



Samford
University

"Let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."
Amos 5:24

Between 1619 and 1863 millions of people of
African origin were enslaved in this land.
In Samford University's early history, slavery
and its aftermath permeated the economic,
social and religious life of the institution
and much of the United States.

The resulting racism has led to discrimination,
oppression, injustice and violence
throughout the history of our nation.
This evil is cause for repentance.
All who walk with God are called
to pursue justice and mercy.

This obelisk honors the sacrifices of many
African Americans for the mission and
vision of Samford University even in days
when their efforts were
invisible or barely acknowledged.

TASK FORCE ON RACIAL JUSTICE *Final Report*

April 2021

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INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of the Task Force on Racial Justice is to assist the University in fostering positive, enduring changes in campus culture and existing systems so that racial justice may become a known attribute of the institution. This report provides an overview of the findings and recommendations for Samford University concerning racial justice. Samford is a Christian university whose faculty and staff advocate that all people be treated as Jesus, his prophets and apostles instruct us in the Bible: with divine justice and love. We are not advocating racial justice out of allegiance to any secular ideology or political party platform, but out of allegiance to God and his Word.

The Task Force, comprised of faculty, staff, students, parents, alumni, and trustees, joins together to educate and affect change on Samford's campus. The group is charged with examining multiple areas across Samford in which racial injustice has potentially taken place. The tie that binds us together as a racial justice task force (across our ethnic, racial, economic, political, and denominational differences) is Jesus Christ, his Word and Holy Spirit. This is a bond more powerful than any earthly power. This gives us transcendent reason to advocate for what is found in this report.

This report provides findings and recommendations from the following subcommittees: Historical, Definition of Justice, Definition of Culture, Athletics, Curriculum, Diversity Education, Hiring, Personal Responsibility, Scholarship/Financial Aid, and Spiritual Formation. These recommendations include a proposed timeline for implementation. The timeline is a suggestion; we recognize there are often additional components outside of our knowledge and control that may affect the implementation of these recommendations.

The very mission statement of Samford University emphasizes that we encourage our people in "social and civic responsibility." Our vision statement makes clear our commitment to "be a diverse community." And our core values include "engagement with the life and teachings of Jesus," "integrity, honesty and justice," and "appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions." We see this report as a set of applications of our school's guiding principles.

Special thanks to the Samford Administration and Board of Trustees for the opportunity and support of the work of the Task Force.

The members of the task force acknowledge the many contributions/feedback of all Samford University stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

From the onset of the charge by President Andrew Westmoreland, the co-chairs recognize that the efforts of the group be shrouded with prayer and commitment and to lead by faith and not by sight. The following scripture is the focus and guiding principles of the leaders of the Task Force:

Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV) ⁵Trust in Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. The Lord has richly blessed our efforts and we trust this report reflects His guidance.

Co-Chair Denise J. Gregory, Ph.D.
Co-Chair Robert Holmes

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

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Director of Student Leadership
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Divinity School

Cameron Thomas '14, '18

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Samford University Board of
Overseers

Cecelia Walker '98

Samford University Board of
Trustees

Danny Wood '99

Samford University Board of
Trustees

TASK FORCE ON RACIAL JUSTICE

Courage in the face of adversity is no small feat. The Task Force on Racial Justice at Samford University was announced June 4, 2020 in the wake of the racial injustices in America sparked by the death of Mr. George Floyd. Injustices felt around our campus were presented through a video created by our Black Student Union. The encounters, viewpoints and contributions of the students in the twelve-minute video affirmed the need and value of the Task Force. Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Mike Hardin and Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Phil Kimrey asked Assistant Provost for Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives Denise Gregory and Samford Board of Trustees Vice Chair Robert Holmes to serve as co-chairs. With the full support of President Andrew Westmoreland and Bill Stevens, Chair of Samford Board of Trustees, the Task Force members were announced June 8, 2020.

Charge of the Task Force

The primary goal of the Task Force on Racial Justice is to assist the University in fostering positive, enduring changes in campus culture and existing systems so that racial justice may become a known attribute of the institution. Racial injustice at Samford, past and present, has been examined and addressed.

The Task Force utilized a wide range of materials and human resources to develop immediate and long-term recommendations for the improvement of racial justice at Samford University, including, but not limited to, social media posts, videos, email messages, petitions, on-campus events, assessments and personal accounts of Black students, alumni and employees. Members of the faculty and staff have provided personal experience, input, research and other information requested by Task Force members.

Neither the administration nor the Board of Trustees have interfered with the work of the group, offering the full freedom to understand and put into coherent recommendations measures that will lead toward Samford's improvement.

The Task Force, comprised of faculty, staff, students, parents, alumni, and trustees, join together to educate and affect change on Samford's campus.

The first meeting of the Task Force was held June 30, 2020. During that meeting Andrew Westmoreland shared the charge of the committee.

During the first meeting, the Task Force agreed that its goal would be to ensure that the work of the Task Force reflect God's nature, reconciliation and healing, and be congruent to the thoughts and the mission of Samford University. Due to the size of the group, subcommittees were established to accomplish the tasks. Subsequently, the subcommittees were charged with examining multiple areas across Samford in which racial injustice has potentially taken place. It was agreed that these subcommittees were needed in order to develop specific action-items that could reform those areas and make them more just. The work of these subcommittees is reported below.

The task of addressing racial justice pertains to any injustice or bias related to ethnicity. *First and foremost*, our document begins with an investigation and recommendations related first to the Black community.

Commonly Used Abbreviations

FEC - Faculty Executive Committee

HBCU - Historically Black Colleges and Universities

MAC - Multicultural Affairs Committee

NPHC - National Pan-Hellenic Council

ODII - Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives

SGA - Student Government Association

Order of Subcommittee Reports

Historical

Definition of Justice

Definition of Culture

Athletics

Curriculum

Diversity Education

Hiring

Personal Responsibility

Scholarship/Financial Aid

Spiritual Formation

HISTORICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

Samford University's history has shaped and formed it into what it has become today. History provides the gateway into what Samford has become as a community. It is imperative that the university assess that which has shaped and formed it, both internally and externally. The Task Force recognizes the importance of acknowledging past sins and regrets in order to move forward towards a just and equitable future together - where all races are valued and celebrated for their diversity.

Chair: Cameron Thomas

Committee Members: Joe Hopkins, Galen Wendell Jones, Brad Radice, Douglas Sweeney, and Cecelia Walker

The historical committee of the Task Force on Racial Justice has worked to explore the historical trajectory of Samford University with respect to racial justice. The historical exploration came with conversations concerning the reckoning of Samford's history and its aspiration as an institution. Alabama Baptist was not devoid of its geographical location nor the social class structure in the developing frontier of the state of Alabama. A university founded during the years of revivalism and economic foundation of enslaved labor in the 19th century served as a vehicle to promote established norms of a fragmented developing republic. The initial donor, Julia Barron, and other university leaders had a connection with the economic system of enslavement. The university had an aspiration for its students of a quadrilateral approach to ensuring an educated student developed in intellect, virtue, benevolence, and faith. Key leaders of Howard College (now Samford University) participated in the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy. The outcome of the Civil War presented a reshaping of history for Howard College as university presidents across the south participated in the perpetuation of the "Myth of the Lost Cause ." Ranks of college presidents in the Confederate Army represented the rank of Colonel at the least as they headed back into their positions as institutional leaders. This helped promote the elongated teaching of the Myth of the Lost Cause which had a lasting impact on the perception of recently emancipated enslaved persons.

As Howard College transitioned from Marion to Eastlake in Birmingham, Howard College students were isolated from the downtown Birmingham environment to shelter them from the racial tension taking place in the city. Some key leaders of Samford opposed integration. Important stakeholders wrestled with the idea of integration but had to succumb to the inevitability of integration with the admission of Audrey Lattimore Gaston Howard into the Cumberland School of Law in 1967. The 50 years following Samford's integration have been wrought with obstacles and opportunities that have brought us to the point of this report.

