010 Diversity Plan,
Texas A&M University

A large component impacting an institution’s diversity climate is its psychological climate, which is shaped by the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about diversity held by members of the institution’s community.⁸ The institution’s community extends beyond current students, faculty and staff to include the Bryan-College Station area, governing boards and former students. Unfortunately, despite Texas A&M’s published DEI goals, there is a contingency of students, faculty, staff and former students who (either out of a lack of understanding, failure to recognize or outright dismissal) don’t believe these goals are of benefit to the university.

Vocal opposition by groups and individuals to these goals and the associated outcomes and strategies can be found on social media and reporting sites, and published articles about the university. This visible and vocal opposition contributes to a negative campus climate for historically marginalized students, faculty and staff, and feeds a narrative that members of the Texas A&M community do not value DEI. It also overshadows the large contingency

of individuals who are committed to these goals and are working to make progress. In addition, there is tension over the phrase “diversity, equity and inclusion.”

This dichotomy can be seen in a recent listening session held by the commission. One individual stated, “Some classmates don’t like the ‘DEI’ term...we don’t need that, we’re all Aggies. It’s just a government program. We need to focus on values and push aside the DEI terms, you might get more people to listen and learn.”

Although a focus on Core Values is a good strategy, dismissal of specific DEI language is perceived as refusing to acknowledge the problem and indicates a lack of care for creating an inclusive environment for all. As another individual stated, “As former students, it’s our burden to feel a little uncomfortable if we care about Texas A&M and its current students. If a term like DEI makes us uncomfortable, so be it if it helps current and future students feel part of the Aggie Family!”

Additionally, a concern frequently voiced by campus employees (staff in particular) is a fear to express DEI critiques or to openly support DEI changes. There is a concern that speaking up could result in marginalization or hidden retaliations, such as a reduction in force. The adages “Highway 6 runs both ways” and “if you don’t like it, leave” are commonly felt and heard by many within and outside the campus community who have questioned the status quo related to diversity and inclusion policies, practices and processes.

Formal DEI education and training programs for students, faculty and staff communicate expectations, benefits and incidents that detract from and enhance campus climate and culture for all Aggies, not only during their time on campus but as they become engaged citizens in their

8. Hurtado, S., Maestas, R., Hill, L., Wathington, H., Meador, E.W. 1998. *Perspectives on the Climate for Diversity: Findings and Suggested Recommendations for the Texas A&M University Campus*. Ann Arbor: Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education

communities and careers. Listening to and learning about DEI issues and the experiences of historically marginalized groups are powerful ways to create understanding between communities.

DEI training for faculty and staff can aid in designing experiences, examining processes and policies, and improving services for individuals from historically marginalized groups. For example, creators of a policy requiring students to purchase meal plans to live on campus may allow exemptions for students who require a certain type of food preparation due to religious reasons.

In several of the listening sessions, participants acknowledged that it was difficult to understand something that wasn't their own lived experience. In addition to enhancing campus climate, global and intercultural fluency continues to be rated

IIID.2.

LANGUAGE AND BEHAVIORS THAT IMPACT CAMPUS CLIMATE

Despite our Core Values, students from marginalized communities are still facing racist language and microaggressions which contribute to a decreased sense of belonging at the university.

Hashtags such as “hateisahiddencorevalue” and “racismatTAMUfeelslike” produced by current and former students, faculty and staff paint the picture of how Aggie Core Values are being ignored when it comes to treatment of students from historically marginalized backgrounds. In addition, incidents reported through the

“There is a lack of understanding and comfort for faculty talking about issues that others face. They are very, very uncomfortable participating in this DEI work.”

Listening session participant

by employers as an essential competency of career readiness of college graduates.⁹

Global and intercultural fluency is the ability to value, respect and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences. Texas A&M must continue to help students build proficiency in global and intercultural fluency to prepare them for a competitive job market.

StopHate website and various programs such as “Difficult Dialogues” capture the lived experiences of students, particularly students in marginalized groups, and illustrate their perceptions of the climate and culture at Texas A&M.

9. <https://www.naceweb.org/>

“This happened on my first-ever day of school at Texas A&M. I was taking the bus and all of a sudden the bus stopped and I fell forward on to another person. This person immediately pushed me off and said ‘Get off me you dirty wetback.’ I wanted to respond but for some reason I couldn’t. Everyone around me quickly looked away and acted like nothing happened... I wish somebody would have stood up for me. I wish I had the strength to respond to that person but I was paralyzed by fear and shock.”

Participant in a Difficult Dialogue session

Some community members will dismiss incidents (speech and behaviors) of hate and bias as occasional and only perpetuated by “a few bad apples.” The phrase “kids will be kids” was used to minimize the behavior by some respondents to commission questions. This outlook on incidents of hate or bias, including microaggressions, disregards the negative impact these incidents have on students from marginalized communities.

One international student commented, “[being the recipient of a microaggression] is like someone pooping in your cereal...it doesn’t matter how big the poop is...it is still poop. It still impacts the rest of your day.” Another international student mentioned, “I am constantly hearing from other international students about experiences with racism and microaggressions on campus. International students are less likely to report these incidents to the university for fear of losing their visa status or being turned in to other authorities.”

These incidents create and perpetuate a negative campus climate at Texas A&M and impact the recipients’ ability to thrive academically, feel a sense of belonging and build institutional commitment. Students who are the recipients of this language and behavior are less likely to persist at the university and recommend the institution to other students from their identity group.

Texas A&M has long prided itself on being a friendly campus. Often, visiting fans to our campus remark at the friendliness of our students and fans. Unfortunately, some view the concepts of “Aggies helping Aggies” and the “12th Man” as not extending to intervening or holding peers accountable for racist, sexist or homophobic speech and behaviors. As evidenced by accounts on message boards, social media and recent incidents, some current and former students do not possess the tools or are not willing to interrupt this speech or behavior exhibited by their peers in person or in a virtual environment.

Reflecting on the response to student activism at the university this summer (including the #shutupandplay hashtag), one student commented, “Aggies will stand for four hours in Kyle Field ready to assist Black football players but won’t do the same for that player off the field.” This student viewed support for these athletes by other Aggies as conditional, as the athletes were only considered Aggies and respected when their views don’t stray from what some think an “Aggie” should be.

Students and former students encounter incidents of hate and bias on campus and off campus. Students have shared experiences of not being allowed into establishments on Northgate and experiencing racist and homophobic comments while shopping at local stores. Constant microaggressions can perpetuate a feeling of unwelcomeness and exclusion for students. As one student explained, “constantly having to defend your presence on campus can be very taxing on a student’s mental health.”

“Factors that would positively impact the campus climate would be ones in which all forms of hate, racism and bigotry are not tolerated whatsoever. One in which Aggies can call each other out on such acts and are willing to stand up against such actions as they are not representative of who we are — really holding each other accountable and up to high standards.”

Listening session participant

Many of these types of hateful comments are protected speech under the First Amendment. A gap exists between how the university does respond and what the community wants to happen to those who engage in hateful speech that is constitutionally protected. The recipients of these comments are frustrated that nothing can be done to those who engage in speech that is racist, sexist or homophobic.

There is a perception that complaints of hate and bias submitted through StopHate and other reporting mechanisms are not followed up on. There is also a dissatisfaction that consequences to the respondent cannot be shared with the complainant or the larger campus community. One student explained what the perception of nonresponse by the institution leads to: “A lack of consequences for those who spread hateful speech enforces the belief that that kind of behavior is tolerated at Texas A&M.”

IIID.3. THE CURRICULAR AGGIE EXPERIENCE FOR HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Many students from historically marginalized groups identify the university’s prominent academic reputation as the reason they chose Texas A&M. Students from marginalized identities want to connect with faculty, staff and peers who share or understand their cultural backgrounds, identities and experiences.¹⁰ As previously mentioned, more needs to be done to diversify the Aggie community to better reflect the demographics of the state.

Some class environments can be extremely isolating for historically marginalized populations when they do not see any other students or professors who look like them. These students still experience bias and microaggressions within their classrooms. Being the only African American or just one of a few in the classrooms can be intimidating. While that is a part of the makeup of the university, where it really becomes uncomfortable is in certain classes where race may come up.

For example, a former student once mentioned that in a peer group where this happened, he raised his hand to comment on what he believed to be a misrepresentation of African Americans in an urban area, and the professor dismissed his observation. The former student said he not only felt his observation did not matter, but he felt many of the students were staring at him for challenging what the professor was presenting about his race. His suggestion was that the professor, through diversity training, could learn how to approach such a topic in a predominantly white classroom.

All students can benefit from courses that focus on learning the culture, history and frameworks of different identities. This may be the first opportunity for many students to learn and engage in discourse about race, ethnicity, culture, inclusion, equity and their implications on society from leading scholars in the field. Given the climate today, we must equip our graduates with the tools to engage in civil discussions around complex issues within disciplines and in the greater academic core requirements.

10. Museus, S.D., Griffin, K.A., Quaye, S.J. 2020. “Engaging students of color.” Student engagement in higher education: *Theoretical perspectives and practical approaches for diverse populations*. New York: Routledge.

IIID.4. THE CO-CURRICULAR AGGIE EXPERIENCE FOR HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Students across identities value the involvement and leadership development opportunities at Texas A&M and believe they contribute to a positive campus culture. The Aggie experience is unique to each student. Students from historically marginalized groups want to enjoy the friendliness, say “Howdy!” and participate in many of our recognized traditions.

In addition, some students from historically marginalized groups find their sense of belonging through identity-based (i.e., race, ethnicity, gender, religion, veteran status, etc.) affinity groups, programs, services and spaces. These students point to the importance of the Department of Multicultural Services in their collegiate experience, growth and development. Organizations such as IDEAAL, EXCEL and LatiLo that are geared towards the first-year experience of students can help foster a sense of belonging on campus. Identification with identity-based affinity groups as a way of connecting with the university extends beyond the current student experience.

As historically marginalized students graduate, many will choose to maintain a connection to the university through The Association of Former Students’ identity-based constituent networks, such as the Black Former Student Network, the Hispanic Former Student Network, the Women’s Former Student Network and the newly established Pride Former Student Network for LGBTQ+ former students. Most of these networks serve to advocate for the concerns and issues of their affinity groups. For example, the mission of the Hispanic Former Student Network is to serve “as an advocate and support group on Hispanic concerns and issues at the university and local communities.”

Affinity-based spaces (e.g., Veterans Resource and Support Center, cultural spaces in the DMS, LGBTQ+ Center, etc.) are an important tool in fostering a welcoming environment for marginalized students. They create a sense of cultural community and provide venues for identity expression, identity validation and mattering, as well as social belonging and development.

Culture-based events, activities, programs and physical spaces are instrumental in enhancing sense of belonging. Many of these programs such as Fusion Fiesta, International Week (I-Week), Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference (SBSLC), Lunar New Year celebration and the MSC WBAC MLK Breakfast promote the cultures and diversity of various backgrounds. These are important programs for individuals who identify with these groups, and they give others opportunities to learn and engage socially with people who may be different than themselves.

The university recently started elevating the visibility of these cultural programs as part of Aggie life. Former Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students often reference these events as “traditions” when they describe their Aggie experience.



IV.

DATA AND POLICIES

IV. DATA AND POLICIES

An abundance of quantitative and qualitative data have been collected over the years across academic and administrative units to identify and address DEI shortcomings at Texas A&M. These data have led to plans, accountability websites, programs, reports and documents containing many well-intentioned recommendations, some of which are given here.

“Equity AND Inclusion — it’s so much more than just numbers...it’s that you’re part of an institution...that you belong. We can get ethnicity numbers up, but still have nothing near equity and inclusion. You can’t break them apart, but if all we do is meet the numbers, we’ve accomplished nothing. We have to have a place where people feel respected and included.”

Texas A&M Administrator

The university has robust efforts led by the Office of Diversity and covered in the 2010 Diversity Plan. For example, the Diversity Operations Committee is charged with 1) ensuring that all existing and planned policies, operations and procedures, and all major plans for organizational change, are pursued with careful attention to their impact on this university’s diversity and inclusion goals; 2) ensuring strategic coordination of university-wide diversity-related activities; 3) considering processes for the collection of equity and climate data and diversity initiatives, as well as recruitment and retention strategies and outcomes; and 4) considering means for enhancing the effectiveness of our collective diversity initiatives, while taking into account current practices and the distinctive cultures of various units.

The Office of Diversity, through the efforts of the 2010 Diversity Plan, also oversees the work of the President’s Council on Climate and Diversity (PCCD) whose purpose is to provide counsel to the President, Provost and Executive Vice President on methods to attract and retain diverse students, faculty and staff to Texas A&M, as well as to strengthen, sustain and promote the

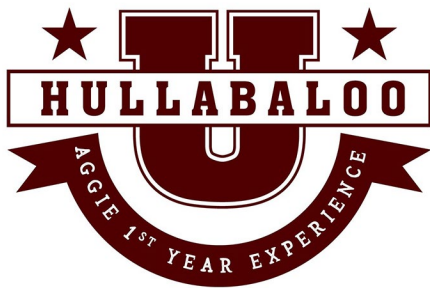
diversity efforts in support of Vision 2020 goals. Additionally, the PCCD assists the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity in planning appropriate assessment and evaluation of all university units regarding diversity-related endeavors.

Because of these efforts, Texas A&M has twice been recognized, in 2019 and 2020, with the prestigious Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity.

Texas A&M works to create an inclusive and welcoming environment that is open to an exchange of ideas leading to discovery and scholarly advancement. In recognition of this, Texas A&M was recently awarded the highest rating for free speech by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE¹). As mentioned earlier, FIRE reviews an institution’s openness to speech and assembly on various campuses, and the organization has found our principles and policies to be entirely consistent with the highest ideals of the First Amendment.

1. <https://www.thefire.org/>

Additionally, the university has created graduation requirements in the areas of International and Cultural Diversity and Cultural Discourse for students entering in fall 2019 and thereafter. Courses that fulfill these requirements are approved by the Core Curriculum Council, a group of elected faculty members who review course proposals based on rubric criteria. Courses are reviewed every three years and are evaluated each semester with student pre- and post-tests on the Global Perspectives Inventory.



The university has instituted Hullabaloo U learning communities for all incoming freshmen, developed an office of student success, and provided additional support to the Regents' Scholars Program to improve student retention and graduation rates by providing students opportunities to create a sense of belonging.

The university has also developed units and programs (such as the ADVANCE Center, ACES Fellows, ADVANCE Scholars, Enhancing Diversity Seminars and the Difficult Dialogues series) to improve campus climate and faculty hiring.

For example, the Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program is a faculty pipeline initiative that connects those advancing outstanding scholarship with relevant disciplinary units on campus. This program promotes the research, teaching and scholarship of early career scholars who embrace the belief that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence.

ACES Fellows will benefit from mentoring, access to instructional best practices, a vast array of world-class research and productivity resources and a robust network of renowned Texas A&M scholars from across disciplines. From this experience, Fellows should develop an understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion and the power that it holds for students, faculty and staff to enrich their lives, and that some ACES Fellows will be hired as tenure-track faculty at the conclusion of the fellowship. This program is funded by the Office of the Provost and administered by the Office for Diversity at Texas A&M in partnership with the College of Engineering and College of Science.

