



SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON RACIAL JUSTICE

Progress Report for the Board of Trustees

December 9, 2020

Mr. Davede Alexander, Co-Chair

Dr. Mary Grant, Co-Chair

Dr. Carolyn Petrosino, Co-Chair

Dr. Jakari Griffith, Vice Chair

Ms. Samantha Joseph, Vice Chair

Ms. Sydné Marrow, Vice Chair

Ms. Anna Rice, Vice Chair

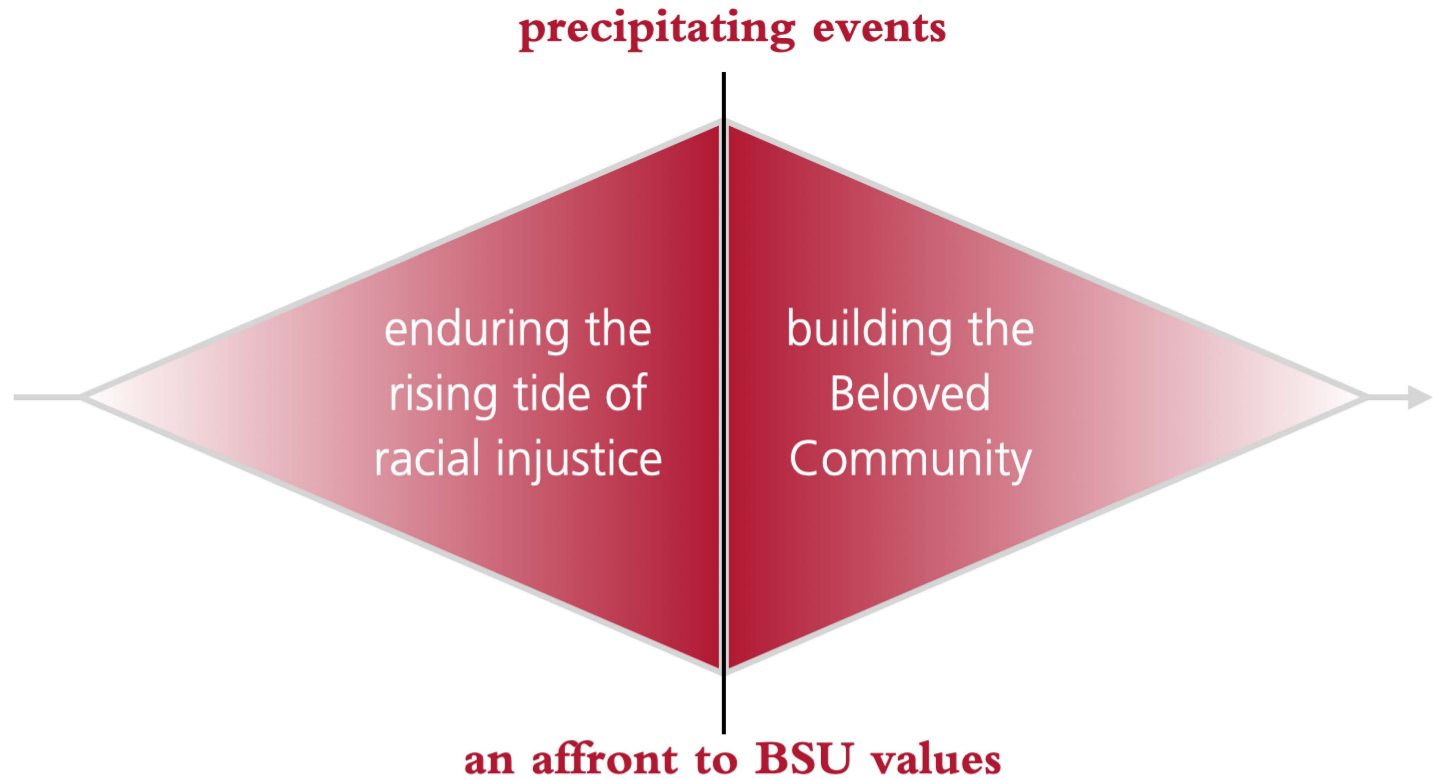
Ms. Jill Beckwith, Project Manager

Context

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We are a welcoming, compassionate, and intellectually rigorous learning,
working, and living environment.