¹ The Myth of the Lost Cause is an American pseudo-historical ideology that promoted the foundation of the Confederate States during the American Civil War as just and a preservation of history and culture. The ideology insists that enslaved people were treated with dignity and desired their status in America and promoted the idea that the Civil War was to cement state rights. This ideology promoted racist structures and preservation of Southern culture.

The stories of Howard College and later Samford University display a university that takes the shape and form of that which it has nurtured. As Samford continues to develop as an institution, this unique intersection of time and a trajectory from the inception have met together for such a time as this. This subcommittee has convened respective scholars with deep historical expertise and personal experiences with the institution. The aspiration of the subcommittee has not been to diminish any personal experiences but to explore how as a community we can serve as a beacon of light towards making Samford, throughout undergraduate and graduate experiences, a place affirming our Christian commitments representative of the whole of Christendom.

The subcommittee’s aspirations were to:

1. Explore the historical trajectory of Samford University on the topic of racial justice.
2. Affirm the necessity of the Samford University to reckon its history with an aspiration of reconciliation as the final goal.
3. Formulate measurable outcomes from our findings to position the university to handle with care the history received from previous generations and envision a way to embrace a future that represents the justice and righteousness of God as stated by the Task Force on Racial Justice.

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
<p>1. Establish a Commission on the History of Race at Samford University.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This commission will explore stories of Howard College/Samford University with respects to slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, the Civil Rights Movement until present. 	<p>Dean of Howard College of Arts and Sciences, the History Department, the University Archivist, Participants on this committee</p>	<p>Fall 2021- Spring 2023</p>
<p>2. Launch an Interdisciplinary Consortium on Race.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide support to faculty for the purpose of conducting relevant cross-disciplinary research and scholarly production in the areas of (but not limited to) the social and physical sciences, humanities, business, education, and religious studies. 	<p>Office of the Provost/Academic Affairs</p>	<p>Spring 2022</p>

DEFINITION OF JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

One of the first concerns addressed was the need to agree on what the Task Force understood to be the definition of justice. A subcommittee to define justice was formed. The group worked to develop a definition that is biblically grounded. After review and discussion, the Task Force has agreed that this would be the definition we will operate under when making decisions. The definition grounds the action items and recommendations of the Task Force. It is important to note that the subcommittee was not charged with developing the definition of racial justice, but of justice. However, the definition of justice has important implications for the ways the Task Force approaches racial justice.

Chair: Dennis Sansom

Committee Members: Karon Bowdre, Ashley George, Corey Green, Rachel Hagues, Galen Jones, Amy Simpson

Definition of Justice

Justice means “to make right or whole” and is a relational term rooted in God’s character and actions. It means people living in right relationship with God, with each other, and with creation by upholding both goodness and impartiality. It affirms that all people enjoy the respect, fairness, and equitable treatment due persons created in the image of God. Our response to God’s love compels us to love our neighbors— and our enemies— in tangible ways. Justice demonstrates love in action; it challenges us to change our hearts and courageously to identify with those who suffer injustices and to right the wrongs. The ultimate arc of justice leads towards reconciliation with God and with each other.

Principles of Application and Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
<p>1. God is Just, and Christ is the reality and model of God’s justice. God expects and demands justice for all in which everyone is treated fairly and according to their human dignity. Justice requires society to care for the historically disadvantaged and oppressed. Also, justice aims to strengthen the community’s witness of the glory of God and to enable the community to love God and the neighbor more concretely and truly. (Deuteronomy 10.18 “execute the judgment of the fatherless, and widow, and loves the stranger”; Micah 6.8 “What does the LORD require of you, to do justice and love mercy”; Psalm 146.7-9 “who executes judgment for the oppressed”; Matthew 25.45 “as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>Comprehensive obligation for all of Samford University (administration, faculty, staff, and students).</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Apply the principles of Justice at the adoption of the Task Force statement.</p> <p>Disseminate the principles of Justice throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p> <p>Continuous promotion and assessment of application of principles of Justice.</p>

<p>2. Justice is an action response to God’s judgment that requires the unjust action to be reversed or made right, if possible. This requires a process of first confession of wrong; repentance for it; submission to God; the duty to do what is right; and finally, a commitment to correct the wrongs.</p> <p>(II Chronicles 7.14 “turn away from their wicked ways”; Amos 5.15 “establish judgment in the gate”; Matthew 5.6 “hunger and thirst after justice” [<i>dikaiosune</i>]))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>Comprehensive obligation for all Samford University (administration, faculty, staff, and students).</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Apply the principles of Justice at the adoption of the Task Force statement.</p> <p>Disseminate the principles of Justice throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p> <p>Continuous promotion and assessment of application of principles of Justice.</p>
<p>3. Justice aims for reconciliation among people. However, for reconciliation to occur, there first must be confession, contrition, and repentance for the wrongs and sins done and then forgiveness by those wronged. True reconciliation requires the development of a relationship of trust grounded in love of God and the others. (Isaiah 58.6 “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? . . . that you break every yoke”; II Corinthians 5.18-21 “God has given us the ministry of reconciliation”)</p>	<p>Comprehensive obligation for all Samford University (administration, faculty, staff, and students).</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Apply the principles of Justice at the adoption of the Task Force statement.</p> <p>Disseminate the principles of Justice throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p> <p>Continuous promotion and assessment of application of principles of Justice.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 		
<p>4. For all Samford students, faculty, administration, and staff to experience the best that Samford University can offer, justice must become part of the institutional and daily practices of everyone. This requires giving greater voice to minorities in the life of Samford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>Comprehensive obligation for all Samford University (administration, faculty, staff, and students).</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Apply the principles of Justice at the adoption of the Task Force statement.</p> <p>Disseminate the principles of Justice throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p> <p>Continuous promotion and assessment of application of principles of Justice.</p>
<p>5. Samford has a timely opportunity to model to society how to act in ways of justice that lead to a better society, that model how to transform our hearts, and that have eternal consequence for God’s providential plans to recreate a new Heaven and Earth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>Comprehensive obligation for all Samford University (administration, faculty, staff, and students).</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Apply the principles of Justice at the adoption of the Task Force statement.</p> <p>Disseminate the principles of Justice throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p> <p>Continuous promotion and assessment of application of principles of Justice.</p>

DEFINITION OF CULTURE AT SAMFORD SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Dennis Sansom

Committee Members: Karon Bowdre, Ashley George, Corey Green, Rachel Hagues, Galen Jones, and Amy Simpson

Culture refers to a shared system of salient beliefs, values, practices, traditions, and customs that reflects a group’s self-identity and self-understanding, informing them on how to interpret themselves and how they should act. It also influences the way a people interpret and perceive other groups. Moreover, a culture indicates what a group wants to leave for future generations and, thus, what they are most anxious about losing. Finally, in that no particular culture is perfectly moral or lives up to its ideals, and what is important to one generation may not be as important to the next, each culture must admit its imperfections and failures and continually examine itself.

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
<p>Principles of Application</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Samford must forthrightly acknowledge past shortcomings and deficiencies in its acceptance and appreciation of diverse cultures, and routinely examine and scrutinize its policies, practices, and customs to ensure that they do not, directly or indirectly, result in unlawful or immoral discrimination. The university should therefore periodically evaluate itself at all levels as to whether it demonstrates a nurturing community “aggressive in self-assessment and continuous improvement” where the core values of “personal empowerment,” “justice,” and “appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions” flourish. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>While this is a comprehensive obligation, specific initiatives should be taken by the Trustees, President, Vice-Presidents, Provost, and Deans.</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Apply the principle at the adoption of the Task Force statement and continually monitor. Disseminate the principle throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p>

<p>2. In that Samford is a university responsible to educate students and create knowledge, Samford in its curriculum, classroom instruction, student guidance and mentoring, and research projects should cultivate the life of the studious mind among the students and faculty by cultivating an intellectual and personal openness to learning from other cultures and historical periods and by engaging and learning from the Christian intellectual, aesthetical, and ethical traditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p> <p>Initiative should be taken by academic administrators and faculty.</p>	<p>Apply the principle at the adoption of the Task Force statement and continually monitor. Disseminate the principle throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p>
<p>3. In that no culture is morally, legally, and religiously infallible and perfect, Samford University in all its facets should constantly evaluate its values, goals, and practices by whether they incorporate the basic humility of Christian ethics; that is, central to the Christian life is obeying the commands to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12.31), to look upon others as better than ourselves (Philippians 2.3), not to judge others (Matthew 7. 1-5 and Romans 14.4), and to serve others rather than lord over them (Mark 10.42).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be disseminated throughout Samford’s publications and website. 	<p>A comprehensive obligation.</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>Should apply the principle at the adoption of the Task Force statement and continually monitor. Disseminate the principle throughout Samford’s publications and website by December 31, 2021.</p>

ATHLETICS SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Robert Holmes

Committee Members: Angelen Brooks, Everett Brooks, Justin Hayes, Denise Gregory, Derrick Sherman

Samford University Athletics Department is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment for our student-athletes and staff.