In 2019, the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Education and Human Development participated in the program and four faculty were hired. In 2020, seven faculty were hired through the program. "As of December 2019, 435 applications had been submitted to the ACES program, proving that Texas A&M can attract promising, diverse early career faculty."² In 2020, two additional colleges are scheduled to join the program.

Despite these recognitions, accomplishments and activities, some challenges to reach espoused goals remain. Moreover, it is unclear how data are being used to inform university policies, practice and processes. A review of data can help identify and understand inhibiting factors and their root causes that prevent Texas A&M from becoming a place that is authentically welcoming, inclusive and affirming to all regardless of their social and cultural identities.

2. <https://diversity.tamu.edu/Diversity/media/diversity/PDF/State-of-Diversity-06-23-20-final2.pdf>

IVA. FINDINGS RELATED TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Qualitative data on campus climate and culture indicate that students of color and other marginalized communities do not feel a sense of belonging at the same rate as White peers. This is an important finding because it highlights that improving admission and enrollment rates of students of color to reflect the demographics in the state is only a start; providing opportunities for these students to experience a sense of belonging on our campus is paramount to ensuring retention and graduation rate benchmarks are met.

Currently, Texas A&M embraces Texas's top ten percent plan, which provides students in the top ten percent of their high-school classes with automatic admission to any public university in the state, including the two flagship schools. Texas House Bill 588, which instituted this rule, was created as an answer to the restrictions of the *Hopwood v. Texas* appeals court case banning the use of affirmative action.

It is difficult to point to any particular policy as the root cause of the disparity between demographics and enrollment figures, though the inability to target populations by race or ethnicity is likely impeding efforts in this area. Developing specific policies aimed at increasing enrollment figures and retention for marginalized groups, including a reversal of the 2003 decision to not use race in admissions and scholarships in order to recruit and retain students of color, could be beneficial.

Texas A&M may potentially use race legally as a consideration in student admission as a tailored means of pursuing greater diversity if it can meet the standards articulated in the 2013 *Fisher v. University of Texas* case. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that it can be difficult to support and defend this type of admission policy under the standards of Equal Protection, as evidenced by continuous federal litigation.

Increasing targeted scholarships (particularly working with affiliate organizations like the Association of Former Students and Texas A&M Foundation) may also be a useful tool. For example, the Regents' Scholars Program has been a positive step toward bringing socio-economic diversity to Texas A&M.

This four-year scholarship program, established in fall 2004, is designed to assist first-generation college students with achieving their educational goals at Texas A&M. This program provides assistance to approximately 850 students each year, and racial and ethnic minority students represent 89% of the academic year 2019 freshman cohort.

In the summer of 2020, The Texas A&M University System board of regents voted unanimously to boost the effort by creating a \$100 million scholarship fund to address diversity issues on the system's 11 campuses. The program is aligned with the board's strategic plan, which articulates clearly the system's commitment to ensuring its institutions serve a diverse student body and better represent the population of the state. The program provides \$100 million over 10 years for scholarships, focusing on awards to low-income and first-generation college students as well as those from geographically underrepresented regions of the state.



Another program that is focused on increasing the number of underrepresented minority students who complete baccalaureate and doctoral degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields is the Texas A&M University System Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (TAMUS LSAMP) program. A partnership composed of four system schools committed to increasing the number of underrepresented students participating in STEM fields, it is part of the larger LSAMP program of the National Science Foundation. The program began in 1990, and in the first eight years alone increased the number of degrees awarded to minority students by a factor of five, to more than 20,000.



RETENTION CONCERNS

- Black and African American students graduate at a rate 20% lower than White peers (61% versus 82%).
- Many peer institutions (e.g., University of Florida, University of Texas at Austin, University of Michigan and University of California, Los Angeles) do not experience these disparities to such a large extent.
- Hispanic and Latinx students graduate at a rate 6% lower than White peers (76% versus 82%).
- Qualitative data on campus climate and culture indicate that students of color and other marginalized communities do not feel a sense of belonging at the same rate as White peers.

"In addition to ignorance, outright defiance and denial is a usual response to discussions of oppressions with dominant groups (White, male, European, etc...), mandating these people address and acknowledge what behaviors are harmful will be a first step. In addition, teaching of discussion-subversion techniques such as derailing, plausibly deniable statements, and the use of macroaggressions would be critical to these courses.

In theory, promoting discussions on other cultures and diversity would be useful; however, realistically, the only students who would attend are not the ones who need them. The racist, sexist, etc., students have no interest in improving these aspects of the campus climate because they likely do not realize that they are the problem."

2016 Graduate Student Climate Survey

STATEMENTS FROM STUDENTS

"I was walking through academic plaza while talking on the phone in Spanish and I got asked if I was here legally and that the only reason I attended the school was because I had 'Mexican Scholarships.'"

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

"If anyone still doesn't think that racism is a problem @ TAMU please read through the #hateisthehiddencorevalue and LISTEN to these Aggie's stories. There IS a problem and it NEEDS to be addressed and fixed. If it's not coming from admin it has to come from students."

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

"#RacismAtTAMUFeelsLike the continued resistance to talking about the issue, telling students 'there is no racism at A&M, get over it.'"

"Freshman year my suitemate said 'I can't stand black people they are the reason I didn't get a scholarship, they take up all of A&M's money so people like me don't get anything when I am way more qualified than them.' Then she went even farther and said 'the least the black people could do is be grateful they could at least smile, don't they realize I'm paying for their check' — referring to the black workers on campus."

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

"The stories under this tag make me sick. If I could I would apologize to everyone who has been made to feel like they don't belong at A&M. You deserve to be here and you deserve to be heard. Aggies: we need to do better and be better this cannot continue."

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

"#BeingAPoCA@TAMU means being able to count on one hand the amount of PhDs EVER graduated by your department who share your ethnicity."

EXAMINING TEXAS A&M UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT TRENDS BY ETHNICITY

- The data on undergraduate student enrollment³ show that the percentage of Black and African American students enrolled at Texas A&M has remained mostly unchanged since at least 1999: African American and/or Black students accounted for 2.66% of the undergraduate student population in 1999 and 3.15% in 2019. This percentage is far below the percentage of Blacks and African Americans in Texas, which is slightly above 12%.
- The number of Black and African American undergraduate students enrolled during this twenty-year period increased by 79% from 958 students to 1,715 students. Importantly, however, overall undergraduate student enrollment increased by approximately 51% during this period.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY

	1999	2019	Change
White	29,335	31,832	8.50%
Black	958	1,715	79.00%
Hispanic	3,398	13,352	292.90%
Total	36,077	54,476	51.00%

- Alarming, Black and African American female undergraduate student enrollment has declined more than 8% over the past four years.

UNDERGRADUATE BLACK AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT ENROLLMENT

	1999	2019	Change
Male	417	827	98.30%
Female	541	888	64.14%
Total	958	1,715	79.02%

- The enrollment of Hispanic and Latinx undergraduate students has increased by 292.9% since 1999 to 9,954 students. It would be beneficial to understand how this growth occurred to better identify which policies and strategies had a role, and to evaluate if those policies and strategies could be successful in increasing the enrollment of other demographic groups.

3. Data from <https://dars.tamu.edu/Student/Enrollment-Profile> and <https://dars.tamu.edu/Student/files/enrollment-profile-fall-1999>

- It is difficult to point to a specific policy for the stagnation in Black and African American student enrollment and retaining those students once on campus, but significant qualitative data point to a culture of racism on campus and an unwelcoming environment. Domestic students of color and international students on campus have increasingly used their voices to make this known. They have relied on a variety of platforms to communicate their experiences with racism on and off campus and demanded action from the administration to make the campus, more welcoming, inclusive and accountable for acts of racism.
- College-level data show that two colleges have made progress in increasing Black and African American undergraduate student enrollment from 2014 to 2019. The College of Engineering has grown by a factor of 1.8 (240 students to 426), whereas the School of Public Health has increased by a factor of 43 (one student to 43). The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has seen a decrease in Black and African American undergraduate enrollment, from 237 students to 203, whereas the College of Science has seen a decrease from 127 students to 88.
- More research is needed to better understand if specific strategies and culture changes in these colleges resulted in student growth or decline, or if the results were due to other factors, like overall enrollment growth in a college. Of course, any identified growth strategies could be employed across other colleges with accountability measures in place.



IVB. FINDINGS RELATED TO GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

Analysis of 2015-2020 graduate and professional student enrollment data⁴ indicates the following key points:

- Although the total of White as well as Black and African American graduate and professional student numbers have remained constant, Hispanic and Latinx graduate students have increased by nearly 26% to compose 13% of the total number of graduate and professional students.
- The percentage of Black and African American graduate and professional student enrollment for fall 2020 (4.5%) is greater than the percentage of Black and African American undergraduate student enrollment (3.2%).
- International graduate student enrollment has declined by 18% over the past year, likely due to political factors and federal changes to student and work visas.
- Hispanic and Latinx graduate student enrollment and Black and African American graduate student enrollment percentages are underrepresented when compared to the state's demographics.
- The gap between female and male graduate and professional student enrollment has narrowed by 6% in fall 2020 (female at 47% and male at 53%). This resulted from a 6% increase in female enrollment and a 5% decrease in male enrollment.

	2015	2020	Change
Hispanic	1,563	1,965	25.70%
White	6,265	6,324	0.90%
Asian	1,030	1,111	7.90%
Black	617	663	7.50%
International	4,648	3,797	-18.30%
Total	14,599	14,616	1.10%

4. Data from <https://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics> - accessed 11/05/20 - parameters: College Station & HSC, Masters, Doctoral, Professional

IVC. FINDINGS RELATED TO FACULTY AND STAFF

Faculty and staff are an important university community, because they commonly remain at an institution over long periods of time and greatly contribute to campus climate, inclusivity and culture. Data show that the percentage of faculty and staff of color remained relatively flat from 2015 to 2019. Some explanations for the shortcomings include a lack of accountability measures to help ensure policies for recruiting and hiring diverse faculty and staff are successful, and a need for additional resources related to increasing diversity.

Texas A&M is exploring several programs to address this shortfall, including the Accountability, Climate, Equity and Scholarship (ACES) Fellows Program, which is a faculty pipeline initiative that promotes the research, teaching and scholarship of early-career scholars who embrace the belief that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence.

Programs like ACES are valuable, and an excellent platform to accelerate attracting and retaining marginalized talent. Overall, most faculty are hired outside of this program. Expanding efforts like ACES, paired with a strong leadership

diversity focus, and creating assessment and accountability for evaluating how Texas A&M’s larger hiring practices affect diversity, could impact a larger number of diverse hires.

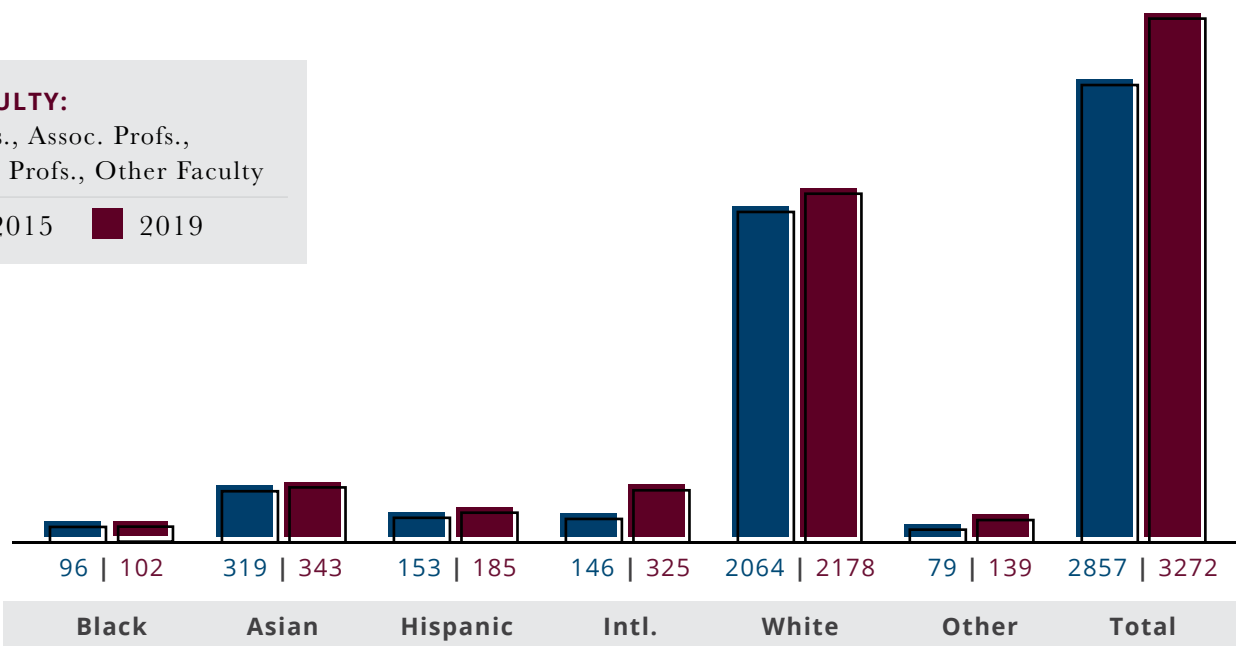
Texas A&M has policies and training (e.g., STRIDE) to help faculty search committees be more conscious of implicit bias regarding race and ethnicity and other forms of diversity. Nevertheless, an accountability and assessment system to ensure that these policies are being practiced seems absent. Moreover, there has not been an evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the STRIDE training.

It may be also beneficial to review the tools and creative options available within the bounds of the law to recruit and retain for gender, race and ethnicity as well as other social and cultural identities, to enhance and advance the university’s espoused commitment to DEI. The Texas A&M Office of Diversity 2020 State of Diversity report offers several examples of units making positive strategic efforts to focus on recruiting a diverse applicant pool.⁵

FACULTY:

Prof., Assoc. Profs.,
Asst. Profs., Other Faculty

■ 2015 ■ 2019



5. <https://diversity.tamu.edu/Diversity/media/diversity/PDF/State-of-Diversity-06-23-20-final2.pdf>



- Data indicate that faculty of color metrics are relatively flat from 2015 to 2019. This points to challenges in recruiting, retention climate and equity.
- The percentages of Black and African American and Hispanic and Latinx faculty and staff members at Texas A&M are below the state percentages: Black and African American 12% (Texas A&M: 3%) and Hispanic and Latinx 40% (Texas A&M: 6%).
- Some data belie underlying problems. For example, according to the 2015 Faculty Climate Surveys, “there were no statistically significant differences among racial and ethnic groups with respect to turnover intentions, burnout or life satisfaction. However, there were statistically significant differences among racial and ethnic groups with regard to job and career satisfaction: African American and non-Hispanic or Latinx White faculty members reported significantly higher levels of overall faculty satisfaction and a higher willingness to recommend Texas A&M to a colleague than did Asian faculty members and persons who did not report their races or ethnicities.”
- National trends reflect that students are increasingly seeking and demanding faculty who look like them and can serve as mentors. This desire is not being met, in that African Americans represent only 6% of full-time professors nationwide (3% at Texas A&M), while Hispanic and Latinx professors represent 6% nationwide and at Texas A&M.
- Black and African American students reported that faculty of color are their biggest advocate and not only provide them with tutorial services but also often play the role of counselor.⁶ Black and African American faculty may intervene administratively on behalf of students. They may also mentor and serve as a source of support for their Black and African American undergraduate students and to many Black and African American students who do not even enroll in their classes.
- Even with the small numbers of African American and Black students and Hispanic and Latinx students, with so few Black, African American, Hispanic and Latinx faculty, those faculty are routinely called upon by such students to help them navigate racial and cultural issues. Black and African American faculty mentoring aids in the retention of students of color at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs).⁷
- African American, Black, Hispanic and Latinx faculty are commonly expected to help oversee the climate health of African American, Black, Hispanic and Latinx students, in addition to helping students deal with micro and macro aggressions on campus and in the classroom. This added responsibility may not be appropriately recognized by academic leadership.

