

APRIL 6, 2021 | VERSION 1.0


UNC SYSTEM RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM
RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE




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RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE



*"As leaders in the University community,
it is our obligation and responsibility to
do the hard work needed to address inequities
in the UNC System **for the benefit of students,
faculty, staff, and all North Carolinians.**"*

— RANDY RAMSEY, CHAIR OF THE UNC BOARD OF GOVERNORS

A vibrant photograph of a group of young people at what appears to be a pride parade or festival. In the foreground, a young Black man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a blue Champion tank top with a rainbow logo and white shorts, holds a flagpole high in the air with a joyful expression. Behind him, a young white man in a blue polo shirt also holds a flagpole. To the left, a young white woman in a white button-down shirt and jeans looks upwards while holding a flagpole. The background is filled with large, colorful flags, including the American flag, the Indian national flag, and various rainbow pride flags. The scene is bright and celebratory.

*“Our mission is to serve the people of North Carolina — **all the people of North Carolina** — and that means putting questions about equity **front and center in our decision-making**. The University of the People cannot meet its mission without **welcoming, supporting, and celebrating all people**. There’s a lot of skepticism about whether big institutions can be **allies in the fight for a better and fairer world**. I promise you that this one can be and will be.”*

— PETER HANS, UNC SYSTEM PRESIDENT

A LETTER FROM THE RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE CHAIR

I remember where I stood when I witnessed the video of the tragic death of George Floyd, the Black man born in North Carolina who was unjustly killed by a white police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Like so many Americans, I was shocked and disheartened. I shared in the pain felt across our nation, and I knew that there was more that we could do – more that we must do – to address cultural and systemic issues within our community that lead to such tragedies.

I was so thankful when we received the letter in June 2020 from UNC System Faculty Assembly Chair David Green, UNC System Staff Assembly Chair Garrett Killian, and UNC Association of Student Governments President Isaiah Green. It urged the leaders of one of the greatest public higher education systems in the country to “be active agents of change” against all forms of racism. I was equally grateful when UNC Board of Governors Chair Randy Ramsey and then-Interim President Bill Roper acted swiftly, responding within 24 hours to form the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force. I was proud to be a part of something I knew could transform lives.

From that moment on, the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force set out on a course of discovery to examine race and racial disparities at each of our 17 institutions and within the UNC System Office.

Over the next six months, task force members met regularly, combing through data, examining policies, and deliberating over procedures and processes that disenfranchised many of our stakeholders. We listened intently during those meetings, taking notes, and learning as much as we could from members of the institutions. We heard thousands of stories from students, faculty, and staff, and gathered information from all who were willing to share.

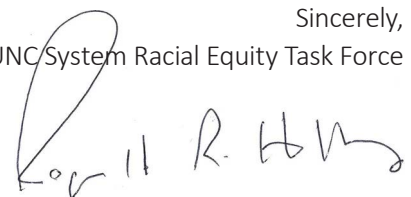
This process we embarked upon was not easy. We were met with criticism and skepticism. We heard about the mounting trauma that students and employees faced daily due to instances of discrimination. We heard about the need for safe, diverse spaces, equal opportunity, and the desire to be surrounded by more equity-minded individuals, even at the highest levels of leadership. We also heard that there was hope and a sincere belief that we could build a better, more equitable tomorrow.

This, as well as other findings, helped to inform these recommendations. Our report supports the voices of the constituents. It represents the academy and reflects the System’s commitment to fulfill its mission: a promise to deliver instruction, advance innovation, and engage in public service to build a brighter future for all North Carolinians.

These six recommendations are a first and necessary step towards racial equity, but they cannot be the last. There is much more to accomplish as this transformation continues.

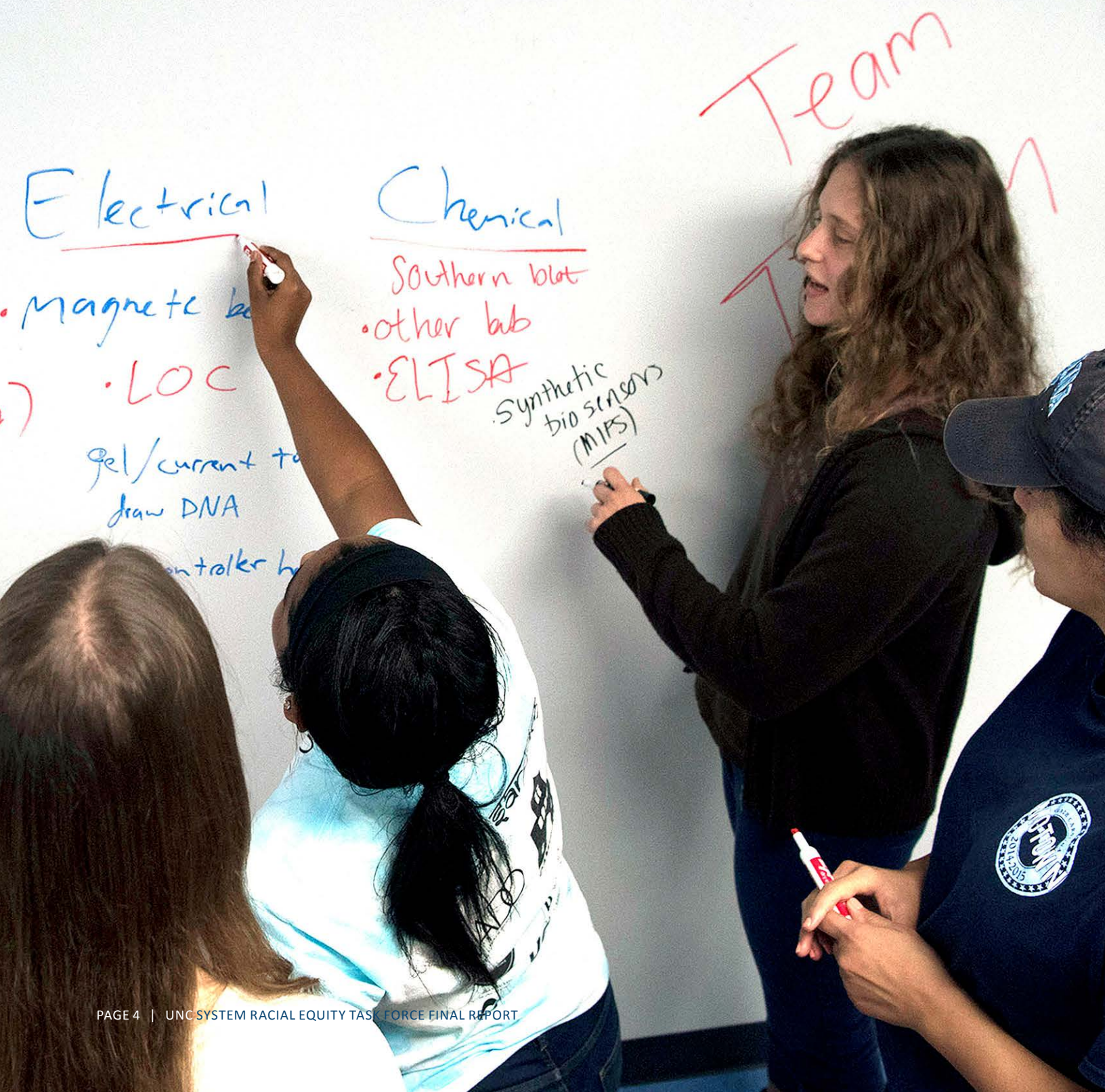
We submit our findings today and humbly request your support. Thank you for the opportunity to make a difference.