After consultation with Black student athletes and coaches, the Director of Athletics recognized the need to form a more formalized approach to addressing racial diversity in athletics. Through the creation of the new position, Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics, this department is focused on creating ongoing communication, education and training for student-athletes and the athletics department, creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive environment and community engagement.

Current efforts initiated by Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics and supported by athletics senior leadership team are ongoing. The Diversity and Inclusion Council comprised of coaches, staff and administration focused on employee development, community building and employee communication. One of the council's first actions was to create the Bulldog Pledge as a way to unite our department and agree on a core set of beliefs around unity. Future plans for this council include reviewing best hiring practices for the athletics department and making recommendations to improve current practices to help ensure a diverse pool of qualified candidates are considered for all job openings.

The Athletics Council for Equality (ACE) was created as a subcommittee of the Samford Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC). This council serves as a platform for student-athletes to address racial, social and equality issues, educate peers and community outreach. ACE leadership is working on setting up regularly scheduled open body meetings to create consistency and allow opportunities for student-athletes to participate in discussions, hear from speakers and participate in other opportunities that are scheduled.

The Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics will continue to provide ongoing educational opportunities throughout the year for student-athletes, coaches, staff and administration. Samford Athletics first department wide diversity training session was conducted this spring through the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives. The goal is to host diversity training for student-athletes and the athletics department coaches, staff and administration annually.

In addition to the efforts listed above, the Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics will continue to promote educational opportunities offered by the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives and ensure that our student-athletes of color feel welcome and comfortable on campus during their time at Samford. This will be done by increasing exposure to opportunities for campus involvement, creating a safe space for our student-athletes of color to discuss issues and report problems and ensure that our student-athletes of color mental health needs are being met.

Samford Athletics is also focused on community engagement. The Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics will work to identify opportunities for our student-athletes and staff to engage and serve in diverse communities. Samford Athletics would like to create a resource page on the athletics website that will provide the community with information regarding our department initiatives, campus resources and additional important resources.

The Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics is working with the Assistant Director of Athletics for Academic Services and the Executive Associate Director of Athletics for Operations to develop and implement a four-year plan professional development program for all student-athletes. This program will be designed to meet specific needs for each class level and help all student-athletes be better prepared for a successful transition to from athletics to the professional work force. This program will include leadership training, diversity and inclusion training, career development and life skills.

Recommendation 1

Place emphasis on the Athletics Council for Equality (ACE) as a resource for students to provide solutions to the needs and concerns of inequities on Samford’s campus.

Specific Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
1.1 Revisit the goals and initiatives of the council, reviewing the work that has been done and the work that needs to be done going forward.	Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics	Fall 2021
1.2 Ensure that the council is diversified to provide feedback and narrative consistent with that of black students on campus.	Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics	Fall 2021

Recommendation 2

Increase athlete and staff interaction within the Athletics department to foster inclusion within the department.

General Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
<p>2.1 Continue Annual Diversity departmental training to ensure that the department is educated on the most efficient ways to provide communication outlets for their students.</p>	<p>Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics</p> <p>Director of Athletics</p>	<p>Spring 2022</p>
<p>2.2 Diversify staff within the Athletics department to increase diversity within the support system available to Black athletes.</p>	<p>Director of Athletics</p>	<p>Spring 2021</p>
<p>2.3 Conduct yearly surveys, one-on-one and small group meetings to get feedback regarding our efforts as a coaching staff, department and university regarding diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics</p> <p>Director of Athletics</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>

Recommendation 3

Create opportunities to assist Black athletes with their transition from athletics to academic and social settings on and off campus.

General Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
3.1 Provide opportunities for Black athletes to communicate with professionals who have transitioned from athletics to their career avenue.	Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics	Fall 2021
3.2 Provide a mentorship opportunity for athletes to meet with Black alumni and Black leaders currently on campus who can share their experiences and assist in navigation of the student experience.	Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics	Spring 2022
3.3 Provide support to Black student-athletes participation in student involvement including Greek Life.	Athletic Department	Fall 2021

Recommendation 4

Provide co-curricular opportunities around racial diversity for all student-athletes and athletic department.

General Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
4.1 Provide opportunities for student-athletes to visit the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum and National Museum for Peace and Justice in Montgomery.	Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics Director of Athletics	Fall 2021
4.2 Create a distinguished speaker series on diversity, equity and inclusion for the student-athletes and the athletic department.	Director of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives for Athletics Director of Athletics	Fall 2021

CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Anna McEwan

Committee Members: Angelia Brooks, Hope Dawson, Lisa Gurley, Rachel Hagues, Alondra Hampton, Jewel Littleton, Cameron Thomas

Narrative of Work

The Task Force on Racial Justice charged the subcommittee on curriculum to examine Samford University's current course offerings and make recommendations for curricular changes and additions regarding justice in general and racial justice in particular. The report was vetted twice by the broader membership of the Task Force on Racial Justice and approved for dissemination among other campus entities on October 10, 2020. The following groups reviewed the report and provided feedback.

- Faculty Executive Council (FEC)
- Chairs of Academic Affairs, General Education, and University Curriculum Committees
- Faculty Senate and full faculty
- Deans' Council and administrators in Academic Affairs

Acknowledgements

Because Samford University undergraduates are required to take Cultural Perspectives I and II (UCCP 101 and 102), members of the Task Force on Racial Justice affirm the use of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Letters from a Birmingham Jail as a core text for these courses. We recognize the more recent effort to include readings and discussion of three African American authors in UCCP 101 and to extend the discussion to matters of racial justice and equality in UCCP 102 for the 2020-2021 academic year. We recognize and affirm the work of faculty in the School of Public Health to revise course content for Concepts of Health and Fitness (UCFH 120) to include readings and discussion of health inequities and disparities, as well as the work of faculty in the History Department in creating a new course in African American history. Furthermore, we applaud Samford faculty representing at least 20 academic disciplines who report that themes of racial justice are infused throughout courses for a wide range of majors.

Observations

While topics, themes, and concepts of race, racism, justice, equity, and racial justice are present within the curriculum, they may not be available for study by all students, nor permanent and sustainable, nor easily identifiable in official course titles and descriptions. A review of general education requirements at six Baptist colleges and universities (Baylor, California Baptist, Campbell, Carson Newman, Mercer, Union) reveals that none include courses that address race, racism, justice, equity, and racial justice in an easily discernable way. Again, concepts of racial justice may be embedded into a variety of courses at these institutions, but the presence of such is difficult to identify through examination of catalog course titles and descriptions. The two historically black colleges and universities (HBCU), Florida Memorial University and Morris College, included in the review offer six hours of African American-focused coursework as part of the general education core. Four institutions offer related minors, and one of the four offers a related major.

- Baylor: Poverty Studies & Social Justice minor (social work)
- Carson-Newman: Conflict & Justice Studies (interdisciplinary)
- Florida Memorial: African American Studies (interdisciplinary)
- Mercer: African major/minor (interdisciplinary); Southern Studies major/minor (interdisciplinary); Applied Social Justice certificate

Subcommittee members recognize the need for consistent application of the Task Force’s definition of justice throughout all curricular efforts. The recommendations that follow should be considered and implemented in ways that stand in accordance with the definition of justice as articulated from a biblical perspective.