6. McClain, K. S., Perry, A. 2017. “Where Did They Go: Retention Rates for Students of Color at Predominantly White Institutions.” *College Student Affairs Leadership* 4.1, Article 3

7. Guiffrida, D. 2005. “Othermothering as frameworks for understanding African American students’ definitions of student centered faculty.” *Journal of Higher Education* 76.6: 701-723.

STAFF HEADCOUNT BY ETHNICITY BY FISCAL YEAR

	2014	2020
American Indian or Alaska Native	19	25
Asian	271	362
Black or African American	365	413
Declined to Specify	--	40
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3	2
Hispanic or Latinx	567	849
Two or More Races	22	79
White	3,643	4,179
Unknown	67	120
Total	4,957	6,069

- Staff demographics have also remained relatively flat, with increases seen in White as well as Hispanic and Latinx staff hires.
- No programs were identified to specifically recruit and retain diverse staff.
- As an institution, Texas A&M has added a mandatory question to faculty and staff applications regarding ways they will work to value DEI for applicants. A question for reference checks now addresses this question as well. These are small steps, but more is needed to help ensure that DEI is valued on the campus, particularly when it comes to hiring faculty and staff.

IVD. FINDINGS RELATED TO COMMUNITY AND VENDORS

Texas A&M exists within the context of the local and surrounding Bryan/College Station community. There were no reported criminal incidents involving hate or bias in 2016, 2017 and 2018, although it is known that some students do experience issues within the community.

More time should be spent exploring the issues relative to community that are impacting DEI at this institution, including:

- The Public Partnership & Outreach program in the Office of the Provost is a strong asset in that it provides services to enhance the relationships, outreach and scholarly engagement of faculty, departments and colleges, as well as the Division of Academic Affairs. Staff within this office facilitate collaborative outreach to the public and various constituent communities with the goal of strengthening Texas A&M's service to and impact with the people of Texas. Their goal is to provide advice and support for the design, delivery and assessment of outreach programs, protocols, promotions, event management and local, regional and global partnerships and academic collaboration services. Locally, this office is engaged with the cities, economic development boards and school districts.
- Students, faculty and staff receive timely warnings according to Federal Clery Act guidelines.⁸
- Clery Act data include all incidents of Clery Act crimes reported to the institution that occurred within Clery Act campus locations, regardless of whether the individual reporting was a member of the campus community and regardless of whether the individual chose to move forward with the criminal justice or campus disciplinary proceedings. To prepare the annual disclosure of crime statistics, the institution collects information from internal sources, such as campus police and other campus security authorities, and requests information from external sources, such as the Bryan and College Station police departments. The university relies on external entities to report these incidents to it when requested, but there is no penalty against the university if the external entities fail to provide the information.⁹
- In 2016, 2017 and 2018, there were no reported criminal incidents involving hate or bias. Students have shared that incidents are not reported because the institution does not have the policies in place to hold violators accountable. The StopHate reports also include additional information that may not be found in other community reports.

8. <https://upd.tamu.edu/Crime%20Logs/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

9. <https://nokwv2p4iir3h3frsml79d3t-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CSAnnualSecurityReport.pdf>

- Maltreatment of faculty, staff and students within the Bryan/College Station community and within the Northgate area is part of the complex issue tied to recruitment and retention. Though some may view these as isolated incidents, they are part of the problem for this institution.
- In the 2016 Graduate Student Climate Survey, graduate students were asked to report whether they had experienced concerns in regard to their personal safety at Texas A&M. Eighty-five percent of the graduate student respondents reported “no” to this question. Those who replied “yes” were further asked specific questions to the causes of these concerns. These findings revealed that 71% of the respondents expressed safety concerns from the Bryan/College Station community.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS (HUB) 2016-2020

- The university has a robust Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) program. The university outlay to these organizations has exceeded 17% from 2016 through 2019 and exceeded 21% in FY20. The university has numerous trade shows on campus in order to educate the campus community regarding HUB opportunities.
- Texas A&M has increased its outlay with Black or African American-owned businesses. Some \$11.5M was spent in FY20. This amount is the average annual spend for the preceding four years. While this amount exceeds the average annual spend for the preceding four years, university spend was atypical in latter FY20 due to COVID-19 campus preparations, so caution is warranted regarding interpreting FY20 results as a pattern in any category.
- It would be beneficial to compare Texas A&M's performance in this area to in-state and out-of-state peer institutions.

V.

VOICES FROM
THE COMMUNITY

V. VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

As Texas A&M is a land-grant institution dedicated to serving the community, the opinions of institutional stakeholders are necessary to understand the full scope of the issue and the demands of different segments. Texas A&M and the Bryan/College Station community were invited to share their views to help the commission better understand perceptions of DEI, both generally and at the university itself.

More than 350 individuals participated in five commission listening sessions, and more than 100 one-on-one interviews were conducted by the members of the community engagement subcommittee. Former students, Texas A&M administrators, current students, staff, faculty and community members contributed, sharing their personal and professional insights and experiences. Additionally, the commission received numerous submissions and suggestions through letters, email comments and an online feedback form, giving rich insights and opinions from a wide spectrum of thought and attitudes.

NOTE

The content presented throughout the community voices section includes direct quotes garnered from individual participants and represents a diverse set of opinions, views and voices. These listening sessions, interviews and other forms of dialogue prioritized empathetic listening, and the feedback informed trends and themes of the community in the commission's findings.

Previously, Texas A&M had worked to engage students and faculty through various campus surveys exploring campus climate and culture, as well as viewpoints on more controversial issues pertaining to race, gender, ethnicity and religion. While these surveys provide some insight into opinions on the state of DEI at Texas A&M, they do not effectively capture the qualitative data of personal experiences, perspectives and reasoning behind the ultimate opinions of stakeholders. Stakeholders continue to feel as though they are not being seen or heard, and these feelings of invisibility leave members of the Texas A&M community feeling undervalued. Over time, this erodes the sense of community and loyalty that is a bedrock of the university.

Exploring responses to questions that prompt more than a “yes” or “no” response will provide insight into the reasons behind often-passionate opinions surrounding Texas A&M’s DEI efforts. Exploring these reasons will assist the university in identifying strengths and weaknesses of existing approaches to DEI while highlighting opportunities to enhance and threats to mitigate in collaborating with stakeholders in this space.

IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE CONSISTENCY, THE COMMITTEE CRAFTED QUESTIONS TO PROMPT DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Aggie identity
- general perceptions of DEI
- Core Values and traditions
- expectations regarding the university's DEI efforts
- blind spots in those efforts

The subcommittee engaged in one-on-one conversations with more than 100 respondents across different constituencies, races, genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations and religions.

PARTICIPANTS IN ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS AND IN FOCUS GROUPS WERE ASKED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What is your connection to Texas A&M University?
(Current Student, Former Student, Staff, Faculty or Other)
2. How do you define what it means to be an Aggie?
3. Has your definition changed over time?
4. Is there a correct way to define being an Aggie?
5. The terms “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” have many definitions and perceptions. When you hear these terms, do you have a favorable or unfavorable perception? Why?
6. Which of these Core Values do you connect with the most (Respect, Loyalty, Leadership, Integrity)? Does this value connect you to Texas A&M history and traditions? Why or why not?
7. What would you like to see from Texas A&M right now?
8. Is there anything else you would like the Commission on DEI to know?

Additional impactful quotes gathered directly from the community can be found in the appendix.

VA. COMMUNITY VOICES FINDINGS



VA.I. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK: IDENTITY INFLUENCES OPINION ON DEI

An individual's personal lens has a significant influence on their response to DEI at Texas A&M. Overall, respondents agreed that every person has their own unique definition of what it means to be an Aggie, which is impacted by their experience with the university. While there are many ways to define being an Aggie, many respondents agreed there is an incorrect way to define being an Aggie — specifically, exhibiting attitudes and behaviors (such as disrespect) that contradict the Core Values of Texas A&M.

Whether or not respondents felt there was a correct way to define being an Aggie, responses were rooted in Texas A&M's Core Values as a prerequisite to any acceptable definition. The majority of respondents stated that their definitions had evolved over time from their first impression, and that their understanding of what it means to be an Aggie grows deeper with more experience with and/or exposure to Texas A&M. Even those who felt their definition of an Aggie had not changed over time still referenced that more interaction with and/or exposure to the university expanded their perspective on the diverse ways in which their definition can manifest.

Across constituencies, when asked how one defines what it means to be an Aggie, the characteristics were positive and centered around the Aggie Family, community and being part of something bigger than themselves. In addition to the general reference of Core Values or a reference to a specific Core Value, respondents also used “inclusive” and “welcoming” to define what it means to be an Aggie. There was often a reference to a strong sense of honor and personal responsibility.

It is noteworthy that while the majority of respondents stipulated to a variety of ways an Aggie can be defined, with a resounding reference to Core Values, most also acknowledged stereotypes surrounding the Aggie definition. These included participating in Aggie football, being conservative, participating in “all of the traditions” and “not being a two-percenter.” Those who felt like they did not belong to or were alienated by the Aggie Family often pointed to the exclusivity and/or rigid nature of a variety of these stereotypes.

VA.2. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK: DEI EFFORTS MUST BE SUPPORTED BY ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

The composition of communities as well as the challenges facing them is subject to change. While Texas A&M's commitment to DEI should be constant, our response and associated efforts must continuously adapt to inevitable change. Texas A&M has an opportunity to remain engaged with stakeholders on the topic of DEI. An ongoing commitment to engagement will foster trust and provide an opportunity to receive and disseminate information.

Respondents across constituencies placed a high value on transparency and expressed a desire for more effective communication with university leadership. Many expressed wanting to be heard and wanting to hear why certain decisions were made. There was an understanding across constituencies that the decision would not always be one that made them happy. The value was placed on being provided with the thought process behind the decision in an effort to foster understanding in the event that agreement was not possible. Community Engagement efforts revealed that stakeholders are thirsting for more opportunities to share their perspectives and were grateful for the efforts of the commission to seek their input.

While the efforts of this commission cast a wide net in seeking feedback from the community, there are still many current and former students, faculty, staff and other stakeholders who were not engaged. Engagement is voluntary, but an open invitation to share feedback and partner with Texas A&M on DEI efforts could increase success.

VA.3. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK: DEI EFFORTS MUST BE TAILORED TOWARD CONSTITUENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

While there were common trends across constituencies related to DEI, targeted community engagement revealed specific blind spots and challenges unique to each constituency group (student, faculty, etc.). A stakeholder's reception to DEI efforts and perspective on desired action from the university was highly dependent on their current relationship to Texas A&M.

Each constituency has a different set of resources and methods with which it can influence the university's DEI efforts. A comprehensive response to DEI should include plans that center the voice of each constituency, partner with their leadership and provide them resources they need to advance their efforts. Below are specific findings tailored to each constituency.



VA.4.**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK: DEI EFFORTS MUST BE FULLY INTEGRATED THROUGHOUT TEXAS A&M AND REQUIRE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Stakeholders had a myriad of responses for the commission on what they would like to see from Texas A&M right now. The general themes of bold leadership, decisive action and clear messaging permeated most responses. The feedback revealed a need for coordination throughout the university and additional resources to support a sustained commitment to these efforts.

SOME OF THE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS GIVEN BY COMMISSION COMMENTATORS INCLUDE:**Participant Suggestions**

- Acknowledgment and ownership of Texas A&M's history that runs counter to DEI efforts
- Representation of Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color (BIPOC) in leadership and decision-making roles at Texas A&M
- Representation of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+) community in leadership and decision-making roles at Texas A&M
- Increased availability of DEI curriculum and training for students, faculty and staff
- Establishment of a Mexican American studies program
- Establishment of Diversity as a Core Value
- Placement of the Ross statue in context
- Removal of the Ross statue from its current location
- Clear condemnation of hateful actions and those who create hate
- Seeking the voices of current students in conversations vs. those of wealthy donors
- Establishment of the position of Deans of Black Student Life, Hispanic Student Life and Asian Student Life
- Diversification of faculty and creation of an inclusive environment to assist in retention
- Establishment of new and inclusive traditions
- Prioritization of campus climate as significantly as research dollars
- Unity in messaging
- Native American Land acknowledgment
- An inclusive focus on diversity that recognizes diversity of thought and perspective
- Increased support for international students
- Better-defined Core Values

VA.5. FACULTY COMMENTS AND THEMES

Many faculty who were interviewed do not feel like they are Aggies. They define being an Aggie as a status reserved for students.

- **Definitions of an Aggie varied among faculty.**
 - Many faculty equate this with football and traditions
 - Some faculty thought it was reserved for White students
 - Some faculty indicated it was defined by adherence to Core Values
 - Other faculty defined being an Aggie by personal attributes (friendliness, personal responsibility and pride in the institution)
- **The definition of an Aggie changed for many faculty.**
 - For some faculty, their first impression was that Texas A&M was a very conservative, Christian and militaristic place. This perception evolved as faculty began to interact with more underrepresented minority students.
 - Several faculty indicated that their perception of what it means to be an Aggie has deteriorated over time. They feel that many students must fight against the culture, and do not feel welcome.
- **Faculty did not feel there was a correct way to be an Aggie.**
 - Some faculty indicated that the perception is that there is a correct way, and that there is an unspoken code.
 - Most faculty felt that there is not and should not be a “correct” way to be an Aggie.
- **Most faculty were favorably inclined toward the terms “diversity, equity and inclusion.”**
 - The majority of faculty have a strong favorable view towards DEI, but many felt we fall short in these arenas.
 - Several faculty were less favorable about the term “diversity.” Reasons included that diversity had a political context and had been “co-opted by liberals,” either well-intentioned or not, or that it simply lacked specific meaningful context.
- **Most faculty identified with the Core Value of Integrity, but indicated that this value does not connect to our history and traditions.**
 - Many faculty felt that our traditions and history do not align with Integrity (or Respect) for women, LGBTQ+ and People of Color. They indicated that the traditions do not resonate with them personally.
 - A few faculty indicated that Integrity does connect to Muster, for example. Also, that the institution does not lack Integrity.