Sincerely,
Reginald Ronald Holley, Chair, UNC System Racial Equity Task Force

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Reginald R. Holley", is written over the typed name.

*“Today is a step forward in our commitment to supporting racial equity across our System and **an opportunity to ensure everyone has the resources** they need to be successful at our institutions.”*

— TASK FORCE CHAIR REGINAL RONALD HOLLEY

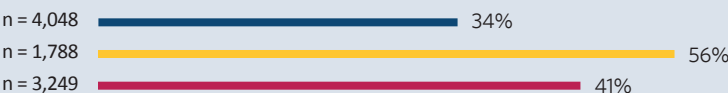


RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE SURVEY & VIRTUAL TOWN HALL FINDINGS

■ STUDENTS ■ FACULTY ■ STAFF

PERCEIVED COMMITMENT OF UNC SYSTEM LEADERSHIP TO CREATE A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE SYSTEM

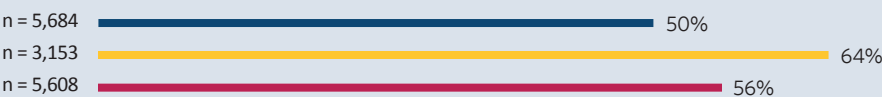
% Selecting “Not Very” or “At All” Committed



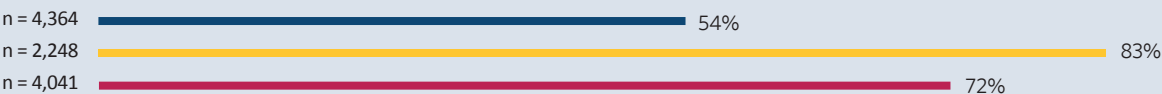
FORMALIZE PATH TO MORE DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Seen as NOT Diverse: % Selecting “Not Very” or “Not At All Diverse”

Institution Leadership

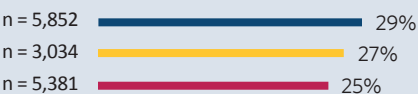


UNC System Leadership

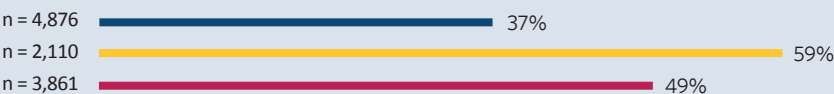


Diversity Perceived to be LOW Priority: % Selecting “Low” or “Extrememly Low”

Institution Leadership



UNC System Leadership

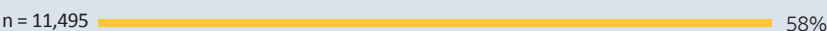


STAKEHOLDERS BELIEVE INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE UNC SYSTEM ARE, AT BEST, ONLY SOMETIMES TREATED EQUITABLY WHEN IT COMES TO...

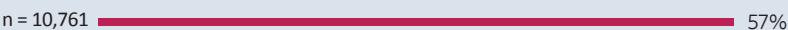
Opportunity for voice to be heard by system leadership on key decisions



Grants, funding and scholarships



Access to UNC System leadership

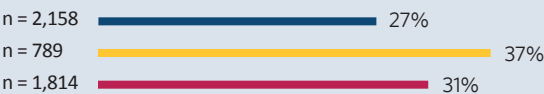


RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE SURVEY & VIRTUAL TOWN HALL FINDINGS

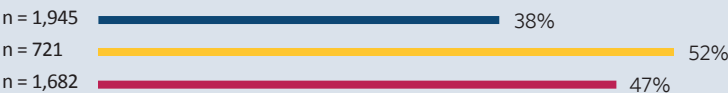
■ STUDENTS ■ FACULTY ■ STAFF

LACK OF COMFORT, CONFIDENCE IN CURRENT REPORTING STRUCTURES

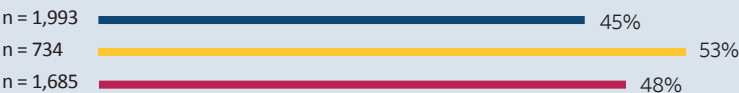
Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) NOT Comfortable Reporting



BIPOC NOT Confident in Protection from Retaliation

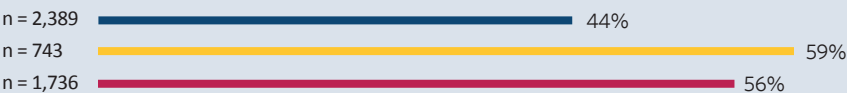


BIPOC NOT Confident Offenders Will be Held Accountable



MANY STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF DON'T FEEL THERE IS EQUITABLE ACCESS TO REPRESENTATIVE SPACES

People of Different Races, At Best, ONLY SOMETIMES Have Access to Representative Spaces



MANY BIPOC PARTICIPANTS SAY THE HAVE EXPERIENCED MISCROAGGRESSIONS, DISCRIMINATION AND/OR HARASSMENT

Personally Experienced Racial Harassment or Discrimination



OVERVIEW

In June of 2020, the chair of the Board of Governors and the president of the University of North Carolina System (UNC System) established the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force to examine racial inequities in North Carolina's public higher education system, explore how those disparities impact the experiences of students, faculty, staff, and communities, and arrive at an actionable path forward to build a culture of equity and inclusion across the System.