Recommendation 1

Members of the Task Force on Racial Justice believe that weaving a thread of Biblical justice throughout the curriculum, first and foremost, for Black Americans who have been historically and uniquely disadvantaged and oppressed, reflects fully the mission of Samford University. Therefore, to promote the institution’s core values of “*integrity, honesty, and justice,*” and “*appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions,*” and to support the Baccalaureate Goals of critical reflection, ethical reasoning, social engagement, human relationships, intercultural connections, and Christian faith, members of the Task Force recommend the inclusion of concepts of race, racism, justice, equity, and racial justice as permanent and easily recognized components of the curricular experience for all Samford undergraduate students.

Understanding that curricular oversight and decision-making are the purview of Samford faculty and that incremental changes may be necessary to realize permanent and sustainable ideals, the following suggestions are offered with all humility and respect.

Specific Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
1.1 Revise content and/or course descriptions for the University Core Curriculum to ensure that racial justice becomes a permanently recognized component of the curriculum.	General Education Committee University Curriculum Committee	Fall 2021
1.2 Revise the narratives that support the Baccalaureate Goals to ensure that racial justice becomes a permanently recognized component of the document that guides Samford’s General Education Curriculum.	Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences SACSCOC liaison	Fall 2021

<p>1.3 Revise content and/or course descriptions for disciplinary courses to ensure that the Baccalaureate Goals of critical reflection, ethical reasoning, social engagement, human relationships, intercultural connections, and Christian faith as pertaining to racial justice are permanently recognized components of selected courses.</p>	<p>Department Chairs Faculty</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p>1.4 Identify one or more additional courses that include topics of racial justice that might be included in the General Education Distribution Areas.</p>	<p>Faculty from SOC and HIST (See 1.7)</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>
<p>1.5 Include a standardized curriculum module on the topic of implicit bias and racial justice to be used across all sections of Foundations (FOUN 101).</p>	<p>Faculty or staff responsible for FOUN 101</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>
<p>1.6 Provide one or more standardized curriculum modules on topics of implicit bias and racial justice in Canvas Commons, available for use by any faculty member for any course.</p>	<p>Interested faculty</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>

<p>1.7 Create an interdisciplinary minor related to racial justice, to include required anchor courses along with a selection of courses taken in at least two disciplines.</p> <p>a. Several existing humanities and social science courses provide keen attention to themes of race, privilege, stratification, and inequality. Examine inclusion of these courses in a minor or certificate program.</p> <p>b. If general education continues to explore “integrative courses” that include cross-cutting themes, consider designating one of the courses as an anchor (required course) for the racial justice minor or certificate program.</p>	<p>Faculty from Sociology, History, Cultural Perspectives</p> <p>Ad Hoc planning committee for interdisciplinary minor</p>	
<p>1.8 Recognize and celebrate faculty who are awarded internal grants that support innovative curriculum projects that address topics of racial justice.</p>	<p>Personnel from: Office of the Provost and/or Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p>1.9 Involve the Division of Marketing and Communication in developing materials and messages that feature curricular efforts at the undergraduate level addressing racial justice.</p>	<p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>On-going</p>

Because Samford graduate students complete courses that address issues around racial justice from a Christian, biblical perspective in the several fields, such as business, divinity, education, social work, and the health professions, members of the Task Force on Racial Justice acknowledge and affirm existing efforts of faculty members representing the University’s graduate programs.

Recommendation 2

To promote Samford’s core values of “*integrity, honesty, and justice,*” and “*appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions,*” members of the Task Force on Racial Justice recommend the continued integration of concepts of race, racism, justice, equity, and racial justice as easily recognized threads woven throughout the curricular experience for all Samford graduate students.

In recognition of the highly specialized nature of graduate programs which is often accompanied by the expectations of external licensing and accrediting bodies, the suggestions offered are necessarily broad.

General Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
2.1 Consider offering opportunities to earn micro-credentials or internal certificates related to topics of racial justice.	Deans; Program Directors	On-going
2.2 Create interprofessional education experiences for addressing topics of racial justice (e.g., students from multiple programs in the health sciences collaborate on an issue related to racial justice in health care).	Deans; Program Directors	On-going
2.3 Provide one or more standardized curriculum modules on topics of implicit bias and racial justice in Canvas Commons, available for use by any faculty member for any course.	Interested faculty	Fall 2021

<p>2.4 Involve the Division of Marketing and Communication in developing materials and messages that feature curricular efforts at the graduate level addressing racial justice.</p>	<p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>On-going</p>
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Because the goal of curricular and co-curricular changes is to positively impact Samford University students, and because the Task Force on Racial Justice was charged with assisting “...the University in fostering positive, enduring changes in campus culture and existing systems so that racial justice may become a known attribute of the institution,” there exists a need to study the effectiveness of our efforts to address racial justice.

Recommendation 3

To ascertain the perspective of faculty and students regarding the impact of curricular and co-curricular endeavors, members of the Task Force on Racial Justice recommend that personnel in the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Affairs and the Division of Academic Affairs (i.e., faculty), collaborate to design and implement a campus study. Furthermore, members recommend that the institution seek grant-funding to support this effort with the goal of disseminating findings to a broader audience and becoming a thought-leader in addressing racial justice in Christian higher education.

Fully recognizing that the scope of any study depends on the support of financial and human resources, directions include, but are not limited to the following.

General Recommendations	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
<p>3.1 Seek funding to support a study that includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of students regarding racial justice before and after completing UCCP101 and 102 (or all courses in the University Core Curriculum) through surveys, focus groups and interviews Examining the perspectives of faculty who are engaged in courses that include topics around racial justice through surveys, focus groups and interviews Examining the perspectives of faculty and staff who are involved in co-curricular activities that address topics of racial justice through surveys, focus groups and interviews 	<p>Institutional Research</p> <p>Personnel from Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives</p> <p>Interested faculty</p> <p>Director of Grants & Contracts</p>	<p>Begin to seek funding immediately</p>
<p>3.2 Seek opportunities to disseminate study findings and feature the work of Samford faculty, staff, and students in addressing matters of racial justice.</p>	<p>Institutional Research</p> <p>Personnel from Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives</p> <p>Interested faculty</p> <p>Director of Grants & Contracts</p> <p>Division of Marketing and Communication</p>	<p>On-going</p>

DIVERSITY EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Jenée Spencer

Committee Members: Bobby Gatlin, Justin Hayes, Rev. John King, Jewel Littleton, Arden Long

Narrative of Work

The Diversity Education subcommittee began as the Implicit Bias Subcommittee to address the need for introspection and bias reformation. Diversity Education better reflects the work of the subcommittee, encompassing recommendations for a wide range of diversity and inclusion training and discussion topics. The Task Force believes this is necessary to affect social and cultural change on Samford University's campus. The subcommittee reviewed the implicit bias training presentation provided by the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives (ODII) and ReNew Partnerships self-assessment bias tool. Implicit bias training and self-assessment were presented to the Task Force on Racial Justice, including discussion of how to interpret self-assessment results. In collaboration with the Task Force on Racial Justice, the Diversity Education subcommittee identified the need for in house creation of self-assessment tool and campus-wide Implicit Bias training (students, faculty, staff, administration, trustees). The Diversity Education subcommittee chair researched effects of implicit bias training on institutions and how to support training at different levels. This information will inform development of statements of support for other subcommittees that can add context training such as hiring and curriculum subcommittee.