- **The large majority of faculty interviewed want Texas A&M to take action, and want increased accountability related to DEI, including a significant monetary investment.**
 - Many faculty indicated that Texas A&M does not sufficiently engage with or address the needs of students, faculty and staff of color. Other faculty pointed out the institution does not adequately support women or LGBTQ+ members of the campus community.
 - Several faculty indicated that the institution needs to “put its money where its mouth is” with respect to DEI.
 - Several faculty said we need to devote significant new resources to hiring cohorts of faculty of color and developing mechanisms where faculty, staff and students of color can interact with each other and feel safe.
 - Several faculty mentioned that many students of color do not feel safe at Texas A&M.
 - Some faculty indicated we need to provide more education on the true history of the institution.
 - Some faculty expressed concern about the lack of transparency and the rigid, top-down approach from the institution.
- **Faculty want the commission to know that there must be transformational change, but the level of optimism that this commission will bring about such change is low.**
- **The majority of faculty thought that the Ross statue should be moved to another site on campus and not be a centerpiece of the campus.** All faculty interviewed felt that there should be some historical and contextual information provided if the statue stays where it is.

VA.6.

FORMER STUDENTS' COMMENTS AND THEMES

The definition of an Aggie varied among former students, but themes such as Core Values and being part of a family or larger community did emerge.

- **The definition of an Aggie hasn't changed so much as evolved.**
 - Most former students will say it hasn't changed but has become less narrow and more inclusive.
 - Those who see the most change are older, and they see it as being more inclusive.
 - Core Values are the themes that remain where change is noted.
- **Former students did not feel there was a “correct way” to be an Aggie.**
 - The Aggie experience is beginning to differ, and each student has their definition of what it is.
 - “Two-percenters” are becoming less of a “thing.”
 - What makes Aggies and Texas A&M different is the availability of so many

opportunities to get involved. Aggies find their place, find their tribes and the university wants to attract students who seek that out and want to become leaders. That isn't (and shouldn't be) for everyone.

- **Favorability of DEI was mixed among former students.**

- Unfavorable perception stems from politically charged context (association with far left) and the intention to divide and/or highlight what makes us different vs. what brings us together (tribalism).



- Equity can be perceived as providing for equality regardless of merit (unfavorable) as opposed to equal opportunity (favorable).
- Diversity should not be limited to race or gender, but to thoughts as well.

- **Most former students identified with the Core Values of Respect, Integrity and Leadership (in that order).**

- Whether or not we “walk the walk” was questioned for Respect, which also calls into question regard for Integrity if we say one thing and do another.
- Respect and Integrity are inherent character traits, but Leadership is part of the experience you can gain from being an Aggie.
- There was little connection between Core Values and traditions, with the exception of members of the Corps of Cadets who felt strongly that Leadership and Loyalty were instilled in them during their time in the Corps.

- **The large majority of former students want to see more visibility around the effort and success of DEI initiatives.**

- Better leadership around concerns on DEI should be offered in a way that wins hearts and minds — not forced upon everyone.
- DEI needs to be genuine and authentic, not paper-pushing, agenda-driving, empty initiatives.
- Better messaging should tell the Texas A&M story and be used to describe a more inclusive and broader Aggie Experience.
- Better definition and communication regarding the expectations behind our Core Values is needed.

- **Nearly all felt that “something needed to be done about Sully.”** The few participants that explicitly wanted it removed from Academic Plaza suggested that it be moved to Cushing or an archival location and be given more interpretation and context. Others suggested that more context and a complete story (with all its complexity) could be told if left in Academic Plaza. Multiple conversations indicated that it should be a visible reminder of how far we have come.

VA.7.

STAFF COMMENTS AND THEMES

Generally, Texas A&M staff who were interviewed believe there is not a “correct way” to define being an Aggie. They reference the Core Values of Respect and Integrity as central to what it means to be an Aggie. They believe that at times, the university falls short of its claims of emulating Core Values.

- **Texas A&M is making great strides and improvements in DEI efforts and needs to build upon those.**
 - The focus should be on unity and respect.
 - The university should refrain from being political and work against infighting and towards peace.
- **Some staff feel alienated if they did not go to school at Texas A&M.**
 - They have feelings of being a “perpetual outsider” and have difficulty connecting to the Aggie culture.
 - There is a palpable feeling from staff that they lack agency and are treated as second-class citizens at Texas A&M.
- **Overall, staff want to see action taken along with an acknowledgement of Texas A&M’s history.**
 - True leadership is necessary.
 - Silence is not the answer.
 - All parts of the university should be moving in the same direction towards DEI.
 - Traditions should evolve.
 - Harmful and offensive traditions should be discontinued.
 - Current students should be centered and valued as much as former students and donors.
 - Leadership should take risks.
 - Leadership should focus on healing.
- **Staff believe that more resources are needed to support DEI efforts.**
 - Training and the space to make mistakes are needed.
 - Mentors and accountability groups should be made available.
 - Staff should be included as a model of Core Values.

- **Staff who mentioned the Ross statue statue expressed that context was important.** The bad parts of Ross’s history should be acknowledged with the good.

VA.8.

CURRENT STUDENTS COMMENTS AND THEMES

Current students have a broad and inclusive definition of what it means to be an Aggie. Their definition of an Aggie centers on Core Values and the Aggie Code of Honor, and they believe the definition of an Aggie has become more inclusive during their time at Texas A&M.

- **Current students did not feel there was a “correct way” to be an Aggie.**
- **Most current students were favorably inclined toward the terms “diversity, equity and inclusion.”**
 - They feel frustrated when DEI efforts appear superficial.
 - They believe DEI should be more inclusive.
 - They want more transparency and communication from leadership on DEI issues.
- **Tension exists between the desires of current students and former students on DEI issues.**
 - Current students want their voices to be heard as loudly as those of former students.
 - Former students unfairly claim ownership over what it means to be an Aggie.
 - They believe that the administration cares more about wealthy donors than the desires of current students.
 - Students want to be able to provide constructive criticism and improve Texas A&M without being accused of hating Texas A&M or being less than an Aggie.
- **Most current students identify with the Core Value of Respect, followed by Integrity.**
 - Some felt the Core Values did connect to the history and traditions of Texas A&M but that current students are not given as much respect.
 - Some felt Core Values are not reflected in the history and traditions of Texas A&M because of the exclusionary nature of the founding of the university.
 - They believe the Aggie experience doesn’t just happen on campus. Aggies belonging to marginalized communities are disrespected off campus as well, and the university should be involved in discouraging that behavior.
- **There is a fear from current students that nothing will change and that the commission is an attempt to keep them quiet.**
 - Texas A&M has created several commissions and issued several reports on DEI before.
 - No clear communication about what the university has achieved in DEI efforts.
 - Texas A&M has a habit of not following up words with actions.



- **Current students want the commission to know that bold leadership is necessary and words are not enough.**
- **Current students believe that a final decision needs to be made on the Ross statue and that it needs to come from university leadership.** Current students are more likely to prioritize the feelings of their marginalized classmates than the tradition.

VA.9.

GREATER BRYAN/ COLLEGE STATION COMMUNITY COMMENTS AND THEMES

"While I was walking out of HEB, I made eye contact with a random guy. He glared at me and slightly pulled his knife out of a knife sheath thing that was connected to his confederate flag belt. It wasn't on campus, but he was wearing a TAMU shirt".

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

"I was volunteering once and one of our coordinators said 'don't worry about doing that, that's some poor Mexican's job'."

#hateisthehiddencorevalue

- **Definitions of what it means to be an Aggie are generally positive.**
 - There is pride in being an Aggie.
 - Being an Aggie is "all-consuming."
 - It is rooted in the Core Values and is generally seen as commitment to Texas A&M.
 - Many people in the greater Bryan/College Station community consider themselves Aggies even though they did not attend Texas A&M.
 - Texas A&M is the largest employer in Bryan/College Station, and employment at the university is often multi-generational.
- **The definition of what it means to be an Aggie has evolved.**
 - The university's employment decisions and benefits have had negative impacts on residents of Bryan/College Station and soured what it means to be an Aggie (e.g., outsourcing, stagnating wages, etc.).
 - Joining the SEC has impacted residents of Bryan/College Station, and football is now a bigger piece of what it means to be an Aggie than it used to be.

- **There is no “correct way” to be an Aggie.**
The definition of what it means to be an Aggie should be inclusive.
- **Perceptions of DEI are generally favorable.**
The Bryan/College Station community feels more diverse than the student body at Texas A&M.
- **Texas A&M’s Core Values are something to strive for,** but they are not always reflected in the actions of the university or Aggie students.
- **Many in the broader community would like to see the university take a stronger position in favor of DEI.** What happens at the university has ripple effects throughout the entire community.
- **Texas A&M should more expressly support its students and student athletes who stand for unity.**
- **Texas A&M’s Core Values should be reflected in how it cares for its staff that help the university run every day.** There seems to be a lack of equity in the treatment of staff (including staff outsourced to SSC), and people appear to be separated into the highs and the lows.



VB. SUMMARY OF OPEN COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

In total, a pool of more than 350 people participated in listening sessions. As with the previous section, these comments are direct feedback from participants. The most consistent participant opinions and themes from across all listening sessions are summarized below.

The most frequently mentioned theme was a desire for action to improve DEI. Most of these participants expressed concern over the lack of DEI, emphasizing that certain traditions are not inclusive or welcoming to people of color. Solutions proposed for action include more venues for civil discourse, admitting more minorities and thoughtfully addressing behaviors counter to DEI. Some students mentioned the need to widen the definition of diversity: increasing facilities for disabled people, introducing halal dining or including LGBTQ+ into the conversation on diversity.

The second-most mentioned theme was the desire to move the Ross statue. These stakeholders generally believed that this statue now was a physical symbol of disrespect.

Third, many brought up the need for leadership training or support for hiring and managing diverse groups. Many individuals expressed feeling unable to discuss concerns, given the outwardly homogenous views expressed on campus and pressure to conform or self-censor even if they disagree with the views. Having such programming was cited as a first step to rectifying the situation.

The fourth-most frequently mentioned theme was that many felt a lack of respect on campus and that few care about their opinion. (This sentiment was expressed primarily by current students.)

In line with the fourth theme, the fifth theme was that there was a need to clarify what the Core Values mean. Nearly all agreed the Core Values are important but indicated that without examples of “what ‘right’ looks like,” the terms cannot be used as guiding principles. Those who stated that they felt a lack of respect attributed the deplorable actions of others to this lack of an operational definition.

Finally, the sixth-most commonly discussed theme was the desire to maintain the Ross statue as is. The reasons cited behind such statements were to prevent erasing history, to honor tradition and to commemorate Ross. It should be mentioned that many who advocated to keep the statue acknowledged racism on campus and expressed the need for DEI improvements, but did not feel removing the statue would achieve this objective. About one quarter of the participants expressed a desire to make no changes to the Ross statue, while the remaining three quarters advocated moving or eliminating the statue.

There appear to be generational gaps in opinions related to the statue as well, with older participants expressing a desire to leave the statue alone while younger generations advocate for relocation/removal. However, this was not always the case; as one former student stated: “If [current] students want it gone, it’s not up to old A&Ms, and I am an old Ag speaking.” Another stated that the students are the ones who are on campus most and therefore the ones who actually see the statue regularly. Although it was only explicitly stated a few times, the overall sentiment was not combative, and most participants indicated they participated in the listening session because they love Texas A&M and want it to succeed.

VI.

SYMBOLS, NAMINGS
AND ICONOGRAPHY

VI. SYMBOLS, NAMINGS AND ICONOGRAPHY

"It's not about the statue. I know the question of what to do about Sully is top of mind right now, but we have to go deeper. So much of the public debate has been about who Sul Ross was and whether he's an appropriate symbol of Texas A&M's values. But the conflict itself is about how people feel and what they are afraid of.

One side has exceptionally positive feelings about their time at Texas A&M and may even idealize it, especially since life today feels extra complicated, and the increase in our community's diversity has meant they've had to grapple with hard questions that they didn't have to before. They fear that an important part of American culture, and of their lives personally, is going to be undervalued and ultimately lost if that statue goes away.

For folks on the other side, the statue is a symbol and reminder of the times they have felt ignored, oppressed, rejected and hurt. They fear that their university doesn't care about them and is not for them if the statue stays. The real challenge is to help people work through THOSE thoughts and feelings. If you can help everyone arrive at a shared reality where everyone is valued and feels valued, the statue debate will be much less of an issue."

Listening session participant

Many universities across the nation have faced escalating protests over campus symbols, namings and iconography in recent years. These statues and building names are often viewed as a proxy to the school's mission, values and culture, defined as the set of ideas and behaviors shared by a group of people, including its traditions.

VIA. PURPOSE OF SYMBOLS, NAMINGS AND ICONOGRAPHY

To begin, it serves to understand the purpose of public symbols and their relation to the concept of history. There are currently two accepted concepts of history: “a record of things from the past that should not be forgotten” and commemoration of the past that expresses values.¹

Public statues are not meant to teach a record of the past². Most monuments and namings are accompanied only by a short plaque summarizing the contribution of the person whom it honors. Rather than teaching history, such symbols are erasing it because they only tell one side of the story, the side that focuses on the positives, normalizing that single narrative and erasing alternative versions. This was evident in the listening sessions — a large number of participants stated that they were unaware until recently of Lawrence Sullivan Ross’s role in the Confederacy and Native American genocide. In short, statues in general, including Ross’s, do not, and are not meant to, teach a record of the past.

The value of symbols and iconography in public spaces is what they indicate about the culture of the society that created them, and perhaps later altered or removed them. In other words, public names and monuments commemorate a person or event. They inform us of what a society thought worthy of recognition in the past when it was erected, and at present, if it is still standing.

The symbols and monuments at Texas A&M are therefore a story of us — who we honor and celebrate, what stories we tell, what values we hold and who we aspire to be. To date, Texas A&M’s symbols and iconography omit any celebrations, stories or accomplishments surrounding minorities and instead heavily center on those of White males. This is partially a result of

Texas A&M’s history of only admitting that demographic for the first century of its existence. However, since the 1960s, Texas A&M’s history, traditions and values changed once the university admitted Black men and then women.

This change in values can be seen in Texas A&M’s symbols and iconography. There have been discussions to create a diversity plaza and install a statue of Matthew Gaines to commemorate both his contribution as Washington County’s first African American state senator and Texas A&M values: “that any Aggie, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or background, can make a lasting impact on our campus.”³



This initiative was begun in 1998, but was abandoned due to the Bonfire tragedy. As of 2020, funding has been secured and the Gaines statue is in the process of being designed.

Texas A&M has also worked not just to add symbols but to remove racist symbols, systems and narratives (e.g., Confederate flags and sexist images from Corps of Cadet outfit insignia, skirts at Fish Camp with racist/sexist/homophobic undertones, racist/homophobic fables by the yell leaders at midnight yell, etc.). Images of exclusion (racist tropes in annuals, Ku Klux Klan robes worn by notable Aggies, etc.) are no longer displayed in the open and are in Cushing Memorial Library & Archives for community members who wish to study the evolution of Texas A&M.