The UNC System Racial Equity Task Force, whose members include representation from the Board of Governors, students, faculty, and staff throughout the System, began its work by identifying three focus areas that are critical to establishing equitable and inclusive working and learning environments across the UNC System: student recruitment, enrollment, and outcomes; employee recruitment, retention, and promotion; and safe, diverse, and inclusive campuses. As part of their discovery process and to inform their recommendations, task force members met regularly to examine data and consult with diversity and inclusion professionals, students, faculty, and staff from the 17 institutions. The task force also conducted a System-wide survey and hosted a series of virtual town hall sessions. Together, these engagement activities garnered participation from more than 20,000 students, faculty, and staff members from across the System.

In November 2020, task force members discussed draft recommendations and survey findings and were asked to prioritize the recommendations and identify action steps for implementation. Based on this feedback, the task force moved to adopt six recommendations and 28 action steps. The recommendations are listed in this report in priority order. While all action steps are important, the task force identified 15 of the steps that are considered critical to the success of the recommendations and the System's pursuit for racial equity. Those action steps are listed first under each recommendation and identified using boldface.

Recommendations and action steps are intended for implementation by the institutions with the support of the UNC System Office and Board of Governors. To account for the existing institutional policies and practices already in place, which vary based on institution size and other factors, strategies should be applied equitably rather than uniformly (i.e., one size or recommendation fits all) to ensure that institutions with a greater need and fewer resources receive priority assistance. All institution-based recommendations related to hiring, recruitment, and retention also include the UNC System Office employees.

*“How do we **move beyond** workshops and discussions to **real systemic change**?”*

– STAFF MEMBER

INTRODUCTION

On June 9, 2020, the UNC Board of Governors Chair Randall C. Ramsey and Interim President William L. Roper announced the development of the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force (Appendix A).^{*} Charged with leveraging the talent and resources of our universities, the task force served as a platform for a System-wide examination of the legacy of race and racism in the state's public four-year higher education system, and how that history shapes and impacts the lived experiences of our students, faculty, and staff.

Chair Ramsey and Interim President Roper asked the task force to do the following:

1. Meet with student, faculty, and staff groups to discuss issues of race and equity in the UNC System and all tangible steps that can be taken across the UNC System in pursuit of equity and understanding.
2. Gather, explore, and develop recommendations, suggestions, and feedback.
3. Prepare a report to the Board of Governors, to include a list of recommendations and action steps in priority order.
4. Present the report to the chair of the Board of Governors and the president.

To accomplish its charge efficiently and effectively, the task force identified three focus areas that are critical for achieving equitable and inclusive working and learning environments within the UNC System:

- **Student Recruitment, Enrollment, and Outcomes:** examine how to close equity gaps at every stage of the student experience, from recruitment through graduation
- **Employee Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion:** study human resources practices in the recruitment, hiring, and retention of employees
- **Safe, Diverse, and Inclusive Campuses:** understand how to foster and maintain safe and supportive campuses that promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging

Task force members were asked to delve into a particular focus area, and members consulted with faculty, staff, and students across the UNC System in the form of discussions in August and September to develop and inform a set of draft recommendations. In addition, the full task force held meetings of the full task force in July, November, and December 2020. Meeting materials can be found on the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force website.

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

In partnership with APCO Worldwide, an advisory and advocacy communications consultant firm, the task force conducted a System-wide online survey to understand the perspectives of students and employees. Using initial results from the survey to guide the conversations, the task force hosted a series of virtual town halls for faculty, staff, and students to provide additional feedback on the three focus areas. Representing all 17 institutions and the UNC System Office, more than 16,000 faculty, staff, and students participated in the survey and 3,500 attended the virtual town halls.

During the November 2020 task force meeting, APCO presented a summary analysis of the results from the campus engagement process. Student, faculty, and staff identified seven areas as top priorities regarding race and equity: formalize a path to more diverse, inclusive leadership; ensure equity in hiring, promotions, tenure, and compensation; establish a diversity education model; invest in equitable mental health; evaluate campus policies and alternative practices; enhance inclusion through representative spaces; and close any funding and access gaps between Historically Minority Serving Institutions and other UNC institutions. APCO's full presentation is provided in Appendix B. The task force also received more than 1,100 responses via a form for anonymous feedback on the UNC System website.

^{*} All appendices can be found at <https://www.northcarolina.edu/unc-system-racial-equity-task-force/>

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

The Racial Equity Task Force, whose members include representation from the Board of Governors, students, faculty, and staff throughout the System, attended task force meetings, gathered feedback from System and external stakeholders, participated in conversations with constituent institutions, and approved and prioritized the recommendations.

- Reginald Ronald Holley, UNC Board Governors, Task Force Chair
- Kellie Blue, UNC Board of Governors, Task Force Vice-Chair
- Pearl Burris-Floyd, UNC Board of Governors
- Isaiah Green, UNC Board of Governors and President of the Association of Student Governments
- Anna Nelson, UNC Board of Governors, Task Force Vice-Chair
- Dawn Brown, Access Coordinator at UNC Wilmington and Former Chair of Staff Assembly
- Dr. Garikai (Kai) Campbell, Provost at UNC Asheville
- David Green, Professor of Law at North Carolina Central University and Former Chair of Faculty Assembly
- Dr. Timothy Ives, Professor of Pharmacy at UNC-Chapel Hill and Chair of Faculty Assembly
- Garrett Killian, Business and Technology Applications Specialist at East Carolina University and Chair of Staff Assembly
- Dr. Ricardo Nazario-Colon, Chief Diversity Officer at Western Carolina University
- David Perry, Police Chief at UNC-Chapel Hill

TASK FORCE SUPPORT STAFF

UNC System Office staff supported the task force, providing data analysis and communication support, coordination of campus conversations and the System-wide survey, and overall project management support for the effort.