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
<p>1. Annual required virtual implicit bias and cultural competency program for students, faculty and staff that centers the needs and core values of the Samford community, to be followed by and supported with in-person discussion facilitated by the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives and certified faculty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progressive modules to decrease topic burnout by classification ◦ Formative assessment should take place after the training ▪ Freshmen, transfers, and new hires participate in basic module ▪ Integrate modules into curriculum via FOUN 101 or Communication Arts/ Cultural Perspectives 	<p>ODII</p> <p>Office of the President</p> <p>Office of the Provost</p> <p>Deans</p>	<p>No later than July 1, 2021</p>
<p>2. Develop an implicit association self-assessment tool that aligns with the spiritual moral imperative of honoring differences and diverse cultures.</p>	<p>ODII</p> <p>Spiritual Life</p>	<p>No later than July 1, 2021</p>

<p>3. Annual opportunity for diversity discussion with trustees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begin with basic overview that each trustee must complete ◦ New trustee must complete during on-boarding ▪ Designated time for discussion centering diversity and inclusion including but not limited to updates, points of pride, areas of concern, training, and allocation of resources. 	<p>ODII Office of the President</p>	<p>No later than July 1, 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual trustee retreat
<p>4. Implicit bias and cultural competency training and certified record of completion for all senior Samford administrators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training to be supported by annual discussions centering diversity and inclusion including but not limited to updates, points of pride, areas of concern, training, and allocation of resources. 	<p>ODII Office of the President</p>	<p>No later than July 1, 2021</p>

<p>5. Implicit bias training centered on hiring for all search committee members prior to beginning the search process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require each search committee chair to participate in one hiring training session facilitated by ODII to review and refresh in preparation for the search process. Sessions will include things to know (key concepts, language), as well as recommendations from Human Resources Department and the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives. 	<p>ODII</p> <p>Office of the Provost</p> <p>Human Resources</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>6. Samford-wide review of systems and processes to address inequities and systemic policies that support implicit bias training and university cultural change.</p> <p>Initial Focus Areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tenure requirements Guidelines for public discourse (social media) Statement of support for Hiring Subcommittee suggestions 	<p>ODII</p> <p>University Counsel</p> <p>University's Student Conduct Coordinator</p> <p>Office of the Provost</p>	<p>January 25, 2021</p> <p>Complete prior to accreditation assessment</p>
<p>7. Diversity and Inclusion education woven into convocation events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued Cadre offerings centered on literature that supports D&I education goals 	<p>ODII</p> <p>Office of Spiritual Life</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>

<p>8. Develop a diversity education module that centers cultural competency and implicit bias education to be used as an Honors Education sanction tool for students.</p>	<p>Student Affairs & Enrollment Management</p> <p>Student Honors Council</p> <p>ODII</p>	<p>Spring 2022</p>
<p>9. Develop a diversity education module that centers cultural competency and implicit bias education to be used as an Education sanction tool for employees.</p>	<p>University Legal Council</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>Faculty Senate committee (Business Affairs & Faculty Welfare)</p> <p>ODII</p>	<p>Spring 2022</p>

HIRING SUBCOMMITTEE

Co-chairs: M. Ahinee Amamoo and Anthony Overton

Committee Members: Angelia Brooks, Stephen Dillard, Denise Gregory, Derrick Sherman, Ben Shirley, Cameron Thomas

Purpose and Goals

As the Task Force addresses the topics of diversity and inclusion across campus, the importance of diversity must be incorporated into the hiring and retention practices at Samford. This subcommittee sought to explore best practices for diversifying faculty and staff in higher education, to develop a benchmark measure of diversity in hiring, and to propose policies or programs to assist the university to address the diversity in higher education needs at Samford.

The following recommendations are provided to Samford University to help increase diversity of faculty and staff. These recommendations focus on principal areas of the hiring process in which we can intervene and incorporate intentional and methodic processes to increase faculty and staff diversity at Samford. At each of these levels of the hiring process, some form of assessment is needed to evaluate the effectiveness and benefits from these initiatives and determine if they are beneficial.

*Note: Detailed explanations for each recommendation are provided below the table of recommendations. The recommendations are in no particular order of importance.

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
Develop and implement requirements for diverse search committees	Trustees, Provost, All VPs, Human Resources, University Legal Counsel	May 2021
Post staff positions for a minimum time period 14 days.	All VPs, Dean, Chair, Human Resources	February 2021
To increase the opportunity to ensure diverse applicant pools, Samford should consider advertising jobs in the multiple job posting locations identified.	All VPs, Human Resources	February 2021

Encourage departments and colleges to explore possibilities for adding members of underrepresented minority groups to their faculty.	Deans	February 2021
Develop a Minority Visiting Professors/Visiting Scholar Program.	Deans	Fall 2021
Track number of diverse applicants, offers and new hires to evaluate the impact of recommendations	Human Resources, All VPs	February 2021
Understand what attracts Black faculty and staff to Samford.	VPs	June 2021
Understand what retains Black faculty and staff to Samford.	VPs	June 2021
Conduct exit interviews for all faculty and staff by a third-party firm	VPs	June 2021
Establish and make a hiring process guide for staff positions available to all hiring committees and managers.	VPs	May 2021
Implement education and training on Unconscious Bias and its Influence on decision making for all deans and search committees.	Human Resources, ODII staff	May 2021

Train all hiring managers/ search committee chairs on the policies and procedures of the hiring process.	Human Resources	May 2021
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Explanation of Recommendations

There has been some growth in the diversity of students at schools affiliated with the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities. According to their most recent report, in 1999 only 2 out of 10 students were non-white as compared to 2018 where 4 out of 10 students are non-white.

Develop and implement requirements for a diverse search committee by incorporating the following:

1. A search committee of at least three people should be formed for each position that is diverse. This format creates additional oversight for hiring staff. A diverse committee is more likely to generate diverse candidate pools and finalist lists. Individuals from outside a hiring department may be invited to serve on a search committee to share insights, challenge assumptions and bring lessons of experience from other perspectives, disciplines and organizations.
2. Consider incorporating an individual trained to ensure an inclusive process in job searches
3. Develop committee of members from diverse background: include subject matter experts, faculty outside of the field, faculty at varying rank levels, staff, and students. Ensure minorities are represented on search committees.
4. Implement education and training on Unconscious Bias and its influence on decision making for all search committees. Certification of completion of this training is a pre-requisite for participation on search committees. An understanding of these biases can help to minimize the influence they may have on the search process.
5. Ensure that diversity in hiring is a priority.

Post staff positions for a minimum time period 14 days.

Advertise all staff positions beyond Samford’s Job Board including external job boards.

Considerations for Faculty Job Postings

Samford University must be intentional about placement of job opening posts. To increase the opportunity to ensure diverse applicant pools, Samford should consider advertising jobs in the following forums:

- a. Academic Search academic-search.org - Academic Search is higher education's first search firm. The company provides search services for colleges and universities looking to hire senior officers including presidents, provosts, academic vice presidents, and administrative vice presidents.
- b. HigherEd 360, www.highered360.com - HigherEd 360 is a meta-collection of Internet resources that have been gathered for the academic job hunter. It includes links to 3,022 faculty, staff, and administrative announcements and is not restricted to teaching positions.
- c. Higher Ed Jobs, www.HigherEdJobs.com - HigherEdJobs is the leading source for jobs and career information in academia. During 2008, more than 2,960 colleges and universities posted over 55,290 faculty, administrative and executive job postings to the company's web site. HigherEdJobs.com is now visited over 2.3 million times a month by 710,000 people (about half the population of Hawaii).
- d. Top Higher-Education Jobs, www.tedjob.com -TedJob is a leading Internet higher education job marketplace. It is carefully designed to meet the unique recruitment requirements for universities, colleges, and other academic organizations.
- e. INSIGHT into Diversity, www.insightintodiversity.com - INSIGHT into Diversity (formerly Affirmative Action Register) is the only national employment publication that is dedicated to all employee candidates regardless of ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, age, disability, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation.
- f. Asians In Higher Education, www.asiansinhighered.com
- g. Blacks in Higher Education, www.blacksinhighered.com
- h. Hispanics In Higher Education, www.hispanicsinhighered.com
- i. Subscribe to The PhD Project to have even greater access to minority candidates www.phdproject.org
- j. Collaborate with HBCUs, women's colleges, tribal colleges, diversity organizations, etc., to broaden the advertisement of information regarding open positions.