1. https://president.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/CEPR_FINAL_12-2-16.pdf

2. <https://clarencelb30.medium.com/statues-arent-our-history-theyre-our-archaeology-e3f12996092a>

3. <https://studentaffairs.tamu.edu/matthew-gaines-statue/>

VIB. THE LAWRENCE SULLIVAN ROSS STATUE AT TEXAS A&M

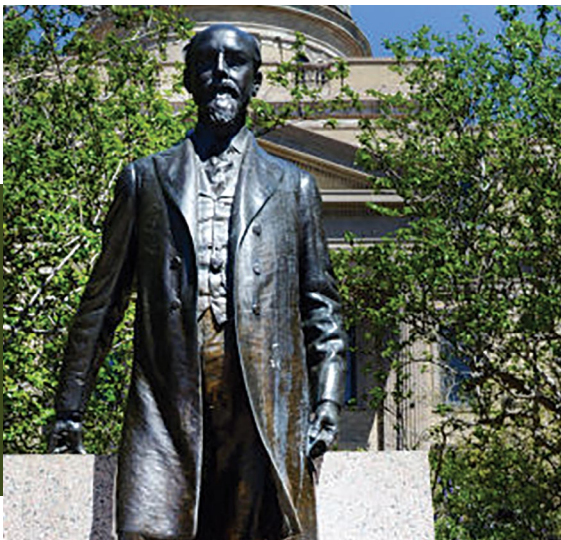
Most recently, the Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue has come under scrutiny as the country and other institutions of higher education examine images and symbols with racist origins in public spaces. At the time the statue was erected in 1919, Texas A&M felt honoring Ross was consistent with campus values, and he was viewed as a role model. Judith Ann Benner, a well-known historian on the Civil War, Texas and the Confederacy, wrote in her full-scale biography of Ross published in the Centennial Series of the Association of Former Students, Texas A&M University that:

“[n] the days, weeks, and months after his death, those who had known Lawrence Sullivan Ross expressed what his life had meant to them. Comrades of ranger fights, veterans of the Civil War, statesman friends of governmental days, and the faculty, alumni, and students of A&M College poured forth praise. His courage, honesty, and public spirit were extolled, and he was compared to George Washington and Robert E. Lee as a Southern ideal.

Other memorials took more lasting form. Less than a week after Ross’s death, the former cadets of A&M were planning a suitable monument. Funds poured in, but the memorial was not actually begun until the state appropriated ten thousand dollars toward the project in 1917. The ten-foot bronze statue, a creation of Pompeo Coppini, was unveiled on May 4, 1919, with appropriate ceremonies.”

*From *Sul Ross: Soldier, Statesman, Educator* by Judith Ann Benner*

Today, the intent of the Ross statue and the tradition of pennies on Sully is still to commemorate him. The statue is placed in the center of campus in a prominent location, making a literal and figurative statement that the statue is central to



Texas A&M. As one student said, “As long as [the statue] has a place of honor, it is a message that this is how the University really feels.” The Texas A&M Traditions website corroborates this sentiment by stating that Ross is “the embodiment of Aggie Spirit” and the tradition of leaving pennies is meant to be a way to “pay homage” and that his statue “stands as one of the most iconic landmarks on campus, situated in the heart of campus in the Academic Plaza.”⁴ In short, nearly all stakeholders agree that the statue and its placement is intended to, and does, confer honor.

The question is what the statue now symbolizes to current students, institutional stakeholders and the public, and whether or not this symbol is out of step with the current lived values of Texas A&M. In other words, what aspect about the statue are we honoring and does this aspect align with today’s Texas A&M?

4. <https://www.tamu.edu/traditions/aggie-culture/pennies-on-sully/index.html>

VIC. FINDINGS

The views of the campus community on the meaning of the Ross statue are polarized, largely along the demographics of race, ethnicity and age. This divide is illustrated in an article in the *Washington Post* from September 8, 2020⁵. It is also clear in the surveys produced from the Student Senate, Texas A&M staff council and other polls this past summer.

While there were many diverse views, of those who voiced an opinion on the matter to the commission, a greater number were in favor of moving/replacement, as discussed in *Voices of the Community*.

The history of both positive and negative sides of Ross's contribution are well documented. The root cause of this conflict, though complex, is essentially dual-faceted: those who see the statue as a symbol of tradition and selfless service and those who see the statue as a symbol of hate, disrespect and intolerance.

Proponents of the statue believe it only honors Ross as a former president of Texas A&M, governor of Texas, general in the Confederate Army, and for his role in saving the college when it was at risk of being closed. Many current and former students have also shared their views that the statue is a symbol of tradition and to them, Ross is a role model that exemplifies such values. Former students have suggested that current students who want to move the statue should go to another institution rather than change Texas A&M.

The statue holds value for proponents as a reminder of tradition and history, invoking a sense of nostalgia for former students and as commemoration of Ross himself, specifically for his commitment to the university (but not negative aspects of his history and actions, which are omitted).

One former student said, "A&M's founders and government officers of the State of Texas who made it successful were some of the giants of Texas history...The statue, building names and street names honoring these men must remain inviolate on the campus of Texas A&M University. Don't destroy them, don't eradicate them, don't slander them."

Opponents to the statue recognize Ross's contributions to the university; however, they believe he should not be honored due to other roles he held, including his leadership in the Confederate army, which fought to preserve slavery as an institution, and his participation in the massacre of indigenous people. Opponents of the statue believe that it honors the anti-value of disrespect. To them, Ross is a prominent, visual reminder of a time when individuals fought to keep oppressive structures and systems that devalued the humanity of historically marginalized groups.

The "fight" to keep the statue is viewed by some as disrespectful because it prioritizes an exclusionary statue over making a more welcoming and inclusive community where all Aggies can thrive. A student commented, "When looking at the purpose of statues and symbols, they indicate to all those surrounding what this institution values and upholds. His statue serves a physical manifestation of exclusion on this campus, especially when the university pushes traditions surrounding it, like 'Pennies on Sully', which not all student groups feel comfortable participating in due to who Sullivan Ross was." Furthermore, many of those who are "pro-Sully" have weaponized the Aggie traditions and chants to make those opposing the statue feel "Un-Aggie" during recent protests.

5. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/09/08/debates-over-race-history-values-challenge-texas-am-campuses-student-body-diversifies/>

VID. CAMPUS ICONOGRAPHY, SYMBOL AND NAMING CASE STUDIES

“Change is constant, and our propensity as Aggies is to be late to the party due to traditional mindsets. I’m not sure if I’m considered an old Aggie or a new Aggie, but I think we would be wise to learn from our past and evaluate what our history teaches us about ourselves. We cannot afford to be insular and disregard what outsiders observe of our behavior.”

Former student

When considering what policies or actions Texas A&M may take regarding statues, symbols or namings, the case studies of other institutions that have managed monument or name controversies may provide insights.

Case studies from the 15 peer institutions listed in the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan and four comparable universities were surveyed and their accounts investigated.⁶ Of the 19 case studies, almost all had or are having issues related to monuments or name changes.

AS OF NOVEMBER 2020:

- Eight have removed the name or monument that was deemed an undesirable symbol.
- Four are currently undergoing review.
- Two have had requests for their removal denied.
- One monument was toppled and reinstallation abandoned.
- One has a sculpture that was vandalized but there are currently no further calls for removal.

The remaining three did not provide information on name or monument removals, but rather have information that new monuments were installed to honor people of color — often in response to a pejorative incident that occurred on campus, but which are otherwise unrelated to past monuments or symbols. Many of these are still ongoing cases and are expected to develop further in the near future.

REASONS CITED FOR THE DECISION TO KEEP OR REMOVE SYMBOLS INCLUDE:

- The monument or name was symbolic of values that did not align with that of the school.
- The monument was a source of division and an obstacle to healing.
- Protests around the monuments presented campus safety concerns.
- The monument made the school ineligible to play in the NCAA.

6. <http://vision2020.tamu.edu/peer-institutions>

In some cases, there was no formal explanation and only a report of the final decisive vote on the issue. However, the most commonly self-stated reason by schools that removed such symbols, or that are considering removal, was that the views and actions of the people the naming or monument honors no longer represent the values of the school.

In nearly all the cases that were controversial (n=16), institutional stakeholders were reported to have very different opinions that varied drastically. Specifically, alumni tended to associate symbols with a sense of nostalgia and identity. Texas A&M's divide in stakeholder beliefs is not unique.

Another pattern across institutions was when there was resistance from the university in relocating or removing symbols, or in name changes, the pushback often became worse. At least ten of the case studies (out of 16 that were controversial) included symbols that had been revisited multiple times before any firm decisions were made, creating fodder for a trail of media reports over the years from the ongoing protests and controversy.

A common complaint from the student bodies in these case studies is the unclear stance universities often take, in addition to the slow pace at which universities come to decisions and implement changes. In extreme cases, such as the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), the statue was torn down by a crowd due to the university's perceived inaction. It is an example of what should be avoided when coming to a decision. Recent news about the UNC case includes a quote from F. Sheffield Hale, the president and chief executive of Atlanta History Center, who stated "Chapel Hill is a special case, and it's particularly special because it's been going on so long, and it's so heated, and every time they've tried to solve it, they've chosen the clumsiest way possible and made it worse."⁷

Another example is University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which was forced to retire their mascot, Chief Illiniwek, in order to remain eligible to play in the NCAA. The school has needed to continue to make related changes every few years. An article by the Chicago Tribune states "Now, if only Illinois would rip off the Band-Aid. Stop prolonging a divisive issue by picking at a scab every few years."⁸

Indeed, this cycle has already happened at Texas A&M. Recent protests to remove the Ross statue and demand accountability are the culmination of decades of frustration from students of color and their allies on campus. This controversy has been ongoing at least since 1998 and a quick search online provides substantial content related to the problems with the Ross statue and Texas A&M's lack of DEI accountability.⁹ These include articles that portray Texas A&M pejoratively, including one that states that A&M handles anything related to race poorly.¹⁰

In short, while some universities have attempted to ignore demands surrounding symbols, names and iconography, in the majority of cases, they have been unsuccessful and by inadequately addressing the issue, increased reputational damage.

Universities were also aware that removals may come across as erasure of history. Nearly all acknowledged the importance of history when such decisions were made and highlighted the distinction between keeping a record of the past and memorialization, which is explained well in Yale's *Principles of Renaming*.¹¹ For example, "The University of Texas at Austin has a duty to preserve and study history. But our duty also compels us to acknowledge that those parts of our history that run counter to the university's core values, the values of our state and the enduring values of our nation do not belong on pedestals in the heart of the Forty Acres."¹²

7. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/14/us/unc-silent-sam-statue-settlement.html>

8. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/sports/college/ct-illinois-chief-illiniwek-ryan-spt-0827-20170826-column.html>

9. Slattery, P. 2006. "Deconstructing Racism One Statue at a Time: Visual Culture Wars at Texas A&M University and the University of Texas at Austin." *Visual Arts Research* 32.2: 28-31.

10. http://www.thebatt.com/opinion/a-m-needs-urgent-self-reflection/article_00556058-077b-11eb-9cd2-5b28da543e92.html

11. https://president.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/CEPR_FINAL_12-2-16.pdf

12. <https://president.utexas.edu/messages-speeches-2017/confederate-statues-on-campus>

“I used to be of the mind that we should contextualize history...but Charlottesville changed my mind. Once statues like this become weaponized by the white supremacist[s] and the Nazis, keeping it up is untenable, I think it has to go. And I think it will go.”

Former UNC-CH Chancellor James Moeser on “Silent Sam” statue

Only in the case of the University of Wisconsin and its Abraham Lincoln statue, where a firm stance was made and is currently still held, was history cited as the primary reason for non removal; “The University [of Wisconsin] is committed to supporting President Lincoln’s history,” according to Blank’s statement, which may, after 150 years, “appear flawed.”¹³

These findings show that based on case study trends, if Texas A&M decides against removal of the Ross statue, there is a very likely chance that protests and controversy surrounding it will continue. It is important to understand, however, that legislative approval may be required to alter, move or remove the monument.

A call for quick resolution was mentioned frequently during the commission’s listening sessions from both defenders and detractors of the statue. In the words of one respondent, “I want the commission to know we want to see some definitive actions. As academics, we study things to death but then there’s little movement. We are pointed in the right direction, but our velocity is screwed up. If we do get there it’s at a snail’s pace.”

VIE. CONCLUSION

Texas A&M is not alone in its struggle to define its values, culture and image through naming, symbols and iconography in higher education or across the nation. Leaders of our institution must decide how we want to be perceived, both now and in the future. Messaging on this issue speaks loudly to students, faculty, and staff from marginalized communities.

When Texas A&M rejected segregation and allowed Black and/or African American men and then women to enroll, each decision was controversial and divisive. Any poll of current and former students at those times would likely look much like the current surveys that have been conducted over the statue. The decisions made by our leaders in those times reflected that the institution was moving and growing in a new direction.

13. <https://madison365.com/uw-chancellor-lincoln-statue-will-stay-on-expropriated-land/>



CASE STUDIES

CURRENT AS OF NOVEMBER 2020

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY

Case:	Barrows Hall, Kroeber Hall, LeConte Hall, Boalt Hall
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	School is deliberating what to do / Yes (for Boalt Hall only)
Stated Reason:	Barrows Hall is the building name that started the renaming controversy at Berkeley— in 2017 the school rejected changing it, stating that they are “considering other ways to make clear that the University’s values have changed dramatically since the building was named.” By July 2020, Barrows Hall is under review again. Meanwhile, Boalt’s name was removed because “The legacy of a building’s namesake should be in alignment with the values and mission of the university.”
Comments:	In 2016, Berkeley embarked on review of more than 150 building names after concerns about Barrows Hall arose. At the end they recommended creating another committee to handle it.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA DAVIS

Case:	The Voice of Lupe monument
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	N/A
Stated Reason:	“With the dedication of The Voice of Lupe , we are setting forth for the world to see that we are committed to building a community that honors and celebrates all of its members, that cherishes our differences, and that fosters a spirit of civility, equity and justice,” Chancellor Linda P.B. Katchi said.
Comments:	The name “Lupe” came from a sexist, racist fraternity song from the 1970s. The Chicano/Hispanic/Latinx community staged a protest in 1976. In 1992, the fraternity funded a room in the school, but people refused to go in. Reconciliation began with the establishment of Lupe Social Justice Scholarships (2007-8) and installation of the public art piece in 2015.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

Case:	Janss Steps name
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	School is deliberating what to do
Stated Reason:	“We are committed to UCLA’s values of equity, diversity and inclusion, and are considering ways to better align the names of campus structures and spaces with those values, as well as to honor the contributions of people from a variety of backgrounds.”
Comments:	School launched the Campus Honorary Naming Advisory Committee to review building names and physical spaces.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

Case:	No current controversies; Sojourner Truth statue added to promote diversity
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	N/A
Stated Reason:	N/A
Comments:	Sojourner Truth statue added. “Her presence will serve to start conversations about who she was and what she stood for, a reminder of her influence and the need to continually address racial and gender equality.” Other artwork on campus celebrating diversity include: <i>Martin Luther King & 37th Street mural</i> and the <i>Chicano Legacy 40 Años mosaic</i> .