- Lindsay McCollum Farling, Vice President for Financial Planning & Analysis, Finance and Administration
- Samantha Hargrove, Director of Marketing Communications, Communications
- Carrie O. Johnston, Assistant General Counsel, Governance, Legal, and Risk
- Haley Lohr, Higher Education Law Fellow, Governance, Legal, and Risk
- Kaity McNeil, Director of Licensure, Academic Affairs
- Dr. Shun Robertson, Senior Associate Vice President P20 Policy & Programs, Strategy and Policy
- Katharine Shriver, Graduate Assistant, Strategy and Policy
- Brian M. Usischon, Senior Associate Vice President for Human Resource Services and Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources

RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Racial Equity Task Force adopted six recommendations and 28 action steps that are considered essential to advancing the goal of achieving racial equity within the UNC System. While all of the action steps are important, the task force identified 15 steps that are considered critical to the success of the recommendations. Those action steps are listed first under each recommendation and identified using boldface.

Action steps are intended for implementation by the institutions with the support of the UNC System Office and the Board of Governors. To account for the existing institutional policies and practices already in place, which vary based on institution size and other factors, action steps should be applied equitably rather than uniformly (i.e., one size or recommendation fits all) to ensure that institutions with a greater need and fewer resources receive priority assistance. All institution-based recommendations related to hiring, recruitment, and retention also include the UNC System Office employees.

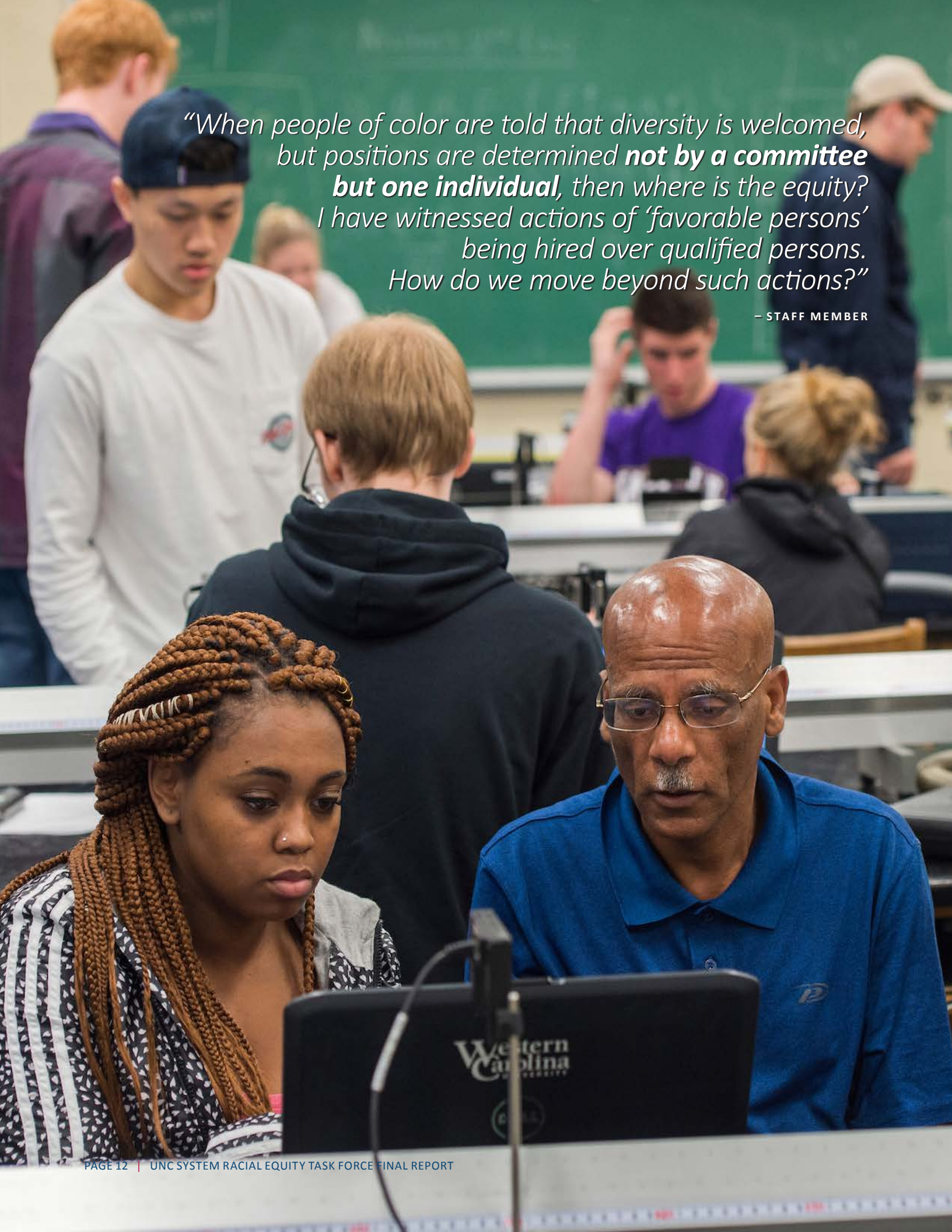


As part of the discovery process and to inform their recommendations, task force members examined data and consulted with diversity and inclusion professionals, students, faculty, and staff from the 17 institutions. The task force also conducted a System-wide survey and hosted a series of virtual town hall sessions. Together, these engagement activities garnered participation from more than 20,000 students, faculty, and staff members from across the System.

While recommendations are listed in priority order, the task force considers all recommendations essential to advancing the goal of achieving racial equity for the UNC System. Recommendations related to hiring, recruitment, and retention also include the UNC System Office employees.

- 1. Diversity and Equity Staffing to Support Inclusion and Belonging.** The System Office should establish an executive position that reports directly to the president to implement the recommendations of the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force and oversee future equity and inclusion initiatives. All faculty, staff, and students should have access to a diversity, equity, and inclusion representative and a safe space to talk confidentially about inequities.

- 2. Representation and Retention at All Levels of the University.** Examine and improve recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention policies and practices to build a racially diverse and equitable University of students, faculty, staff, and top leadership.
- 3. Data and Accountability.** Establish reporting requirements, accountability mechanisms, and processes that support a sustainable procedure for collecting race and equity data and the implementation of strategies that will help build support of a more equitable UNC System.
- 4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education.** Establish comprehensive programming for all students, faculty, and staff of the UNC System, and provide mandatory training for those individuals charged with ensuring compliance with diversity and inclusion standards, including institutional leadership, department chairs, division leaders, and others who serve in a supervisory role.
- 5. Programs and Activities in Support of Racial Equity and Inclusion.** Develop and support programs that improve equitable outcomes.
- 6. Campus Policing.** Build upon and make consistent across institutions training, procedures, and data collection practices that effectively support and promote racial equity in campus policing. Strengthen partnerships with other campus departments to facilitate alternative and/or shared responses to certain crises.