Encourage departments and colleges to explore possibilities for adding members of underrepresented minority groups to their faculty.

In fields where women are underrepresented, departments must be alert to opportunities for attracting outstanding underrepresented to the faculty. If a department has located a prospective faculty member of high caliber who would present an extraordinary opportunity to enhance diversity, the department chair will contact Academic Affairs via the dean of his/her college to request permission to pursue the recruitment.

Minority Visiting Professors/Visiting Scholar Program.

Encourage the use of visiting appointments to provide opportunities for the career development of underrepresented minorities, as well as of women in those fields where they are underrepresented. Encourage the recruitment of underrepresented minorities and women for distinguished visiting professorships, with an eye toward possible longer-term appointment.

Track number of diverse applicants, offers and new hires to evaluate impact of recommendations.

To better understand the diversity of the current faculty, staff and applicant pools, the university should collect demographic data on all applicants, faculty, staff, and student. Trends and improvements in process cannot be assessed if data are not captured and reviewed on a yearly basis.

Understand what attracts and retains Black faculty and staff to Samford.

To have a better understanding of the best practices at Samford with regards to hiring and retention, host ongoing listening sessions and interviews with faculty and staff to learn what attracts and retains Black faculty and staff to Samford and incorporate the emerging themes to hiring and recruitment practices to help highlight why minorities should choose and continue to work at Samford.

Conduct exit interviews for all faculty and staff by a third-party firm.

A key component of the process of diversifying faculty and staff is ensuring retention of new hires. Despite intentional efforts to retain new hires, it is inevitable that faculty and staff will leave Samford. As an organization it is important to understand why employees stay, why they leave and how the organization can continue to grow and change. Exit interviews help provide organizations this feedback. A third-party should be hired to provide exit interviews to all faculty and staff leaving Samford halfway between announcement of departure and actual departure. This gives an opportunity to obtain information from the employee before disengagement from the organization.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND HONOR CODE SUBCOMMITTEE

Co-chairs: Hope Dawson and Alondra Hampton

Committee Members: Holly Simmons, Richard Simmons, Cecelia A. Walker, Danny Wood

Purpose

College is one of the most transformative times in a person's life. Samford encourages students to be well-rounded and to thrive and contribute to the world through stellar academics and real-world opportunities. Students are encouraged to cultivate diverse relationships to be prepared to live in a culturally diverse world. The purpose of this subcommittee is to encourage students to break down barriers and take personal responsibility for making Samford a place where everyone, regardless of race, can feel welcome and respected.

Current Resources in Place

- SGA's Multicultural Affairs Committee
 - *The Multicultural Affairs Committee (MAC) makes recommendations to the Student Executive Board to improve cultural awareness and support on-campus multicultural programming, as well as to insure minority representation in the Student Government Association. The committee serves as diversity peer educators in order to advance cultural competency and cross-cultural dialogue on campus. The administrative assistant for diversity and intercultural initiatives advises MAC.*
 - Last year, MAC provided diversity training for every branch of SGA. This is being continued this year. MAC also hosted 2 campus-wide "Face to Face with Race" events in the fall 2020 semester that allow students to learn from each other through challenging conversations
 - MAC provides cultural competency training for student organizations and groups when needed.
- Diversity Ambassadors
 - *Samford University Diversity Ambassadors are committed to learning about and sharing the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Diversity Ambassadors (DAs) also serve as a key resource to underrepresented prospective students who desire to learn more about the Samford before, during, and after the admission process. The experiences and information shared by our DAs serve as integral pieces to prospective students' navigation of the university as well as learning more about unique opportunities for underrepresented students on campus.*
- SGA Senate Diversity Committee and Faculty Senate Diversity Committee
- The Honor Code
 - *The Honor Code is a document which outlines the conduct standards for all Samford University undergraduate students. The Honor Code exists to provide policies and student-led procedures for upholding those standards. The Honor Code calls on Samford students to live lives that give honor to God and respect to others. This Honor Code furthers Samford's mission to model ethical competency, foster academic achievement, and advance vocational potential, while encouraging social and civic responsibility and service to others.*

- Implemented August 1, 2020
- IV Standards of Conduct and Violations, 1. Samford Students Will Respect the Dignity, Worth and Property of Others, (d) Engaging in unwelcome conduct that is sufficiently severe and pervasive that it alters the conditions of education and creates an environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, threatening, harassing, or humiliating. The frequency of the conduct, its severity, and whether it is threatening or humiliating are factors that will be objectively considered in determining whether conduct is abusive. Abusive conduct includes behavior that is objectively calculated to demean or abuse another individual or group because of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Such actions may include, but are not restricted to, using racial epithets, slurs, making racially derogatory remarks, using racial stereotypes. Simple teasing, offhanded comments, respectful statements of sincere religious convictions, and isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) do not constitute the abusive conduct prohibited by this paragraph.

New Resources in Progress

- Diversity Training is being added for the mandatory Student Organization Training sessions every semester.

Recommendations

1. Student Organizations

- Require that every student organization, including the Student Government Association, hold at least one event addressing racial injustice annually to remain in good status with the university.
 - Examples include but not limited to a cultural competency training with MAC or invite a guest speaker. Requiring at least one event, while allowing options for event type, promotes accountability and ownership. Approval of the event needs to come from the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement in advance.

**The burden of hosting events will not fall onto multicultural student organizations. There are several options to meet these requirements, not just hosting a mixer or joint event.*

2. New Resource

- Allyship
 - When students encounter a situation that makes them feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or marginalized, they need to know where they can go for help. In order to accomplish this, there needs to be a group of faculty and/or staff members on campus that are trained to handle these situations.
 - The list of these trained members will be accessible to students on the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives website. Also, they will have a special sticker or identification label on their office door.

3. Mandatory Training/Experiences

- Online Options
 - Virtual training for racial justice required for students prior to returning to campus in the Fall. This could be a video series developed by ODII and MAC that includes a test/quiz at the end of each video that must be passed at the end to ensure that they paid attention. This could be refreshed every year to ensure that it is promoting relevant information and is as effective as possible.

- Annually or mandatory at the beginning of freshman year and junior year
- Easily accessible and participant completion is tracked/recorded
- In-person Options
 - Some students retain information better in interactive settings, while others retain information better in a lecture format. To accommodate for learning preferences, require students to attend one in-person racial diversity-focused event per semester.
 - These events can include:
 - Convocation Services
 - Diversity Student Organization Events
 - Cadres
 - ODII Events
 - Art Showcases
 - Plays
 - Guest Lectures
 - Promotes awareness of events and resources, as well as increases opportunities for participation

Estimated Cost and Resources Required

Student Organization Recommendations

- Who
 - The Director and Coordinator of the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement would be responsible for making these expectations clear for the student organizations. Other than that, the students would be responsible for following through. If the students in charge of student organizations fail to do so, the student organization will no longer be in good standing.
- Cost
 - The organizations can request funding for their events through SGA Senate or pay for the events through their dues.
 - The University could host an event or a special speaker. If an organization has over 75% of their members attend this University event, it would count for the organization's required event for the year. If this route were taken, there could be an additional cost to the University.

Allyship (New Resource)

- Who
 - Faculty/Staff members will apply to be a part of this group. They will be selected, overseen and managed by the Board of Trustees' Student Affairs Committee.
- Cost
 - There would be an additional cost to have a third party provide allyship training.

Mandatory Online Training

- Who
 - The staff in the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives would help create the video. (See recommendations from the Implicit Bias Training Subcommittee on the Racial Justice Task Force.)
 - The Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management would be responsible for distributing the videos and making sure students complete the training.
- Cost
 - Approximately \$15,000 for required resources and software. (See recommendations from the Implicit Bias Training Subcommittee of the Task Force on Racial Justice.)

Mandatory In-Person Diversity/Multicultural Experience

- Who
 - We recommend that the University host more events centered around racial justice, multiculturalism, and diversity so that students have more opportunities.
 - Events could be tracked similarly to how convocation is tracked.
 - The Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives or the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement would be responsible for keeping record.
 - Students would be responsible to attend the events.
 - Students who work as card swipers could have more opportunities at these events.
- Cost
 - Costs would be minimal but would include the cost of hosting, any honorarium, and paying student workers to host.