We reject all forms of bias, discrimination, xenophobia, and violence.

We re-commit ourselves to actions that put into practice
our individual and institutional values of diversity, inclusion, and equality for all.

THE CANDID VOICES OF OUR COMMUNITY

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The only words that come out are “I’m tired” – you know what I mean? Tired of explaining, saying why it’s important, why it’s not a black vs. white issue... it feels like we are not allowed to breathe outside of our home. There are no words because it’s inhumane. It’s disbelief. It’s too much.

I want you to believe in me and believe in the words that are coming out of my mouth. I am talking to you because I want something to change. I love BSU but sometimes I feel like BSU does not love me back.

The stories were told out of love for BSU – and, out of our love for BSU, we need to correct things that are wrong.

We need to be clear to our students that their safety and success matter to us. We need to be very clear that they matter to us.

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If any one of us fails to live up to our values,
we have all failed.

If any one of us fails to apply urgent action to
solving the issues of race that have caused so
much pain and suffering, **we have all failed.**

If any one of us demonstrates hate and
ignorance, **we have all failed.**

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Words alone are not enough.

We need to be introspective, to listen, to honestly evaluate how we can do better, and to thoughtfully develop recommendations for an action agenda to make change.

We must do better, and we will do better.

BUILDING A CREDIBLE PROCESS FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

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inclusive and
representative
participation

transparent
structure

regular updates
to the broader
BSU community

rigorous and objective
approach to inquiry

data-driven
analysis

honest scrutiny
and self-examination

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What elements of policy, practice, and culture are **impeding racial equity at Bridgewater State University?**

What remedies and recommendations for **corrective action can we advance?**

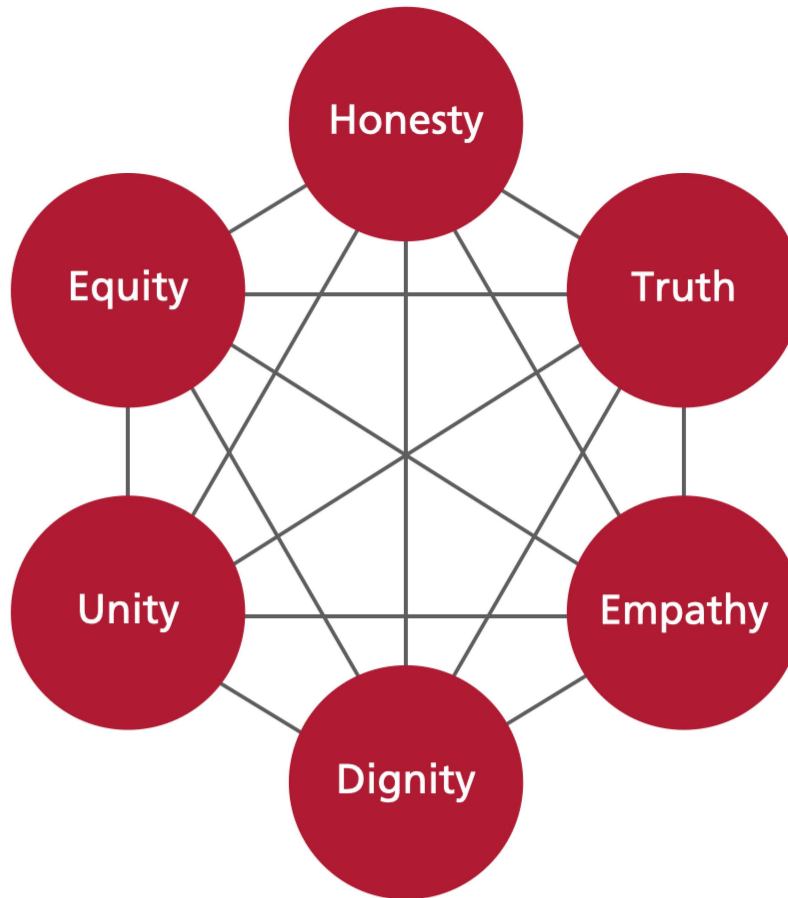
** formulated by Dr. Carolyn Petrosino, Co-Chair*