*“When people of color are told that diversity is welcomed, but positions are determined **not by a committee but one individual**, then where is the equity? I have witnessed actions of ‘favorable persons’ being hired over qualified persons. How do we move beyond such actions?”*

— STAFF MEMBER

RECOMMENDATION 1

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY STAFFING TO SUPPORT INCLUSION AND BELONGING

The System Office should establish an executive position that reports directly to the president to implement the recommendations of the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force and oversee future equity and inclusion initiatives. All faculty, staff, and students should have access to a diversity, equity, and inclusion representative and a safe space to talk confidentially about inequities.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Conversations with constituent institution diversity and inclusion officers revealed that supportive environments are key for students and employees of color to thrive within a university setting. Half of our survey respondents said they do not feel comfortable reporting incidents of racial discrimination and harassment. They shared the need for more resources for students, faculty, and staff to confidentially report race-related concerns.

While the System has taken steps to promote diversity and inclusion in the past, there is not a System expert fully dedicated to coordinating efforts among campuses, reporting findings to the president and Board of Governors, and providing guidance on matters related to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The University of North Carolina Board of Governors was directed in S.L. 2017-57, sec. 10.13(b) to submit to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee a study of the University's equal opportunity and diversity and inclusion operations and policies by January 1, 2018. At the direction of the Board, the UNC System Office completed the study, with the assistance of an external consultant, and the Board approved the study for transmittal to the Joint Committee. The Board of Governors' Subcommittee on Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion worked through the spring of 2018 on the findings of the study and proposed recommendations. While there has been some progress on these recommendations, including the creation of a Board of Governors policy and a Diversity and Inclusion Network, there are still some institutions without clear, dedicated diversity positions and no System- wide diversity and inclusion research agenda or goal with progress tracking.

ACTION STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION MAY INCLUDE:

1. Appoint, elevate, and/or enhance the role of the diversity, equity, and inclusion position at each institution. The diversity, equity, and inclusion position should be empowered to help set a clear path for addressing race and equity issues and establishing processes, resources, and solution- based support/ assistance.
2. Develop a System-wide Faculty Equity Fellows program, which brings together the expertise of faculty members and evidence-based research that advances the UNC System's policies and practices towards diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.
3. Make available to all constituent institutions the services of an ombuds officer, who will be a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for faculty, staff, and students. This officer would work in collaboration with the DEI officer to address race and equity issues.
4. The System Office should partner with the UNC System Diversity and Inclusion Council to develop a knowledge management strategy for institutions to share best practices to develop equitable working and learning environments.

RECOMMENDATION 2

REPRESENTATION AND RETENTION AT ALL LEVELS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Examine and improve recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention policies and practices to build a racially diverse and equitable University of students, faculty, staff, and top leadership.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

North Carolina's rapidly changing demographics could exacerbate disparities in educational opportunity and attainment. While the System's enrollment mirrors the current North Carolina population, our demographics do not reflect the state's population growth that is occurring in our younger age groups: while 80 percent of North Carolinians over the age of 65 are white, only 62 percent of those under the age of 17 are white. The young Hispanic population is growing most rapidly.

To meet the needs of our changing student population before they arrive at our institutions, a stronger, more diverse teacher pipeline is needed to increase the number of students who regularly interact with teachers of their own race and can see mentors and leaders who look like them. Research shows that Black students who have at least one Black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade are forty percent less likely to drop out of high school and thirty percent more likely to consider college as an option. White students benefit from having a teacher of color, too. But not everyone in North Carolina has the opportunity to have a teacher of color.

When North Carolina high school students graduate, they often want to attend one of our institutions. Of students who intend to go to college, one-third of Black and American Indian students, and 21 percent of Hispanic students intend to pursue postsecondary education at a UNC System institution. However, many qualified students of color and first-generation college students never make it to our classrooms because they do not have access to the supports and information necessary to help them successfully navigate the college experience.

Task force members heard from students of color that it is vital to their success to see faculty and staff who look like them represented on campus. A study of 13,000 faculty at 134 colleges and universities found that high levels of faculty diversity are positively related to student learning. Efforts to create and maintain this diversity should include fostering more underrepresented students of color in pursuing doctorate degrees and offering faculty and staff opportunities for career growth within our institutions. However, almost half of the employees surveyed by the task force believe there is not equitable access to leadership and promotion opportunities. Four in ten faculty and staff feel opportunities for leadership roles, tenure track, or promotions are, at best, "only sometimes" equitable.

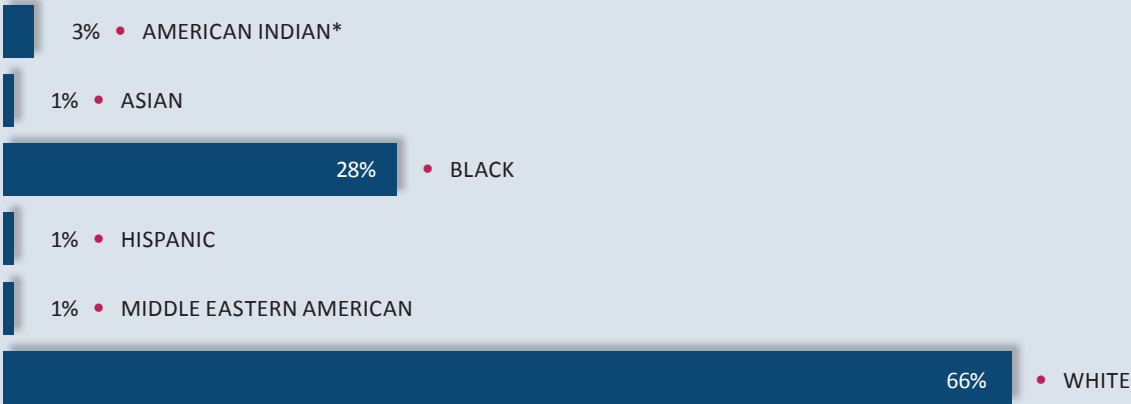
Three-fourths of survey respondents believe that our System leadership (i.e., Board of Governors, boards of trustees, and System Office leadership) is not diverse. Having diverse perspectives on each institution's board of trustees is an important component of both ensuring racial equity and aiding institutions to perform at a high level of excellence. Under state law, the 16 UNC four-year institutions generally must have 13-member boards of trustees with eight trustees appointed by the Board of Governors, four appointed by the General Assembly, and the president of the student government serving as an ex-officio member. In addition, state law accounts for up to a 30-member board for the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, and 15 board members for the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

The following table details the demographic makeup of the 2020-2021 boards of trustees, appointed by the Board of Governors. Two-thirds of trustees are white, one-quarter are Black, and only a small number are American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, or Middle Eastern American. The boards of trustees for our Historically Minority-Serving Institutions (HMSIs) are more diverse than other institutions. (Institutional-level data is provided in Appendix C.)