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Case:	O'Connell Center and J. Wayne Reitz Union building names, "Gator bait" cheer
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	School is deliberating what to do about the namings, Gator bait cheer will not be used anymore
Stated Reason:	Cheer is no longer going to be used because of its "horrific historic racist imagery."Part of the new strategic goal falls under "History, symbolism and demonstrating behaviors consistent with our values" including name and monument changes. This is also where new values are being evaluated and defined. No decision has been made yet about the namings, but they are "committed to removing any monuments or namings that UF can control that celebrate the Confederacy or its leaders."
Comments:	Building renamings have been proposed many times over the years, but no changes were made. Now the university is reconsidering again.

GEORGIA TECH

Case:	No current controversies; statues added to promote diversity
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	N/A
Stated Reason:	N/A
Comments:	Two statues added that honor the first Black students who entered the institution.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA CHAMPAIGN

Case:	Chief Illiniwek mascot
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	Yes / Ongoing
Stated Reason:	“In 2007, at the insistence of the NCAA, the school banned the Chief Illiniwek mascot.” A majority of students had voted to keep it, but on March 13, 2007, the University of Illinois board of trustees voted to retire Illiniwek’s name, image and regalia.
Comments:	The mascot had been controversial since the 1970s. NCAA banned UIUC from participating in 2006 as part of a ban on schools that use “hostile and abusive American Indian nicknames.” UIUC finally removed the mascot in 2007, and in 2017 other traditions related to the mascot were removed. Some people remain angry, and an unofficial “chief” still appears at games, there is currently a state bill being considered to remove all Native American mascots in Illinois.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Case:	Clarence Cook Little and Alexander Winchell building names
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	Did not reflect university’s institutional values.
Comments:	Principles for renaming buildings were created.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Case:	Lotus D. Coffman Hall, Nicholson Hall, Middlebrook Hall and Coffey Hall building names
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	No
Stated Reason:	Regents voted to keep current names for the buildings, “contradicting the recommendations of University President Eric Kaler and the university task force charged with studying the former administrators’ history.”
Comments:	A faculty-led task force had recommended removing the names, but after the report’s release, one of the regents accused the task force of academic dishonesty, saying it left out information that would have vindicated Mr. Coffman. The university said it will form a permanent Advisory Committee on University History, which could consider renaming other buildings.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Case:	Confederate statue at Lyceum Circle
Peer Institution:	No
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	Student government voted unanimously to remove it (47-0). While some stakeholders were split on the issue, the compromise to move to the cemetery was seen as a bipartisan resolution.
Comments:	Statue removal was revisited many times . First a plaque was put in place to better contextualize it in 2015. In 2019, the student government voted unanimously to remove it. It was finally removed in July 2020. It is still controversial because it was moved to a cemetery and now appears to be a shrine.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Case:	Silent Sam statue (ongoing), and Saunders Hall in the past
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	Statue was toppled by protestors / School is deliberating what to do regarding the statue. Saunders Hall was renamed.
Stated Reason:	The university did not provide a reason for removal because the Silent Sam statue was toppled by protesters. For Saunders Hall, “[a]fter a review, the trustees conceded that university leaders in 1920 made a mistake in citing Mr. Saunders’s role as head of the KKK in North Carolina as a qualification.”
Comments:	Since 1960s, there has been opposition to the statue (vandalism, protests, etc.). In 2010s, more protests, vandalism, and media calls were made to remove it. The statue was pulled down in 2018, and in 2019 a settlement was signed with the Sons of the Confederacy (\$2.5 million), a White nationalist group, which was seen as a back-room deal. Earlier in 2020, the agreement was voided by the same judge who signed the settlement after public outcry, and the issue till now remains unresolved with where the statue will go.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Case:	Thomas Oxley statue
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	No
Stated Reason:	N/A
Comments:	There is no official call to remove the statue. However, it has been vandalized, suggesting it is controversial (Oxley was pro-segregation).

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Case:	Joe Paterno statue
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	Penn State President Rod Erickson said he decided to have the statue removed and put into storage because it “has become a source of division and an obstacle to healing.”
Comments:	President Erickson said Paterno’s name will remain on the campus library because it “symbolizes the substantial and lasting contributions to the academic life and educational excellence that the Paterno family has made to Penn State University.” Even so, the school faced a lawsuit with the Paterno family that was recently resolved.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Case:	Woodrow Wilson building name
Peer Institution:	No
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	The Princeton University Board of Trustees voted to remove Woodrow Wilson’s name from the university’s School of Public and International Affairs saying his was an inappropriate namesake because his views do not align with the school’s current values.
Comments:	The first time this became an issue they voted not to remove it and only put in a plaque, protests continued before they reconvened and decided to remove it.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Case:	John H. Schnatter Center for Economic Research building name
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	Removal was “necessary to avoid distraction from the center’s work” as it led to counterproductive division on the campus and was a deviation from the university’s often-stated stance on tolerance and racial relations.
Comments:	The Papa John’s Founder had donated \$8 million to Purdue. In a conference call he used a racial slur. Purdue offered to return the donation. Ball State University, his alma mater, is not removing his name from a building there.

RICE UNIVERSITY

Case:	William Marsh Rice statue
Peer Institution:	No
Removed/Relocated:	No
Stated Reason:	Some students, staff, and faculty are against its removal.
Comments:	Issue was revisited several times (2015, 2017, 2018). This is a developing case involving sit-ins currently taking place at the statue.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN

Case:	Several building name changes and statue removals
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	They are symbols of hate and bigotry that run counter to core values.
Comments:	The majority of petitions were approved, except for removing “Eyes of Texas” which is currently under development. The school is taking steps to promote diversity and is considering multiple renamings, removals and installations. It has also added diversity initiatives in response to these controversies.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Case:	The Chamberlain Boulder that has a nickname after a racial slur and an Abraham Lincoln statue
Peer Institution:	Yes
Removed/Relocated:	School is deliberating what to do
Stated Reason:	The boulder is under consideration for removal but the school stated that the Abraham Lincoln statue stays because they support his history.
Comments:	“As the [boulder] itself is of concern – and not the personal history of President Chamberlin [...] Chancellor Blank is exploring other ways that he can be remembered by the university.” However, Chancellor Blank stated that “The University continues to support the Abraham Lincoln statue on our campus.”

YALE UNIVERSITY

Case:	John Calhoun College name
Peer Institution:	No
Removed/Relocated:	Yes
Stated Reason:	Does not align with school mission or values.
Comments:	Controversy regarding renaming began in 1992; graduating seniors commissioned a plaque to reveal the associated history. The name change was discussed again in 2015 after the Charleston church shooting, but the president said they “can’t erase history.” Finally, in 2017 a task force recommended renaming it.

VII.

LEADERSHIP

VII. LEADERSHIP

"We know what we should be doing and what we need to do. We need to move forward doing the right thing. Courage does not come in still waters. It's about leadership and will."

Listening session participant

VIIIA. CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

Though faculty, staff, students and community have a deep impact on the institution, Texas A&M leaders have the power to greatly influence the adoption and diffusion of DEI in authentic and meaningful ways. University leadership, college and various divisions can demonstrate commitment by implementing systemic policies and procedures to ensure success in this area. Additionally, resources (human, financial and physical) should be provided to carry out plans. While university leadership may provide the resources needed to implement plans for a more inclusive climate and culture, continuous verbal, physical and emotional support from leadership is vital as well.

In spring of 2020, in response to continued racism at Texas A&M, university leadership accepted and triaged a collection of proposals from students, faculty and staff containing remedies to concerns stemming from local, regional and national events that have negatively impacted our communities. Leadership identified common action items and organized proposed remedies by themes.

Five key themes were identified, comprising a total of 16 action items, such as providing funding and erecting the Matthew Gaines statue by the spring of 2021, revising the script used during student tours, funding identity-specific cultural resource centers on campus, and developing and enforcing a systemwide anti-racism policy for students, faculty and staff.

Each action item has already been given attention; some items were completed, and others remain in progress. A full list of the themes, action items and assessments, as well as an outline of the actions taken to date and contact information, can be found in the appendix.



LEADERSHIP FINDINGS

- There is a strong desire for Texas A&M leaders to actively and authentically acknowledge issues around racism, and talk directly about broader DEI issues.
- A perception heard from many is that Texas A&M leadership has created a number of reports, recommendations and suggestions from past groups, and has known all of the data included in this report for many years, yet has made no significant actions or changes in DEI.
- There is limited compositional diversity in leadership positions across the university, including the President, Vice Presidents, Provost, Associate and Assistant Provosts, Deans, Department Heads and Board of Regents.
- It is difficult to cross-reference leadership positions with diversity attributes on dars.tamu.edu. The absence of this data further complicates efforts to achieve DEI at our institution.
- In 2017, there was approval through the Council on Built Environment (CBE), but no funding provided, for a Diversity Plaza.¹ The lack of action on this potentially important campus structure and cultural space is concerning. Though these projects are in the Campus Master Plan² (page 130), they have not been enacted in purposeful ways that provide meaning to campus diversity efforts.
- Clearly compiling on a central website all the reports related to DEI could make them more widely understood. Additionally, when reports and metrics are available, there is often a lack of information related to progress or current status.
- Defining actions in specific terms with metrics and timelines may help Texas A&M and others assess discernable progress. Incorporating additional accountability tools, such as AEFIS (Assessment, Evaluation, Feedback and Intervention System) through the President's or Provost's offices, may help address this issue.



1. <http://cbe.tamu.edu/Data/Sites/1/allouruploads/presidentialactions/2017actions/062817aggiesunitedplaza.pdf>

2. <https://campusplan.tamu.edu/files/presentations/2017CampusMasterPlan.pdf>

VIIB. COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING SUPPORTING DEI

University Life Suits Him Fine.

C.J. Woods enrolled as a student three decades ago and hasn't left a college campus since. His pursuit of higher education ultimately led him to earn a doctoral degree on that very subject. His experience has taken him from being a residence hall director as a student in Mississippi, to overseeing diversity programs at several colleges, on to his current role as associate vice president and chief of staff for the Office of the President at the largest university in the country.

As the son of a math teacher and a guidance counselor, C.J. learned the value of public service early, and supporting students both inside and outside the classroom has become a mission. Whether as administrator, professor, entrepreneur or father, he approaches every role with dignified grace and thoughtful decision making.

DR. C.J. WOODS
Associate Vice President and
Chief of Staff
Office of the President



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INSIGHT
DIVERSITY CHAMPION
2020

INSIGHT
DIVERSITY CHAMPION
2020

**Giving A Voice To Freedom,
With An Eye Toward The Future.**

The story of African Americans in post-Civil War Texas comes not just from people, but from places. Preserving the state's 337 "freedom colonies" and documenting grassroots preservation practices is what moves Texas A&M University Professor Dr. Andrea Roberts, who founded the Texas Freedom Colonies Project.

She and her team partner with communities to tell their stories, preserve their heritage and protect remaining historic sites. Her research illuminates African American resilience in the past and present, while helping communities plan for brighter futures.

ANDREA ROBERTS, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Urban Planning



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INSIGHT
DIVERSITY CHAMPION
2020

INSIGHT
DIVERSITY CHAMPION
2020

Marketing and messaging serve critical roles in setting campus climate, and are shaped by the existing culture. Official photos, stories, ads, videos and other collateral play a large role in communicating what is valued by the institution. If only longstanding traditions, activities and organizations are highlighted, an opportunity is missed to showcase the diverse offerings and ways individuals and groups connect with and serve Texas A&M. This can be key in recruiting students, faculty and staff from historically marginalized groups who seek cultural familiarity in their future environment.

Texas A&M recently placed ads in the September 18, 2020 diversity edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, featuring prominent campus African Americans and highlighting recent diversity awards. The ad of Dr. Andrea Roberts also ran in *The Atlantic*. This type of messaging helps keep DEI and marginalized groups at the forefront and shows that Texas A&M is serious about inclusion.

Texas A&M's human resources and organizational development recently added a diversity and inclusion statement to all Texas A&M job announcements. Another example of matching messaging with DEI goals was the response to the campus tour discussion of the Ross statue; see inset.

APPELT AGGIELAND VISITOR CENTER CAMPUS TOUR UPDATES: SUMMER 2020

As social unrest swept the nation and Texas A&M more boldly addressed racism on its campus, the Appelt Aggieland Visitor Center and Howdy Crew (student employees of the visitor center) were on the front line. Every campus tour discussed Lawrence Sullivan Ross. Multiple petitions from Black students demanded revisions to “the script” that would not “whitewash his legacy.” Revisions to the campus tour were implemented when campus tours returned to campus to welcome visitors on July 1, 2020.

Notably, the move to tell a more complete history of “Sully” was driven much more by the internal conversations. On Zoom, Howdy Crew students recounted how they had been targets of racism on campus. We surveyed tour guides to assess their feelings and comfort level to discuss “Sully.” These difficult dialogues fostered critical empathy to pivot discussion of cherished Aggie traditions.

Students who are truly uncomfortable discussing Ross have been empowered to skip talking about him, unless directly asked; we owe them that respect. These students, mostly people of color, are now among our most loyal and engaged employees. We aspire to be a workplace that celebrates everyone’s personal beliefs and authentically demonstrates that there is not just one Aggie story.

The fall 2020 campus tour now promotes the Department of Multicultural Services and A&M’s support for expressive activity. It “acknowledges Ross’s biography as a Confederate general, whose transformational impact on Texas A&M is undeniable.” We view the Medal of Honor display of Clarence Sasser, an African American former student, in the MSC and discuss his heroic acts of Selfless Service.

Overall, the campus tour’s verbal messaging and visual representations now offer a much more inclusive view of Texas A&M to the thousands of prospective students and guests served by the Appelt Aggieland Visitor Center.

When asked what people wanted to see from Texas A&M right now, there was an overwhelming desire to see more swift, frequent and effective communication about DEI. Texas A&M leaders were encouraged to reflect and honestly discuss areas that need improvement as well as successes.

Two themes readily emerged. First, there was a strong desire for Texas A&M leaders to actively and authentically acknowledge issues around racism and talk directly about broader DEI issues. As one student noted, “I’m so sick of bland statements!” A senior administrator said, “We have to talk about these issues, or we have failed!” Another respondent encouraged leaders to continuously listen and respond.

“Regularly and proactively seeking input— and then showing what you’re doing in response to that input— is the best way to find out how Aggies are feeling and what they want. And the more you do it, the more they will feel like they can come talk to you instead of launching a protest or complaining about you on social media.

I would also encourage Texas A&M leaders to use multiple channels and methods. Surveys are important, but so are casual conversations and social media engagement. And it can’t just be top leadership or the chief diversity officer who does this work.”

Listening session participant

LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The land the U.S. federal government provided to build and fund land-grant universities in the Morrill Act was only made possible through earlier decades of war and subjugation that forced Native American tribes to cede their land.