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- 1. Curricula & Co-Curricula**
- 2. BSU Workforce**
- 3. Education, Training, and Continued Learning Opportunities for Faculty, Staff, and Students**
- 4. Investing in and Supporting Students**
- 5. Police and Public Safety**
- 6. Creating a Place for Ongoing Support, Problem Solving, Reporting Resolution, and Response**

follow a rigorous approach

allow core values to guide deliberations

work with respect, integrity, and candor

identify barriers and strengths

remain open to exploring new areas

contribute to a more racially equitable BSU community

TASK FORCE STRUCTURE & SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

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at least one student on every subcommittee

formal call to MSCA

balance across colleges and divisions

spans the organizational hierarchy

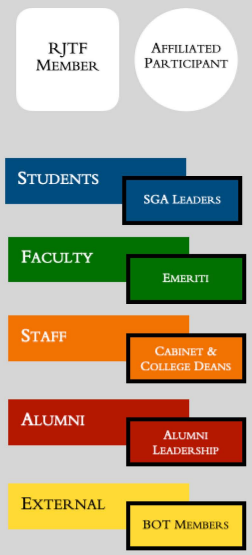
involves BOT and alumni leaders

includes non-BSU (external) perspectives

BSU RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

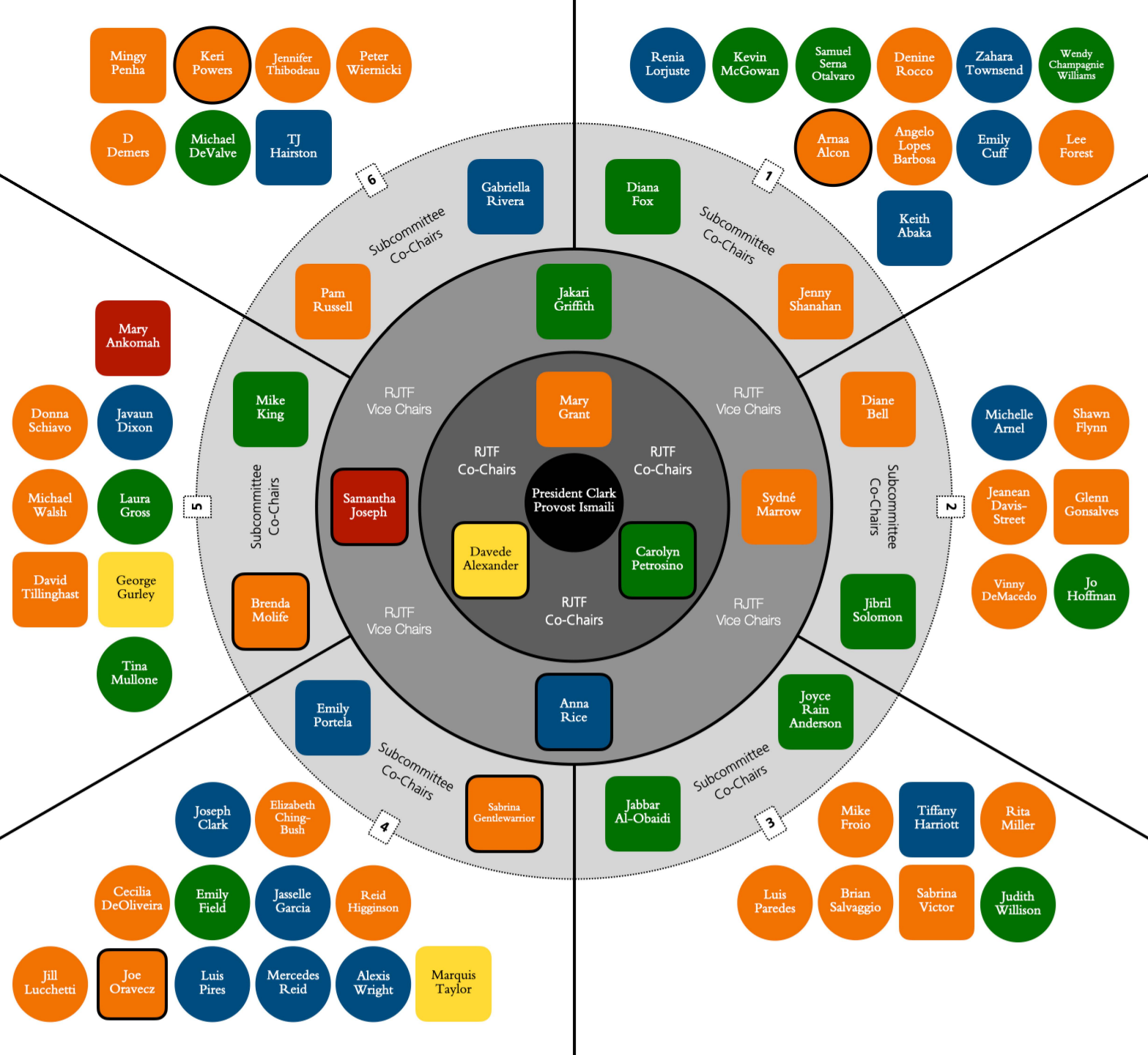
AS OF DECEMBER 9, 2020

Participants



Subcommittees

- 1 Curricula and Co-Curricula
- 2 BSU Workforce
- 3 Education, Training, and Continued Learning Opportunities for Faculty, Staff, and Students
- 4 Investing in and Supporting Students
- 5 Police and Public Safety
- 6 Creating a Place for Ongoing Support, Problem Solving, Reporting Resolution, and Response



PROJECT TIME FRAME & PHASES

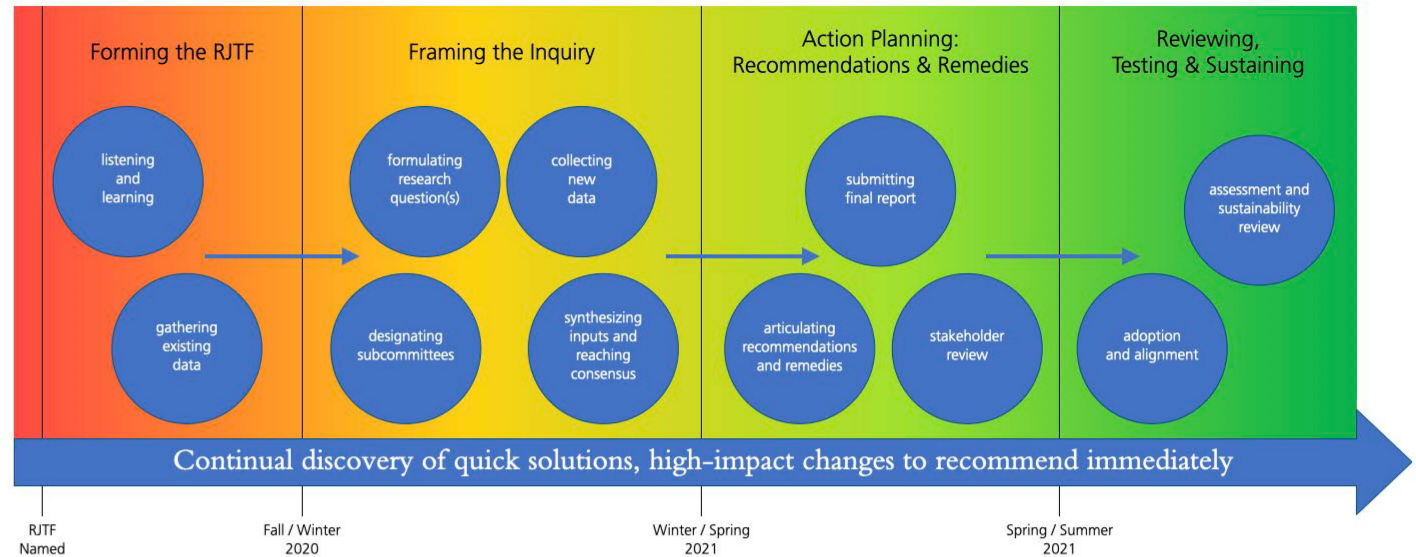
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Racial Justice Task Force to Organizational Implementation