ACTION STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION MAY INCLUDE:

- 1. Build a high-quality, diverse teacher pipeline by recruiting, enrolling, and graduating more students of color in UNC System educator preparation programs.
- 2. Ensure that students of color are prepared to succeed by increasing financial aid counseling, improving partnerships with college access organizations, and expanding access to internships and undergraduate research.
- 3. Assess and modify hiring, salary increases, promotion and tenure, and retention processes and practices to identify strengths and growth opportunities, and develop System and institution action plans for improvement.
- 4. Seek opportunities to increase diversity in boards of trustees so that each reflects student enrollment.
- 5. Continue rollout of the Executive Leadership Institute with an emphasis on representation from historically minority-serving institutions and persons of color.
- 6. Review the nomination and selection processes for Board of Governors awards to ensure equitable practices and processes exist (Appendix D).

2020-2021 BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOG APPOINTMENTS) BY RACE, UNC SYSTEM INSTITUTIONS



** American Indian includes Native Americans along with Alaska Natives, as defined by the US Census*

RECOMMENDATION 3

DATA AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Establish reporting requirements, accountability mechanisms, and processes that support a sustainable procedure for collecting race and equity data and the implementation of strategies in support of a more equitable UNC System.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Data allow institutions to assess how well they are fulfilling their missions and goals and identify areas for improvement. Our campus engagement process revealed that participants are looking for new or improved policies and processes within the UNC System that address student, staff, and faculty equity and inclusion priorities. Disaggregating data is the critical first step to address inequities in our System because it helps us see where gaps exist and take precise steps that lead to more equitable outcomes for our constituents.

Data that provide a deeper perspective on our faculty, staff, and students should be used to evaluate efforts to improve racial equity and promote accountability at both the individual campus level and across the System. Task force members heard from our constituents that regular reports to and information sharing with System leadership related to diversity, equity, and inclusion should support and inform leadership's decision-making. We also heard that data should be reported at the institution- level, because data from our HMSIs sometimes mask System- level progress and areas for growth.

While System data show that faculty, staff, and students of color are underrepresented at many of the UNC System institutions, this does not diminish their assignments on racial diversity panels, task forces, and committees or the request to have them mentor, advise or facilitate discussions that involve faculty, staff, and students of color. These additional hours of service are not accounted for nor do they equate to opportunities for raises, promotions, or recognition. Often students and employees of color welcome the invitation to assist a fellow colleague, but disproportionately lose time studying, focusing on teaching and research, or miss out on other meaningful activities. Moreover, the need to support ongoing diversity initiatives can contribute to feelings of being overtaxed and burnt out—ultimately, hindering a positive campus experience. This concern was shared by student leaders, chief diversity officers, and faculty and staff members.

ACTION STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION MAY INCLUDE:

1. Require that regular presentations and reports be provided to the Board of Governors, the president, boards of trustees, and chancellors related to the University's progress and areas for improvement related to racial equity.
2. Increase the granularity of data that is collected, analyzed, and published on race and ethnicity for all faculty, staff, students, and leadership at all institutions and the System Office.
3. Require and administer campus climate surveys and exit interviews for students, faculty, and staff leaving the University.
4. Formalize incentives and accountability measures for students, faculty, staff, and administrators to engage in work to promote racial equity, diversity, and inclusion, and include institutional measures related to racial equity as part of performance evaluations.

RECOMMENDATION 4

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION EDUCATION

Establish comprehensive programming for all students, faculty, and staff of the UNC System, and provide mandatory training for those individuals charged with ensuring compliance with diversity and inclusion standards, including institutional leadership, department chairs, division leaders, and others who serve in a supervisory role.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Town hall and survey participants noted that institutions should offer diversity and equity training that covers topics such as racial bias, implicit bias, and diversity and inclusiveness for employees and students. While many of our institutions offer some form of diversity training, there is currently no uniform cultural sensitivity or diversity training available across the System.

Research on effective diversity education supports programming that includes the following design elements:

- Grounded in current theory and empirical evidence;
- Use of active learning techniques so that participants engage with course content;
- Avoidance of assigning blame or responsibility to participants for current diversity issues; and
- Inclusion of a plan for ongoing rigorous evaluation of the intervention's efficacy with different groups.

The task force recognizes that diversity and inclusion cannot be learned in a day or through a single program. One participant stated, "I often think training is done for universities to check off a box so they can say they did it. It would be nice if they followed through and implemented some policy instead of forgetting the training the minute it's gone." Positive effects of diversity training are greater when complemented by other diversity initiatives, policies, and practices targeted to both awareness and skills development over a significant period.

ACTION STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION MAY INCLUDE:

1. In partnership with the UNC System Diversity and Inclusion Council, the UNC System Office should identify a common core of diversity and equity training programs for employees, including such topics as racial bias, implicit bias, cultural competence, and diversity and inclusion.
2. Analyze and align the training modules with the responses from UNC System Racial Equity Task Force town halls and survey, and the System-wide employee engagement survey.
3. Establish reporting requirements and accountability and/or incentive tools to ensure effective training.