Measuring Impact

- Participation Data
 - Attendance for these events will be tracked annually. The first year of implementation will be the benchmark. Data from the following years would be used to measure the progress of the student body taking advantage of opportunities that encourage them to cultivate diverse relationships and take personal responsibility to break down barriers.
- SGA survey
 - Use this annual survey to help gain student feedback on these events and gauge short term impact.
- Exit Survey for Seniors
 - Review the content of the already utilized National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for evaluation of racial justice concepts and add additional questions to the Senior Exit Survey as deemed needed. Results could be utilized to see how these recommendations impact students and make them more culturally aware throughout their time at Samford.
- Some of the impact made cannot be measured such as a new, more hospitable and inclusive spirit that could be felt on campus in the coming years. The Samford community will be a place where anyone, regardless of race, will feel included and accepted.

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
Require that every student organization have at least one diversity event every year in order to remain in good standing with the university	Office of Student Leadership and Involvement	Fall 2021 Semester

<p>Allyship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When students encounter a situation that makes them feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or marginalized, they need to know where they can go for help. In order to accomplish this, a group of faculty and/or staff members on campus that are trained to handle these situations should be established. The list of trained members will be accessible to students on the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives website. Also, they will have a special sticker or identification label on their office door. 	<p>Faculty/Staff members will apply to be a part of this group. They will be selected, overseen and managed by the Board of Trustees' Student Affairs Committee.</p>	<p>Fall 2021 Semester</p>
<p>Mandatory Virtual Training for Students</p>	<p>Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives</p>	<p>Fall 2021 Semester</p>
<p>Require students attend one in-person racial diversity-focused event per semester.</p>	<p>Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives, Office of Student Leadership and Involvement</p>	<p>Fall 2021 Semester</p>
<p>Review the content of the already utilized National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for evaluation of racial justice concepts and add additional questions to the Senior Exit Survey as deemed needed. Results could be utilized to see how these recommendations impact students and make them more culturally aware throughout their time at Samford.</p>	<p>Office of Student Leadership and Involvement</p>	

SCHOLARSHIPS/FINANCIAL AID SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Amy Simpson

Committee Members: Angelen Brooks, Everett Brooks, Hope Dawson, Fritz Gordon, Rhega Gordon, Belinda Stroud, and Stephen Stroud

Narrative of Work

The subcommittee for minority recruitment and scholarships researched the current process for recruiting minority students, including scholarships and financial aid. Subcommittee members spoke with the staff regarding the recruitment and scholarship process, and what they viewed as the greatest opportunities and threats to recruiting more minority students. Subcommittee members also met individually with current students to discuss their experience with the recruitment process, what made them decide to attend Samford, and what they think would help recruit more minority students. Students were asked about their experiences as a current student and what they feel their non-Samford friends' perception is of Samford.

Three of the four students came from predominantly Black, public high schools in Alabama, and one came from a private Christian high school. The three students from predominantly Black high schools all mentioned that they had previously not heard of Samford or never considered it because of the influence of their Black faculty/staff from high school encouraging them to attend an HBCU. One mentioned her fear of being ridiculed by her Black peers for attending a predominantly white, Christian school instead of attending an HBCU. All three mentioned the need for **more advertising in predominantly Black schools and for current Samford minority students to visit predominantly black schools to share their experiences and how they were able to successfully build community at Samford.**

Another recurring theme among the students was the impact the Admission Diversity Day and the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Initiatives played in their decision to attend Samford. Of those who attended the Diversity Preview Day, they spoke of how it allowed them to build community not just prior to attending Samford, but also prior to attending the larger Preview Day the next day. It allowed them the ability to meet other students of color before attending the larger predominantly white Preview Day, which made it less overwhelming. **All four of the students emphasized the ODII played a large role in their recruitment and retention.** They spoke of the importance of continuing to host Diversity Preview Days and having ODII present at those events. They all mentioned the constant support of ODII being critical to their success at Samford, particularly the IMPACT mentorship program.

All four students, as well as three staff, mentioned students of color noticing there are not many students who look like them at Samford. While all the students we interviewed mentioned that they knew ahead of time Samford was a predominantly white school, they felt like there were things Samford could do to help make it more diverse. While they emphasized the Diversity Preview Days as being very helpful, they also suggested having **more students of color and faculty and staff of color present and leading tours and sessions at the regular Preview Days and at Connections (summer orientation).** Two staff members also acknowledged the challenge of finding minority representation at those events. Additionally, **the students suggested that, at a minimum, student tour guides and Connections leaders should be very well trained on diversity resources and avenues for involvement at Samford.** One of the students gave an example of Connections leaders not being aware of what a National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) is. Better trained tour guides and Connections leaders will project Samford's valuing of diversity.

While Admission staff acknowledged more scholarship funds could help, they did not feel that was the greatest issue with recruiting minority students. They felt the perception of Samford among people of color was a greater challenge combined with the pervasive white, Southern culture of the campus. However, a staff member and all four students felt more scholarship funds were greatly needed. The students in particular all spoke very strongly of the barrier that exists because of the cost of attending Samford. One student is a Presidential scholar but still felt like Samford’s financial aid package did not adequately reflect her accomplishments in high school and was not competitive with offers from other schools. For that reason, **we are strongly recommending increasing minority scholarship funds.**

A valuable recommendation from the Admission staff is **a parents’ council specific to diversity initiatives that could be used to connect minority parents and address any ongoing issues. Likewise, a need to keep minority students connected to Samford beyond graduation was mentioned,** which would be valuable to have minority alums speak at events or connect with prospective students to share their experiences at Samford.

Finally, another strong theme was the need for diversity initiatives and support at Samford to come from the top down. Meaning, **increasing diversity should be emphasized as a priority of the executive level leadership,** and efforts should be championed in a way that reflects sincere intentions rather than simply working to meet a quota. It was emphasized that this would be a huge step toward improving the campus culture and people’s perception of Samford being a predominantly white, Southern, upper class campus. The Admission Office explained that they do have a 6-7 year strategic plan related to diversity recruitment, which has been instrumental in increasing the number of minority students by 50% over the past four years. While this is reflective of Admissions’ priorities in recruiting more minority students, it should also be something emphasized by Samford’s executive level leadership.

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
1. More advertising in predominantly black schools. ◦ Current Samford minority students could visit predominantly black schools to share their experiences and how they were able to successfully build community at Samford.	Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admission Office of Admission	Recruiting season beginning Fall 2021
2. Continue Diversity Preview Days and connecting ODII to prospective minority students.	Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admission Office of Admission ODII	Spring 2021

<p>3. More students of color and faculty and staff of color should present and lead tours and sessions at the regular Preview Days and at Connections (summer orientation).</p>	<p>Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admission</p> <p>Office of Admission</p> <p>Office of Student Activities & Events</p>	<p>Spring 2021</p>
<p>4. Student tour guides and Connections leaders should be well trained on diversity resources and avenues for involvement at Samford.</p>	<p>Office of Admission</p> <p>Office of Student Activities & Events</p>	<p>Summer 2021</p>
<p>5. Increase minority scholarship funds.</p>	<p>Executive level leadership</p> <p>Advancement</p>	<p>Fundraising should begin immediately.</p>
<p>6. Create a parents' council specific to diversity initiatives that could be used to connect minority parents and address any ongoing issues.</p>	<p>Director of Parent Programs</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>
<p>7. Keep minority alumni connected to Samford, especially through recruitment efforts and sharing their Samford experience.</p>	<p>Advancement and Admission</p>	<p>Fall 2021</p>
<p>8. Increasing diversity should be emphasized as a priority of the executive level leadership.</p>	<p>Samford President and Vice Presidents</p>	<p>Immediately</p>

SPIRITUAL FORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Bobby Gatlin

Committee Members: Karon Bowdre, Hope Dawson, Rachel Hagues, Alondra Hampton, Joe Hopkins, Cameron Thomas

Purpose

The subcommittee on Spiritual Formation recognizes the importance of Spiritual Life at Samford in the shaping of the culture of Samford, especially in matters of the heart. We acknowledge the need for a greater degree of diversity on Samford’s campus, particularly as it pertains to Black students, staff, and faculty, especially in light of historic omission, spiritual development, and discipleship. We long to see students and employees being devoted to one another in love, honoring others above self (Romans 12:10), and realizing we are all being woven together in Christ and uniting as one (Galatians 3:28). Because of this, the following recommendations will assist Samford in establishing a culture that seeks unity with others, loves justice and mercy, and looks to Christ’s example as inspiration for substantive spiritual change that we might be a more loving community regardless of racial differences.