CATALYZING POSITIVE CHANGE AT BSU

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BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY

Academics - Admissions - Cost & Aid - Student Life - BSU Works - About Us - Quicklinks

Racial Justice at Bridgewater State University

Messages

Oct. 29, 2020
from Task Force Co-Chairs
[Update on Special Presidential Task Force on Racial Justice](#)

Oct. 26, 2020
from Office of the Provost
[Racial Justice Updates](#)

Oct. 7, 2020
from Office of the Provost
[Racial Justice Updates](#)

Sept. 28, 2020
from President Clark
[Racial Justice, Inclusion & Equity](#)

Sept. 25, 2020
from Office of the Provost
[Racial Justice Announcement](#)

Sept. 10, 2020
from Task Force Co-Chairs
[Update on Special Presidential Task Force on Racial Justice](#)

Aug. 4, 2020
from President Clark
[Special Presidential Task Force on Racial Justice Membership](#)

June 19, 2020
from President Clark
[June 19th, Racial Justice Task Force Update and Next Steps](#)

June 12, 2020
from President Clark
[Special Presidential Task Force on Racial Justice Update](#)

June 5, 2020
from President Clark
[Racial Justice](#)

June 2, 2020
from President Clark
[We Hear You](#)

June 1, 2020
from President Clark
[Words Alone Are Not Enough](#)

Contact Us
For more information or to contact the Racial Justice Task Force, please send an email to B.J.T.F.@bridgew.edu.

We stand with the Black Lives Matter movement...

"Bridgewater State University fully supports the Black Lives Matter movement as it continues that struggle, a struggle to make our nation live up to its highest ideals of freedom and equality. Here, on our campus and in our community, we commit ourselves to bold action that puts into practice our values of diversity, inclusion and equality for all." —Frederick W. Clark Jr., Esq.

Social Justice Courses Offered in Spring 2021

Racial Justice Task Force

Anti-Racism Resources

Engagement Opportunities

For more information about this artwork and more, visit the [Wallace J. Anderson Gallery site](#)

Upcoming Events

DEC 07 Brian Banks Movie Discussion ...
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Brian Banks Movie Discussion with Justin Brooks

Join Raising Multicultural Kids Youth Forum on Monday, Dec. 7, 2020 from 7-9 p.m. for a virtual conversation with Justin Brooks, the Co-Founder and Director of the California Innocence Project and Professor at California Western School of Law and helped prove Brian Banks' innocence.
[Learn more and register](#)

[View past events](#)

If you would like your event listed on this page, please share event details at least 72 hours in advance via this [Racial Justice Event form](#).

Racial Justice at BSU website:
www.bridgew.edu/racial-justice

renaming of
Lewis and Gaines Center for
Inclusion and Equity (LGCIE)

ambitious fundraising in support
of equity, inclusion, and
Gaines Scholarships

dedication of 2020-21 academic
year to issues of racial justice

conversations about race with
Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum
and Dr. Estela Bensimon

participation of
Dr. Tia McNair in the
summer MRISJ faculty institute

re-evaluating all student affairs and
enrollment management through
the racial justice lens

new viewbook to include
BSU equity and justice values

Leading for Change
recognized and supported
by the Lumina Foundation

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Curricula & Co-Curricula

Subcommittee 1

Some of what we have learned so far...

- ▶ There is a lack of antiracist and decolonial content and skills in BSU's Core Curriculum. There is also a lack of BIPOC perspectives, histories, figures, etc. in the Core, as well as across many departmental/program curricula.
- ▶ Microaggressions and macroaggressions (by peers, faculty, librarians, staff, administrators, and students) have been expressed in classroom and co-curricular settings.

Some of what has pleasantly surprised us, encouraged us, or we have found rewarding...

- ▶ There is rich expertise from several members of the faculty, from across the disciplines, as critical race theorists and pedagogical researchers. Their proficiency and willingness to facilitate professional development for colleagues will significantly advance the curricular and co-curricular learning needed for campus-wide change.

Some of what already jumps out at us as needing more work...

- ▶ We know of some colleagues' experiences anecdotally, but not in a systematic, research-based way. We need organized and reliable information from a broad cross-section of faculty, librarians, and staff about: their personal experiences with racism; curricular and co-curricular designs for racial and social justice; antiracist and decolonial pedagogies and practices; and even resistance to the university's commitment to racial and social justice.