RECOMMENDATION 5

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

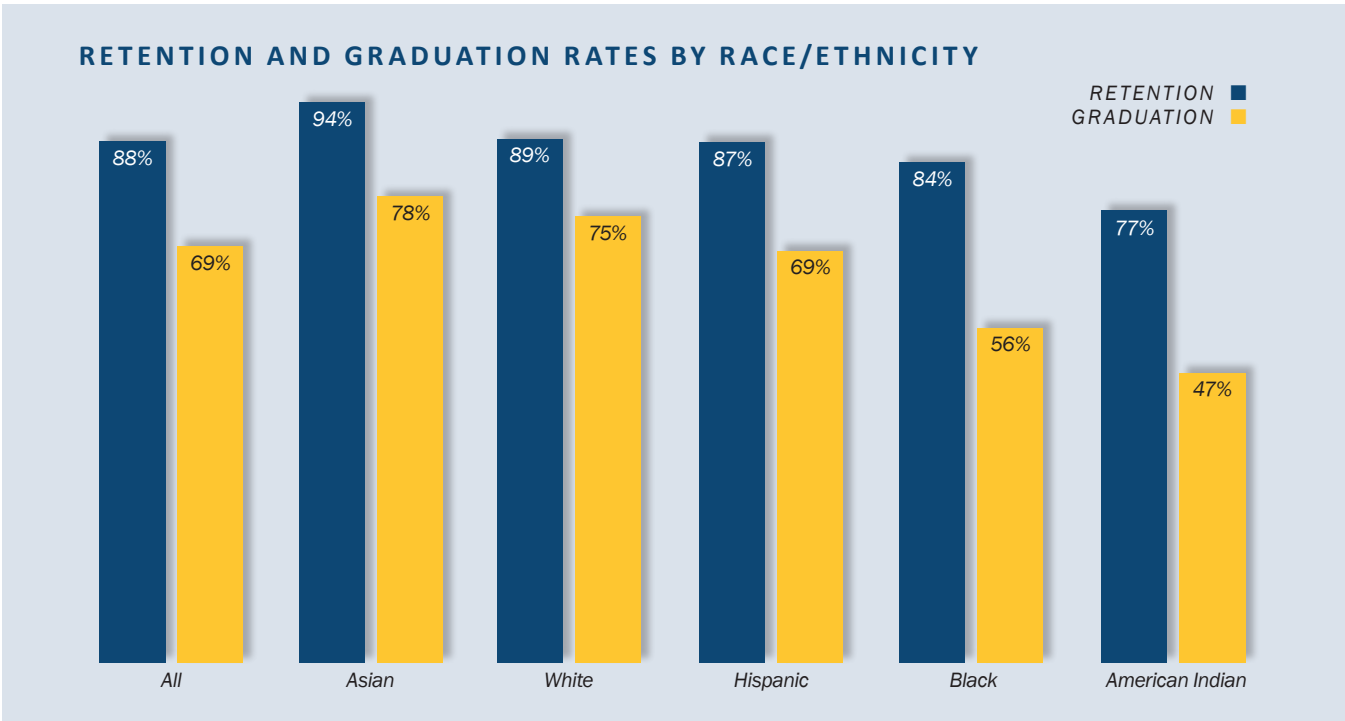
Develop and support programs that improve equitable outcomes.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Community colleges serve as the gateway to postsecondary education for many low-income, first-generation college students and students of color, who come with great talent and aspiration. Over 17,000 students transferred into the UNC System in the Fall 2019 semester—11,000 from the North Carolina Community College System. Working with our two-year college peers, we must develop strategies to help students understand the importance of finishing what they start.

Intense focus on improving postsecondary completion for students of color has produced notable effects: a growing body of evidence of what works in improving student success; an awareness of the importance of using data to assess and monitor student outcomes; and the breaking down of silos to create increasingly collaborative student success efforts. Even though we have seen progress in our institutions, we still have persistent equity gaps throughout the System.

To close equity gaps, it is important that we design supports to help students in and outside of the classroom. And, when developing these services, we should consider the different situations and circumstances from which our students come and how these experiences may influence their academic progress. Including diverse content



in course curricula creates more opportunities for underrepresented students to participate in postsecondary education and builds the outcomes that employers need (e.g., critical thinking, understanding of diverse perspectives, and decreased prejudice). By honoring our students' various backgrounds and investing in teaching and learning strategies known to benefit students of color, like adaptive learning, we can foster stronger learning outcomes and help students feel like they belong at our institutions.

While many college students arrive on campus feeling emotionally and academically unprepared, research shows that students of color are less likely to seek help than their white peers. In one study, one-quarter of Asian-American and Black students and one-third of Hispanic students with mental health problems sought treatment versus almost half of white students.

Graduate students should not be forgotten in this conversation. A recent American Council on Education report states, "Graduate students are a relatively vulnerable population within universities, and graduate students of color experience vulnerability on multiple levels. They rarely have access to the infrastructure of support services that undergraduate students have, for example, and social dynamics within graduate learning environments that exacerbate mental health risks are felt most profoundly by minoritized students."

Mental health was listed as a top 5 priority for students in our survey. One of the participants in the campus engagement process said, "Part of the deficiency in counseling services is that many counselors have no frame of reference for some of the trauma and issues that minorities faced in the past and continue to face in the present. Many minorities are left feeling undervalued and overwhelmed, and don't know what to do or how to deal with those kinds of ongoing psychological trauma."

ACTION STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION MAY INCLUDE:

1. Review best practices and innovations that the UNC System and its constituent institutions should consider that can improve the delivery of mental health services for undergraduate and graduate students and employees of color.
2. Provide support to institutions to pilot and scale innovative programming to ensure students of color persist and graduate, including students transferring from community colleges.
3. Increase diversity of mental health staff and expand access to counseling professionals with diverse backgrounds and/or training in trauma-informed and culturally responsive methods.
4. Integrate student support and mental health programming at critical student transition points (e.g., first-year student experience, transfer student experience, graduation) and targeted for underrepresented populations (e.g., black males).
5. Develop trainings and resources for faculty to learn best practices on how to reach underrepresented populations.

RECOMMENDATION 6

CAMPUS POLICING

Build upon and make consistent across institutions training, procedures and data collection practices that effectively support and promote racial equity in campus policing. Strengthen partnerships with other campus departments to facilitate alternative and/or shared responses to certain crises.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The task force was established following George Floyd's death at the hands of a police officer. Sixteen of the seventeen UNC System institutions have sworn law enforcement officers who serve and interact daily with students, faculty, and staff of color. It is critical to understand the roles campus law enforcement officers serve within our institutions and how their interactions with campus community members are experienced and perceived. In our survey, students reported "alternatives to policing" and "evaluating policing practices" as top priorities. A participant stated, "I think it is important we take on a restorative justice approach in policing generally in campus police. For example—a commitment to not take legal action for all non-violent drug offenses, and instead invest in therapy and rehab services."