Recently, universities have begun grappling with this grievous legacy through land acknowledgement statements — written or verbal declarations that recognize and honor Indigenous peoples. Specifically, these acknowledge that the land on which the higher educational institution is built belonged to one or more Indigenous groups who resided or still reside in that geographic area.

Texas A&M has an opportunity to recognize the Indigenous peoples that the federal government exploited to build the university. Current Native American students have stated in commission interviews that they do not feel seen on campus and are “too small to matter.”

“Engage the Texas A&M community in learning about our history together. In my ongoing personal journey to better understand race, racism and equity, learning more about our nation’s history has been crucial. The more I learn about how people of color, women and other minoritized groups have been discriminated against in the past, the more I see the ripple effects here in the present day.”

Listening session participant

In addition, many current students expressed that there is not an overarching campus message (similar to the “Step In. Stand Up” and the “Don’t Pass It Back” coronavirus campaign) that communicates to the community our commitment to creating an inclusive campus climate where all Aggies can thrive. As one listening group participant stated, “If you want to change the climate of the campus, there needs to be education and teaching about how to step in and stand up, acknowledging acts of racism and marginalization.”

Other programs and efforts targeted at specific campus groups could be more widely marketed to help create a better sense of belonging and inclusion across campus. Examples include the new faculty and staff wellness program, Flourish, the Deans CARE: Deans Committed to Anti-Racism Efforts initiative, and many student, college and unit-specific DEI activities that may be overlooked.³

Secondly, there are many Texas A&M DEI success stories, but without a central and comprehensive communications or marketing strategy, these institutional wins are often overlooked or viewed as singular events. The Texas A&M Athletics Aggie Commitment initiative was created in conjunction with student athletes and coaches.⁴

Debuted with actionable goals, statements from top athletic leadership, photos and video ready for social media sharing, Athletics leadership communicated a clear DEI message, noting that “athletics may not be the most important thing at the university, but they can be the most visible.”

3. <https://flourish.tamu.edu/>

4. <https://12thman.com/news/2020/8/25/the-aggie-commitment.aspx>



VIIC. DONOR FUNDING

“It’s important for our community to know the full history and culture of the institution, embracing and celebrating what’s been good but also acknowledging and grappling with the bad. That’s a scary thing to do, particularly when you rely on your institution’s good reputation to attract students and donors — but telling the full truth is an act of integrity that will ultimately serve our community well.”

Listening session participant

A concern from various stakeholders was that changes in DEI efforts on campus and to the Ross statue could have donor funding implications. To address this question, meetings were held with three affiliated organizations that help provide funding for Texas A&M: including the Texas A&M Foundation, the Association of Former Students of Texas A&M and the 12th Man Foundation.

While some of today’s donors may not agree with DEI changes, many in the current student body lean heavily toward greater DEI efforts. These students will become the future donors. The largest group of current donors is White males, which is expected as many in this group attended the university before or just after A&M began admitting minorities and women. The trend is slowly starting to shift to women and some minority groups. As a more diverse graduate pool leaves Texas A&M, a subsequent increase in donations from women and minorities is also expected.

Two of the three organizations indicated an expected short-term (~3 year) drop in funding, but the overall consensus seemed that long-term funding (~10+ years) will not be greatly changed if the university stays true to its values. Short-term funding is also affected by the current social climate and global pandemic. All groups agreed that much of the dissent is from a small number of people who are spreading rumors and tend to be overly vocal about their opinions. In terms of actions, all three groups indicated that better defining values, putting them into practice and marketing them would be positive for both Texas A&M and fundraising efforts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An effort of this size and scope requires a combined effort and the Texas A&M Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion had an outstanding team and many dedicated people who assisted the commission. Deep appreciation to Dr. John Hurtado and Dr. Jimmy Williams, commission co-chairs, the subcommittee co-chairs and to the entire commission membership. Additionally, we thank those listed below for their commitment and assistance throughout the process.

WITH THANKS FOR COMMISSIONING THE STUDY AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

President Michael K. Young

Provost Carol Fierke

COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION MODERATORS AND SCRIBES

Nikki Cavendar

Jennifer Reyes

Tonya Driver

Charlene Shroulote-Durán

Suzanne Droleskey

Julie Wilson

Connie Langellier

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Texas A&M Engineering

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Texas A&M Office of the President

Briana Cammack,
Texas A&M Office of the President

Jennifer Reyes,
Texas A&M Office of Diversity

Tracy Cullen,
Texas A&M Office of the President

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Texas A&M System Office
of General Counsel

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Texas A&M Office of the President

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Texas A&M Marketing & Communications

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Texas A&M Office of the President

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CJ Woods,
Texas A&M Office of the President

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RESOURCES

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Michelle Castro

Ken Robinson

Travis Dabney

Justin Romack

Tonya Driver

Chancellor John Sharp

Robin Means Coleman

Amy Smith

Susan Fox-Forrester

Bill Taylor

Porter Garner

United Way of the Brazos
Valley Partner Agency Leadership

Kathryn Greenwade

Tyson Voelkel

Kristin Harrell

Eric Webb

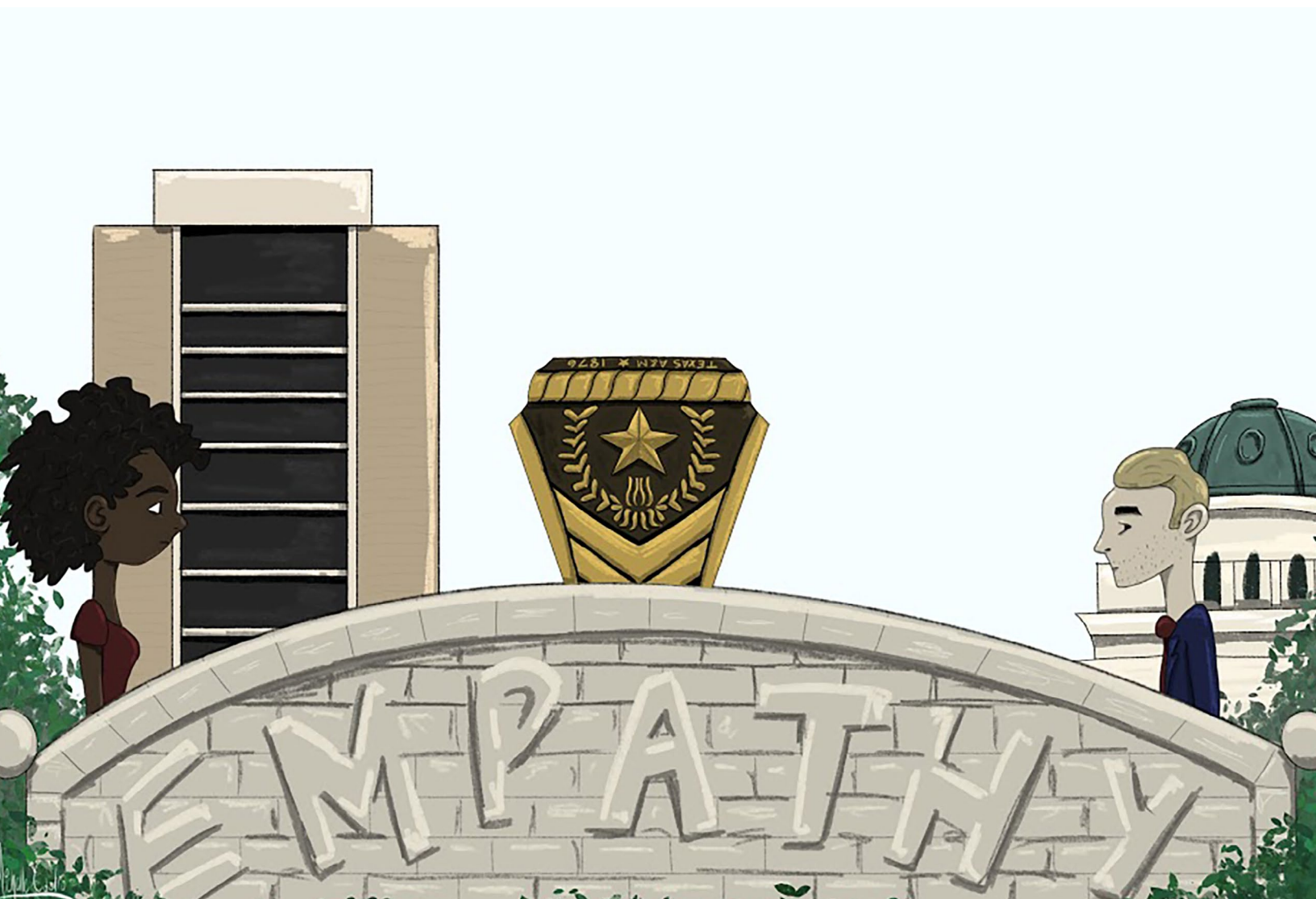
Frances Jackson

Heather Wheeler

Kristi Orr

Chad Wooton

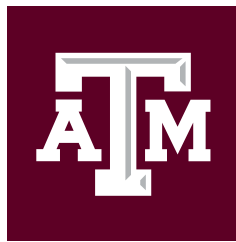
Ligia Perez



About the Artist, Michelle Castro

"My major is Performance Studies with a minor in Art. I was born in Chicago, raised in Mexico and for the past nine years or so I've been in Texas. During my last year in high school I had gone to two college road trips, and of the five universities we toured, Texas A&M felt right. I felt very at home on campus and I got excited over the courses that were offered.

In this piece I wanted to show campus and some of the landmarks, Rudder, the Aggie Ring and the Academic Building. I think having the Aggie Ring in the middle of the empathy ring really centers our focus and end goal of being one big diverse family."



TEXAS A&M
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EQUITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVES FOR FACULTY

Dr. Omar Rivera, Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion (along with Faculty Affairs, Equity & Inclusion team members Drs. Mark Zoran, Jennifer Whitfield, and Cynthia Werner) work to:

- Support efforts to recruit underrepresented faculty such as the ACES Faculty Fellows program and the ACES + program
- Support the pursuit of HSI funding
- Contribute to the annual accountability report due to the Office for Diversity
- Provide accountability for fair and equitable processes related to faculty hiring, evaluation, and promotion
- Serve as a resource for individual faculty and departments dealing with challenges related to workplace climate.



Omar Rivera →

Associate Dean, Equity & Inclusion
Associate Professor, Philosophy & Humanities

Office: Academic Building, 4th Floor



Mark Zoran →

Executive Associate Dean, Arts & Sciences
Professor, Biology

Office: Academic Building, 4th Floor

Equity & Inclusion →

Contact →

Equity & Inclusion Initiatives for Faculty →

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee →

Student Success Initiatives →



Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship Faculty Fellows Program

Texas A&M University's Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship (ACES) Faculty Fellows Program is a faculty hiring program that connects early career faculty advancing outstanding scholarship with relevant disciplinary units on campus. Faculty are hired as ACES Assistant Professors with the expectation of transitioning to tenure track (pending departmental review) by the end of the fellowship period. ACES is administered by the Office for Diversity in partnership with the following colleges and schools:

[College of Agriculture and Life Sciences \(https://aglifesciences.tamu.edu/\)](https://aglifesciences.tamu.edu/) +

[College of Arts & Sciences \(https://artsci.tamu.edu/\)](https://artsci.tamu.edu/) +

[School of Architecture \(https://www.arch.tamu.edu\)](https://www.arch.tamu.edu) +

[School of Education and Human Development \(https://education.tamu.edu/\)](https://education.tamu.edu/) +

[School of Medicine \(https://medicine.tamu.edu/\)](https://medicine.tamu.edu/) +


[School of Public Health \(https://public-health.tamu.edu/\)](https://public-health.tamu.edu/) +

The ACES Faculty Fellows Program promotes the research, teaching, and scholarship of early career scholars who embrace the belief that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence. From this experience at Texas A&M, fellows should develop an understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion and the power that it holds for students, faculty, and staff to enrich their lives. Meet [ACES Faculty Fellows Cohort 1 \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F/Cohort-1\)](#), [ACES Faculty Fellows Cohort 2 \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F/Cohort-2\)](#), and [ACES Faculty Fellows Cohort 3 \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F/Cohort-3\)](#).

As a public, land-grant, Hispanic-serving (HSI) research university, Texas A&M upholds its responsibility to accountability, campus climate, equity, and scholarship by maintaining a campus that affirms equity and fosters inclusion and belonging. Significantly, Texas A&M holds itself accountable to improve campus climate and equity goals through clear, accessible measures. ACES Assistant Professors are afforded access to invaluable academic and professional development experiences to advance their careers as scholars. The objective is for ACES Assistant Professors to transition to tenure-track faculty by the end of the fellowship. ACES Assistant Professors will benefit from: prescriptive mentoring, access to instructional best practices, a vast array of world-class research and productivity resources, and a robust network of renowned Texas A&M scholars from across disciplines.

ABOUT THE ACES FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM

- Texas A&M University's ACES Faculty Fellows Program is up to a two-year (24 month) fellowship for early career PhDs. Applicants' degrees should be completed no more than four years from the time of application. ACES Assistant Professors begin their appointment August 1.
- The benefits and stipend are department specific. Benefits including medical, dental, and vision are available. The faculty fellowship period generally begins August 1 and ends on July 31. Effective Fall 2021, the mandatory hire date for new faculty is August 1.
- ACES Assistant Professors will receive reimbursement for one-time relocation fees, a research and travel allowance as specified in the position description, and a private office.
- ACES Assistant Professors will teach one course per academic year, thereby benefiting from dedicated research time. Fellows will hold the title of ACES Assistant Professor.

 A hallmark of the Texas A&M University's ACES Faculty Fellows Program is the mentoring ACES Assistant Professors will receive, as well as its attention to community-building.

<http://tamu.edu>

Applications are now closed.

Texas A&M University is committed to enriching the learning and working environment for all visitors, students, faculty, and staff by promoting a culture that embraces inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability. Diverse perspectives, talents, and identities are vital to accomplishing our mission and living our core values.

Texas A&M University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Veterans/Disability employer committed to building a culturally diverse educational environment. The University is aware that attracting and retaining exceptional faculty often depends on meeting the needs of two careers and therefore implements policies that contribute to work-life balance.

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[Texas A&M TODAY \(https://today.tamu.edu/\)](https://today.tamu.edu/)

[Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce \(https://www.bcschamber.org\)](https://www.bcschamber.org)



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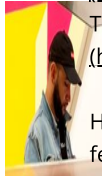




ACES COHORT 1 (2019)

Effective Fall 2021, Cohort 1 have all transitioned successfully to tenure-track positions.

Dr. Bryce Henson is an Assistant Professor of Media, Culture, and Identity in the [Department of Communication \(https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/communication/profile/bryce-henson/\)](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/communication/profile/bryce-henson/) & [Journalism \(https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/communication/profile/bryce-henson/\)](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/communication/profile/bryce-henson/) of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow \(http://~/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](http://~/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).



His research interests include cultural studies, Africana studies, media studies, diaspora theory, Black feminism, Caribbean theory, postcolonialism, and critical ethnography. He is a co-editor for the forthcoming book *New Spaces of Colonialism: Reading Cities, Schools, and Museums in the Tumult of Globalization* (Peter Lang) and also working on his solo book manuscript titled *Diasporic Fugitives: Race, Gender, and Brazilian Hip-Hop Cultures*.