Internal Recommendations

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
1. Broaden the scope of the student worship experiences to represent the faith tradition of the Black student population, in particular, allowing more opportunities for Black students to participate on the student worship team	Office of Spiritual Life	Immediately
2. Utilize and support the Gospel Choir by highlighting this group and providing opportunities to lead. Encourage a partnership between the School of the Arts and the Gospel Choir facilitating opportunities to perform and lead while gaining a valuable partner in the music division of Samford.	School of the Arts	Immediately

3. Make use of Black student and employee testimonials to allow opportunities to hear faith journeys and cultural experiences that will help students develop a deeper understanding of and an appreciation for our differences and similarities.	Office of Spiritual Life	Ongoing
4. Pursue additional cadre* opportunities that focus on racial justice.	Office of Spiritual Life	Spring 2021

*On campus cadres are small groups led by faculty or staff that meet approximately 8 times during a semester to discuss a book, biblical text, specified topic. Up to 8 convocation credits are given to those who complete the requirements. Service cadres seek to help students integrate faith and learning through action. These cadres engage students with community partners in the greater Birmingham community in meaningful ways.

External Recommendations

Recommendation	Area of Responsibility (VP/AVP/Director/Dean)	Date to Initiate By
1. Pursue guest speakers who can provide spiritual affirmation for non-majority students in campus worship gatherings by canvassing campus partners and local ministry leadership.	Office of Spiritual Life	Spring 2021
2. Invite guest worship leaders from the community to lead in campus worship gatherings who represent non-majority student expressions of worship.	Office of Spiritual Life	Spring 2021

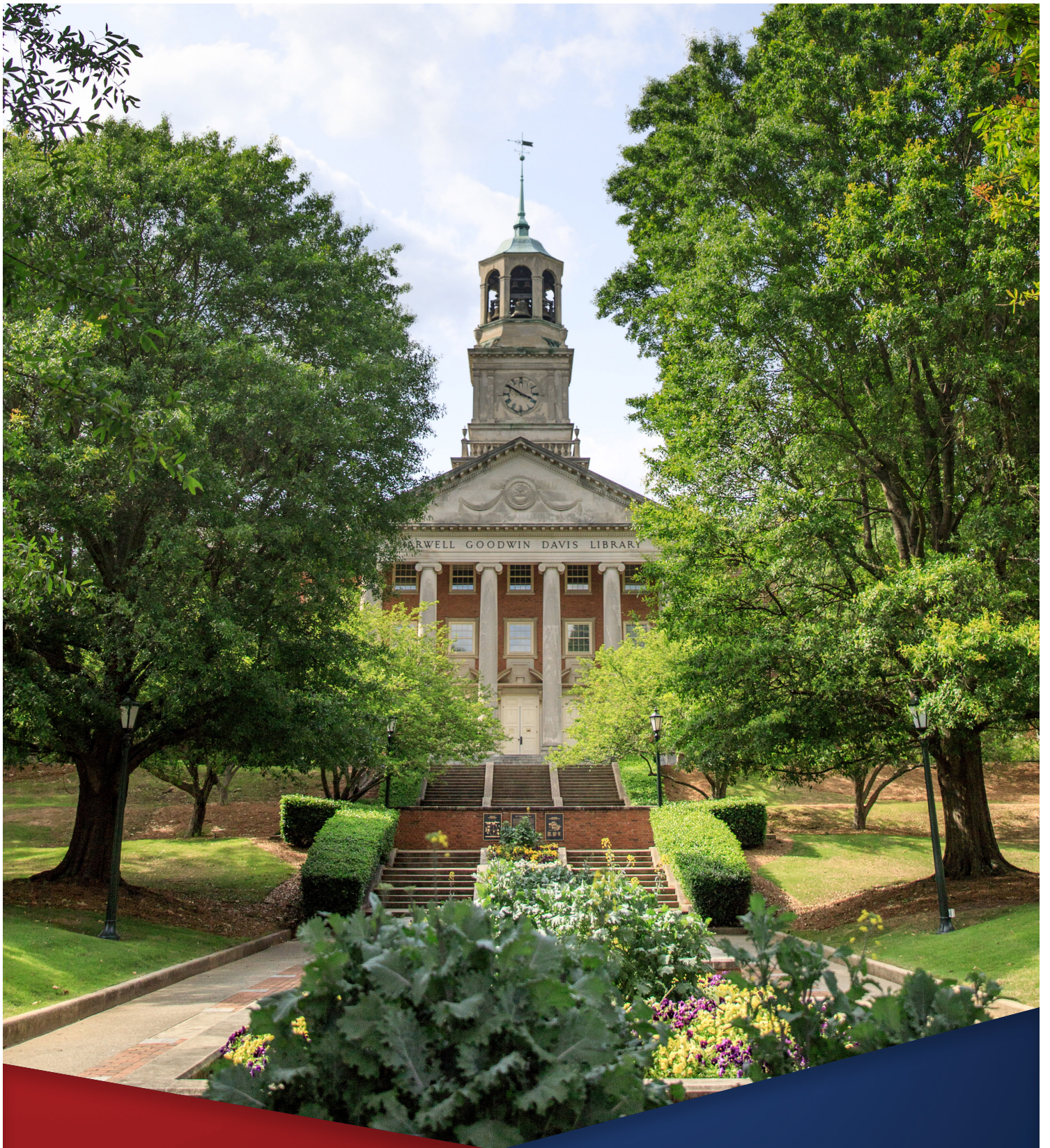
<p>3. Prioritize the hiring of a person of color to serve in the Office of Spiritual Life.</p>	<p>Student Affairs Office of Spiritual Life</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>4. Form an advisory board of minority pastors who align with the Samford mission, values and orthodox theology to provide resources for college ministries, recommended speakers, and assist with spiritual formation similar to relationships we have other area churches.</p>	<p>Office of Spiritual Life</p>	<p>Spring 2021</p>
<p>5. Invite representatives from local Black churches to participate in the annual Church Connections as well as the online directory of churches.</p>	<p>Office of Spiritual Life</p>	<p>Spring 2021</p>

CONCLUSION

The Lord reveals in his Word very clearly that his people should do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God (Micah 6:8). They should let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream (Amos 5:24). We are all children of God through faith and among us there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for we are all one in Christ (Galatians 3:27-28). Though we were once separated from the Lord and his promises, without hope in the world, we have now been brought near by the blood of Jesus Christ. He himself is our peace, who has made us all one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility, reconciling all of us to God through the cross. We are all now fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (Ephesians 2:11-22). All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:11-21). This means, among other things, that the Samford community, as a Christian community, should show no partiality, prejudice, or favoritism. If we really fulfill the royal law of God according to Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” we do well. But if we show prejudice, we commit grave sin (James 2:1-13).

The very mission statement of Samford University emphasizes that we encourage our people in “social and civic responsibility.” Our vision statement makes clear our commitment to “be a diverse community.” And our core values include “engagement with the life and teachings of Jesus,” “integrity, honesty and justice,” and “appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions.” We see this report as a set of applications of our school’s guiding principles. We know that the timeline included with these recommendations may need to change depending on other factors outside of our knowledge or control. Thus, we offer it as a suggestion. As a task force, it is our hope and prayer that as we begin to implement these principles, we will be transformed into a community that is known for doing justice.

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