The task force also heard potential topics for police training that could lead to culturally responsive policing, crisis and de-escalation training, and strategies on how to respond to diverse populations.

Based on a recent third-party review of campus law enforcement operations and through Task force members' conversations with and information collected from campus police chiefs within the System, there are opportunities to further develop consistency in campus law enforcement procedures, training, and equipment across all departments within the UNC System. Accreditation of all campus police departments, which has been a recommendation of two previous task forces within the past 15 years, and more uniform processes for review of data collection and training, are strategies that could help to ensure safe and inclusive campus experiences for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Eight of our campus police departments are currently accredited and three are currently seeking accreditation.


ACTION STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THIS RECOMMENDATION MAY INCLUDE:

1. Centrally engage a subject-matter expert to determine what data should be collected by campus law enforcement related to race and implement regular collection and analysis of any such data that is not currently collected.
2. Reduce the criminalization of incidents involving students by utilizing student affairs resources, such as counseling services and the student conduct process, rather than addressing matters through criminal prosecution.
3. Complete a review of how campus law enforcement departments develop and adopt their policies, procedures, and training content and frequency.
4. Require all campus police departments to obtain accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) or the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA).
5. Equip every sworn officer in the field responding to calls for service or following up on reported crimes or incidents with a body-worn camera. All campus police departments should possess less lethal devices in addition to existing firearms.
6. Require agreements with independent contractors for security services or for mutual aid with local law enforcement agencies to be approved by the campus police chief or his or her designee.

A group of diverse students are taking a selfie outdoors at night. In the foreground, a woman with grey hair and a black shirt is holding a white smartphone, smiling broadly. Behind her, several other students are visible, including a man with a white cap, a man with a black hoodie, a woman with long dark hair, and a man with glasses. They are all smiling and looking at the camera. The background shows a brick walkway, trees, and a building with lights. The overall atmosphere is positive and inclusive.

*“We risk bringing minorities into spaces that are not prepared to support and accept them. **It seems to me that we need to first focus on purging our environments of discriminatory tendencies and unchecked racism.** That way, we don’t usher our fellow BIPOC into spaces that are going to be harmful to them.”*

– STUDENT

A photograph of a student in a lecture hall. The student, a young woman with long dark hair, is wearing a light blue surgical mask and black-rimmed glasses. She is seated at a desk, looking down at a laptop. The lecture hall has rows of red seats, many of which are empty. In the background, other students are visible, some wearing masks. A sign on the desk in front of her reads "PLEASE LEAVE THIS SEAT".

***"I don't see a face I can trust
that can actively and
adequately understand
what I'm going through."***

— STUDENT

OTHER THINGS WE HEARD

During this process, the task force heard several concerns that are not covered in the recommendations and action steps. These topics are still important and should be addressed by the UNC System.

- **The Board of Governors should be representative of the diversity of the students in the UNC System.** The members of the Board of Governors are elected by the Senate and House of Representatives of the North Carolina General Assembly. While this process is not in control of the UNC System, faculty, staff, and students repeatedly stated that the current Board of Governors does not reflect the diversity of our state, student body, and institutions.
- **Every student should have a laptop.** The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the fact that many of our students do not have access to effective technology. Students cannot be successful in their online classes without consistent internet and computer access. With more classes turning to digital learning resources, technology access has become just as essential as traditional books, even for in-person classes.
- **Other issues of equity and diversity should be addressed at the System-level.** This task force was charged with a focus on racial equity, but there are other issues of equity that should be considered for System-level study, including socioeconomic status, gender, and disability.
- **The Board of Governors should establish a staff award.** In support of the UNC System's mission, the Board of Governors honors and recognizes excellence in areas of teaching, research, and public service through the following awards: Oliver Max Gardner Award, The Governor James E. Holshouser, Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service, Awards for Excellence in Teaching, and University Award. While the UNC System Staff Assembly presents annual awards and scholarships (The Erskine B. Bowles Services Award, The Thomas Ross Visionary Leader Award, and The Janet B. Royster Scholarship), there is no Board of Governors award for staff.

THE WORK FORWARD

The task force understands that enacting the recommendations and action steps will take time. The System Office should partner and engage in an iterative process with institutions to develop a plan for implementation that includes funding implications, needed policy changes, assessment of current status of recommendations and action steps at each institution, and metrics to measure progress.

This work must be ongoing. The UNC System must continue to examine where inequities currently exist, how those inequities negatively affect many of our students and employees, and how the System can transparently prioritize equity as an integral part of its pursuit of strategic goals. By fostering equity in our policies, programs, and practices, the UNC System can enhance economic and social mobility for all North Carolinians, particularly for those in communities that have historically been under-served and underrepresented in our classrooms and across our institutions.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO YOU

The Racial Equity Task Force was created in response to three dedicated leaders, representing the interests of students, faculty, and staff, who asked the UNC System leaders to address the growing concerns related to racial inequities and injustices affecting our institutions. The UNC Board of Governors Chair and UNC System President responded immediately to their request and on June 9, 2020, the work of the Racial Equity Task Force began.

The final recommendations and action steps grew from discussions with students, faculty, and staff through virtual town hall meetings, surveys, focus groups, and individual feedback offered over the course of several months.

We appreciate all of those who gave their time, energy, and honesty to this process. Thanks to those who shared their stories, their expertise, and their disappointments, all in a concerted effort to move us into a brighter, more equitable future. The realization of this bigger and bolder vision, where equity defines both the culture and outcomes of the UNC System, is the work we collectively aspire to support in the road map offered in this report.

We would like to thank all of those who offered valuable contributions to this process.*

- DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COUNCIL
- VIRTUAL TOWN HALL CONTRIBUTORS
- UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE
- APCO WORLDWIDE
- UNC SYSTEM OFFICE STAFF
- WORKING SESSION PRESENTERS
- FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS
 - FACULTY ASSEMBLY
 - STAFF ASSEMBLY
 - STUDENT BODY PRESIDENTS
 - STUDENT ADVOCATES

** a full list of names are listed on the Racial Equity Task Force website <https://www.northcarolina.edu/unc-system-racial-equity-task-force/>*



**THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM**
RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE

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