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/Henson\)](#) with Dr. Henson.

Dr. Sergio Lemus is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Anthropology \(https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/anthropology/profile/sergio-lemus/\)](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/anthropology/profile/sergio-lemus/) of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](http://~/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).



Dr.
Sergio
Lemus

Dr. Lemus is a cultural anthropologist whose research interests include theories of race, materiality, the body, Mexican (high-skilled/general) migration, Border Theory, Latinx cancer, bio/necro/politics, and class relations. His book, "Los Yarderos: Mexican Yard Workers in Neoliberal Chicago," documents the centrality of labor processes in driving cultural transformations among Mexican migrants as well as the politico-historical transformation that give rise to a new working-class formation—*los yarderos*.

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/Lemus\)](#) with Dr. Lemus.

Dr. Portia Owusu is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of English \(https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/english/profile/portia-owusu/\)](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/english/profile/portia-owusu/) of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](http://~/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).



Her research interest includes contemporary American and West African literature. Of particular interest are slavery; historical trauma and memory; diaspora and cultural philosophies. Her published work includes *Spectres from the Past: Slavery and the Politics of "History" in West African and African-American Literature* (<https://www.routledge.com/Spectres-from-the-Past-Slavery-and-the-Politics-of-History-in-West-African/Owusu/p/book/9780367819880>). The book inspiration stems for an intellectual curiosity to look at slavery and the politics of history and memory in West African and African-American literature.

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/Owusu\)](#) with Dr. Owusu.



Dr. Emilce Santana an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Sociology](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/profile/emilce-santana/) (https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/profile/emilce-santana/) of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/aces/) (/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).

Her research interests include race/ethnicity, social stratification, and immigrant integration. Her published work includes, "[Is White Always Right? Skin Color and Interdating Among Whites,](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12552-020-09285-1)"

Dr. [Emilce](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12552-020-09285-1) (https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12552-020-09285-1) which focuses on skin color and interethnic/ interracial relationships.

Santana
Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/Santana\)](#) with Dr. Santana.

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ACES COHORT 2 (2020)



Dr. Connie Barroso Garcia is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Educational Psychology](https://directory.cehd.tamu.edu/view/cbarroso) (<https://directory.cehd.tamu.edu/view/cbarroso>) of the School of Education & Human Development at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship Fellow \(ACES\) Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).

Her research focuses on understanding the beliefs, attitudes, and emotions surrounding the subject of math and how these affective factors are associated with math achievement, STEM career interest, and other achievement outcomes. Her published work includes investigations on the link between math affect and cognition; undergraduate music majors' music theory achievement; the relation between math anxiety and math achievement and its moderators; and the conceptualization and development of math intelligence mindset during childhood.

Dr. Connie Barroso Garcia

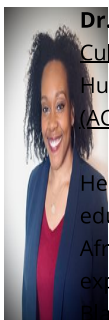


Dr. Jocelyn Frelier is a former Assistant Professor in the Department of Global Languages & Cultures of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).

Her research interests include contemporary French and francophone literature and culture, migration, and gender studies. Her various research projects combine readings of literary texts with transnational and queer theories. She is currently finalizing her first book, *Transforming Family: Queer Kinship and Migration in French, Moroccan and Algerian Literature of the 21st Century*, in which she examines a collection of novels penned by French-language authors who mobilize their work to depict the struggles confronted by transnationally-positioned families. In her work on family, her research methodology also draws on her autobiographical experiences as the daughter of an Argentine immigrant.

Dr. Jocelyn Frelier

Read the [Office for Diversity interviews \(/frelier\)](/Office%20for%20Diversity%20Interviews%20(Frelier)) with Dr. Jocelyn Frelier and [Dr. Jocelyn Frelier and Dr. Allegra Midgette \(/carework\)](/Dr.%20Jocelyn%20Frelier%20and%20Dr.%20Allegra%20Midgette%20(Carework)).



Dr. ArCasia James-Gallaway is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture](https://directory.education.tamu.edu/view/ajamesgallaway) (<https://directory.education.tamu.edu/view/ajamesgallaway>) of the School of Education & Human Development at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).

Her research seeks to bridge past and present perspectives on African American struggles for educational justice. Her research agenda follows three overlapping strands of inquiry: the history of African American education, Black history education, and Black women's and girls' education experiences. These strands engage critical theories and methodologies such as critical race theory, Black feminist theory, and oral history methodology. They coalesce around the ways white supremacy, antiBlackness, misogynoir, and other interlocking systems of oppression have shaped African American education.

Dr. ArCasia James-Gallaway

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/James-Gallaway\)](/Office%20for%20Diversity%20Interview%20(James-Gallaway)) with Dr. James-Gallaway.



Dr. **Jesse O'Rear** is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Performance Studies](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/performancestudies/profile/jesse-orear/) (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/performancestudies/profile/jesse-orear/>) of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/performancestudies/profile/jesse-orear/) ([/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/performancestudies/profile/jesse-orear/)).

His research interests include queer and trans studies, feminist theory, autobiography, and devised theatre techniques. He has contributed to multiple anthologies, including the recently published *Methuen Drama Book of Trans Plays* and the forthcoming *TransNarratives* (Canadian Scholars Press). He is also currently developing a performance-based peer education program for LGBTQ students here at Texas A&M.

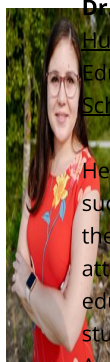
Dr. Jesse O'Rear



Dr. **Kristy Pathakis** is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Political Science](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/pols/profile/kristy-pathakis/) (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/pols/profile/kristy-pathakis/>) of the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/pols/profile/kristy-pathakis/) ([/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/pols/profile/kristy-pathakis/)).

Her research integrates scholarship in political science, psychology, and sociology to explore the ways that social disadvantage affects people's motivation to participate in the democratic process and the ways in which they perceive their own qualifications for political participation. She studies how the effects of social disadvantage on political engagement often go beyond the well-documented constraints imposed by resource deprivation and include psychological barriers that prevent people from participating in ways they could if they felt less constrained by social roles and other cultural

Dr. Kristy Pathakis



Dr. **Cinthya Salazar** is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Educational Administration & Human Resource Development](https://eahr.tamu.edu/?team=cinthya-salazar) (<https://eahr.tamu.edu/?team=cinthya-salazar>) of the School of Education & Human Development at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Fellow](https://eahr.tamu.edu/?team=cinthya-salazar) ([/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F](https://eahr.tamu.edu/?team=cinthya-salazar)).

Her research focuses on the mechanisms used by undocumented students to access, persist, and succeed in higher education. Through her scholarship, she seeks to generate localized retention theories and student success models which can potentially reduce minoritized student's college attrition. Dr. Salazar's research and pedagogy are informed by her former experiences as a higher education administrator. She worked as a student affairs professional for over eight years, primarily in student retention and success programs. Dr. Salazar continues to be an active member of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), supporting practitioners committed to creating equitable learning environments for minoritized students.

Dr. Cinthya Salazar

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/salazar\)](https://diversity.tamu.edu/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F/Cohort-2) with Dr. Cinthya Salazar.

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ACES COHORT 3 (2021)



Dr. Benika Dixon is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics \(https://public-health.tamu.edu/departments/epi-bio/index.html\)](https://public-health.tamu.edu/departments/epi-bio/index.html) of the School of Public Health at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship Faculty Fellow \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).

Her research focuses on understanding the physical and mental health impacts of environmental exposures and hazards, particularly among environmental justice communities and vulnerable populations. Dr. Dixon's research integrates scholarship in epidemiology, environmental health, hazard and disaster research, and community engagement. She is a Faculty Fellow with Texas A&M University's Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center (HRRC). Dr. Dixon is also a Founding Fellow of the William Averette Anderson Fund (BAF), whose mission is to expand the number of historically underrepresented professionals in the field of disaster and hazard research and practice.

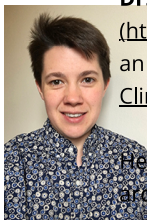
Dr. Benika
Dixon



Dr. Jeehee Han is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Public Service and Administration \(https://bush.tamu.edu/psaa/\)](https://bush.tamu.edu/psaa/) of The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).

Her research interest lies at the intersection of housing and education policies for socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. Dr. Han's work primarily focuses on examining the impact of housing assistance programs, fair housing laws, neighborhood resources, and school policies on children's health and education outcomes. She is particularly interested in understanding the circumstances under which children from low-income households may benefit from living in public housing.

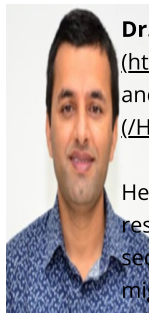
Dr. Jeehee
Han



Dr. Spencer Jones is an Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Oceanography \(https://ocean.tamu.edu/\)](https://ocean.tamu.edu/) of the College of Geosciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow \(/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F).

He studies how global ocean circulation and ocean mixing transport heat, salt and other tracers around the ocean. Dr. Jones uses a variety of models in this work, ranging from simple mathematical models to couple climate models. His published work explores fundamental questions like, Why is the Atlantic saltier than the Pacific? Recently he has been investigating the role of isopycnal mixing in ventilating the deep ocean, both today and at the Last Glacial Maximum.

Dr. Spencer
Jones



Dr. Kashi Kafle is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Agricultural Economics](https://agecon.tamu.edu/) (<https://agecon.tamu.edu/>) of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).

He studies the intersection of agriculture, poverty, and international development. Dr. Kashi researches critical topics in agricultural and development economics – poverty and inequality, food security, gender and social inclusion, climate change and agricultural water management, and migration in developing countries. His expertise also entails analysis of complex longitudinal data from developing countries. He has several years of experience in designing impact evaluation and other micro-economic household and agricultural surveys in South Asia and Africa.

Dr. Kashi
Kafle

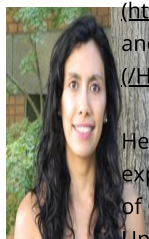
Dr. Rachel Lim is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of History](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/history/) (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/history/>) of the College of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).



She is a critical ethnic studies scholar whose research interests include transnational migration, diaspora, race and ethnicity, globalization, and religion. Her work has appeared in multiple scholarly and popular venues, including *The Journal of Asian American Studies*, *Verge: Studies in Global Asias*, and *The Washington Post*. Dr. Lim is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *Itinerant Belonging: Korean Transnational Migration to and from Mexico*.

Dr. Rachel
Lim

Dr. Grace Melo is an Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Agricultural Economics](https://agecon.tamu.edu/) (<https://agecon.tamu.edu/>) of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).



Her current research focuses on consumer demand using national survey data and economic experiments. Dr. Melo received her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Applied Economics from the University of Georgia in 2017. Prior to coming to Texas, she was an Assistant Professor at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, where she conducted research on food policy and taught Agricultural Marketing and Agribusiness.

Dr. Grace
Melo

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/Melo\)](#) with Dr. Grace Melo.

Dr. Allegra Midgette is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/psychology/) (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/psychology/>) [Psychological and Brain Sciences](https://directory.cehd.tamu.edu/view/cbarroso) (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/psychology/>) of the College of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship Faculty Fellow](/Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F) (</Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F>).



Her research examines the origins and social processes that support individuals in developing an understanding of justice and learning how to care for others in an inequitable and unjust world. Her work addresses two key questions: How do we come to care about each other and about justice within the family? How do we become just in the face of inequality? To investigate these questions, Dr. Midgette collaborates with scholars in Brazil, China, Finland, South Korea, and the United States. The long-term goal of her work is to characterize how cultural, societal, and family practices influence individual moral development, with the ultimate aim of supporting the creation of interventions that contribute to individuals' development into more caring and just individuals.

Dr. Allegra
Midgette

Read the [Office for Diversity interview \(/carework\)](#) with Dr. Allegra Midgette.

Dr. Benjamin Montemayor is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Health and Kinesiology \(https://hlkn.tamu.edu/\)](https://hlkn.tamu.edu/) of the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow \(Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](https://hlkn.tamu.edu/).



Dr. Benjamin Montemayor

Dr. Montemayor's research interests include the prevention and intervention of alcohol and other drug (AOD) use among adolescent and young adult at-risk minority populations and underrepresented sub-groups. Specifically, Dr. Montemayor likes to utilize a harm reduction approach in AOD use programming and incorporate theory to help explain and predict the future use of alcohol and other drugs. He is experienced in all stages of AOD use programming, including the development and implementation of both group and individual AOD use intervention programs at previous University's Health and Wellness Departments.

Dr. Jessica Murfree is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Health and Kinesiology \(https://hlkn.tamu.edu/\)](https://hlkn.tamu.edu/) of the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow \(Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](https://hlkn.tamu.edu/).



Dr. Jessica Murfree

Her research in the Division of Sport Management focuses on sport ecology, which is the bi-directional relationship between sport and the natural environment. Specifically, she examines the effects of climate change on sport, namely the social and legal implications of extreme weather and climate risks, and environmental injustices faced by minoritized groups in sport and recreation. Dr. Murfree's research coincides with her active membership on the Sustainability Committee for the North American Society for Sport Management, the Sport Ecology Group, and the Laboratory for Sustainability in Sport at Texas A&M.

Dr. Vanessa Restrepo is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Mechanical Engineering \(https://engineering.tamu.edu/mechanical/index.html\)](https://engineering.tamu.edu/mechanical/index.html) of the College of Engineering at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow \(Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](https://engineering.tamu.edu/mechanical/index.html).



Dr. Vanessa Restrepo

Dr. Restrepo is strongly oriented to addressing research in an interdisciplinary manner. She combines principles of solid mechanics, structural analysis, and finite element methods with biology to develop, model, and test bioinspired materials. Her current research focuses on the design and fabrication of sustainable construction structures with enhanced mechanical performance, energy efficiency, and self-repairing properties. Dr. Restrepo envisions her research on bio-inspired design as a steppingstone to the creation of multifunctional materials to perform structural, optical, mechanical, and chemical functions through the judicious arrangement of the components.

Dr. Lucien Nana Yobo is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the [Department of Geology and Geophysics \(https://geogeo.tamu.edu/\)](https://geogeo.tamu.edu/) of the College of Geosciences at Texas A&M University and an [Accountability, Climate, Equity, and Scholarship \(ACES\) Faculty Fellow \(Home/Accountability,-Climate,-Equity,-and-Scholarship-F\)](https://geogeo.tamu.edu/).



Dr. Lucien Nana Yobo

His research uses non-traditional stable isotopes (Ca, Sr, Cr, Mg, Fe) to investigate the effects of past changes in Earth's history from marine sedimentary rocks. Combined with these proxies, Dr. Nana Yobo also uses numerical box models to understand how these global biogeochemical changes occurred. Currently, his research has focused on Ocean Anoxic Event 2 (OAE 2), that occurred in the Cretaceous time. During OAE2 (lasted about 600,000 years) the world's oceans were depleted of oxygen and his research has focused on understanding how anoxia developed and was sustained.

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