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BSU Workforce

Subcommittee 2

Some of what we have learned so far...

- ▶ 23.9% of our faculty and staff are of color; 76.1% are white.
- ▶ There is a lack of existing university policies that define and set accountability standards for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and mentoring employees of color.

Some of what has pleasantly surprised us, encouraged us, or we have found rewarding...

- ▶ As evidenced by data collected from several student focus groups, campus forums, and student letters, there is a growing collective consciousness about racial equity issues at BSU.

Some of what already jumps out at us as needing more work...

- ▶ We need to be more intentional in creating specific accountability policies for divisions, colleges, and departments.
- ▶ These policies should have measurable outcomes and address the entire employee lifecycle.

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Education, Training, and Continued Learning Opportunities for Faculty, Staff, and Students

Subcommittee 3

Some of what we have learned so far...

- ▶ There has been no shortage of topical events offered on campus over the past five years.
- ▶ The focus of these events, however, has been too diffuse and centered on general themes such as diversity, white privilege, race, harassment, abuse of power, discrimination, sexual orientation, immigration, and racial justice.

Some of what has pleasantly surprised us, encouraged us, or we have found rewarding...

- ▶ BSU's calendar is crowded with campus-wide training events offered through various departments and organizations.
- ▶ Our faculty and staff are wanting these trainings, though students sometimes need incentives to participate (e.g. extra credit).

Some of what already jumps out at us as needing more work...

- ▶ We need to find new ways to better engage those who are not regularly attending and encourage/incentivize their participation.

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Investing in and Supporting Students

Subcommittee 4

Some of what we have learned so far...

- ▶ The data appear to indicate a widespread lack of attention paid to the unique strengths, cultural capital, perspectives, needs, and stresses of students of color.
- ▶ University departments may be engaged in universalism, in which a one-size-fits-all service and support system privileges white students to the disadvantage (or even harm) of students of color.

Some of what has pleasantly surprised us, encouraged us, or we have found rewarding...

- ▶ Overall commitment to the subcommittee's work has been extraordinary. Students, in particular, are sharing their experiences and engaged in critical analysis of the data with deep thoughtfulness, integrity, honesty, and love for BSU.
- ▶ Faculty and staff participants have been candid and non-defensive in identifying areas in need of additional study or improvement.

Some of what already jumps out at us as needing more work...

- ▶ More focus is needed at the level of individual departments to better understand the unique challenges and opportunities they face in offering racially just student services.

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Police and Public Safety

Subcommittee 5

Some of what we have learned so far...

- ▶ With the exception of one road for traffic stops, BSU Police share on-campus patrol jurisdiction with their Town of Bridgewater counterparts. Unlike BSUPD, the Town of Bridgewater does not keep traffic-stop data based on demographics. This complicates our ability to assess the fuller picture.
- ▶ We need more granular student conduct data to assess whether there are underlying racial disparities with respect to reporting and discipline outcomes.

Some of what has pleasantly surprised us, encouraged us, or we have found rewarding...

- ▶ The BSU Police Department is generally regarded as a model police force and has an existing working relationship with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).
- ▶ BSU Police and the ACLU have partnered to address issues of equity and inclusion.

Some of what already jumps out at us as needing more work...

- ▶ We need a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between positive/negative student experiences and retention/recruitment as it pertains to students of color.

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Creating a Place for Ongoing Support, Problem Solving, Reporting Resolution, and Response

Subcommittee 6

Some of what we have learned so far...

- ▶ There is no single go-to place for students, faculty, or staff to address racial justice issues. Though students and employees have multiple pathways for support, the absence of a strong, integrated structure may present inherent challenges.

Some of what has pleasantly surprised us, encouraged us, or we have found rewarding...

- ▶ BSU already offers an abundance of support services for specific types of problems and disputes.

Some of what already jumps out at us as needing more work...

- ▶ In addition to the data we are currently collecting about our campus, we need to research what other institutions (both peer and aspirant) have done to build a more integrated structure and offer a single place/space to address issues of racial justice.

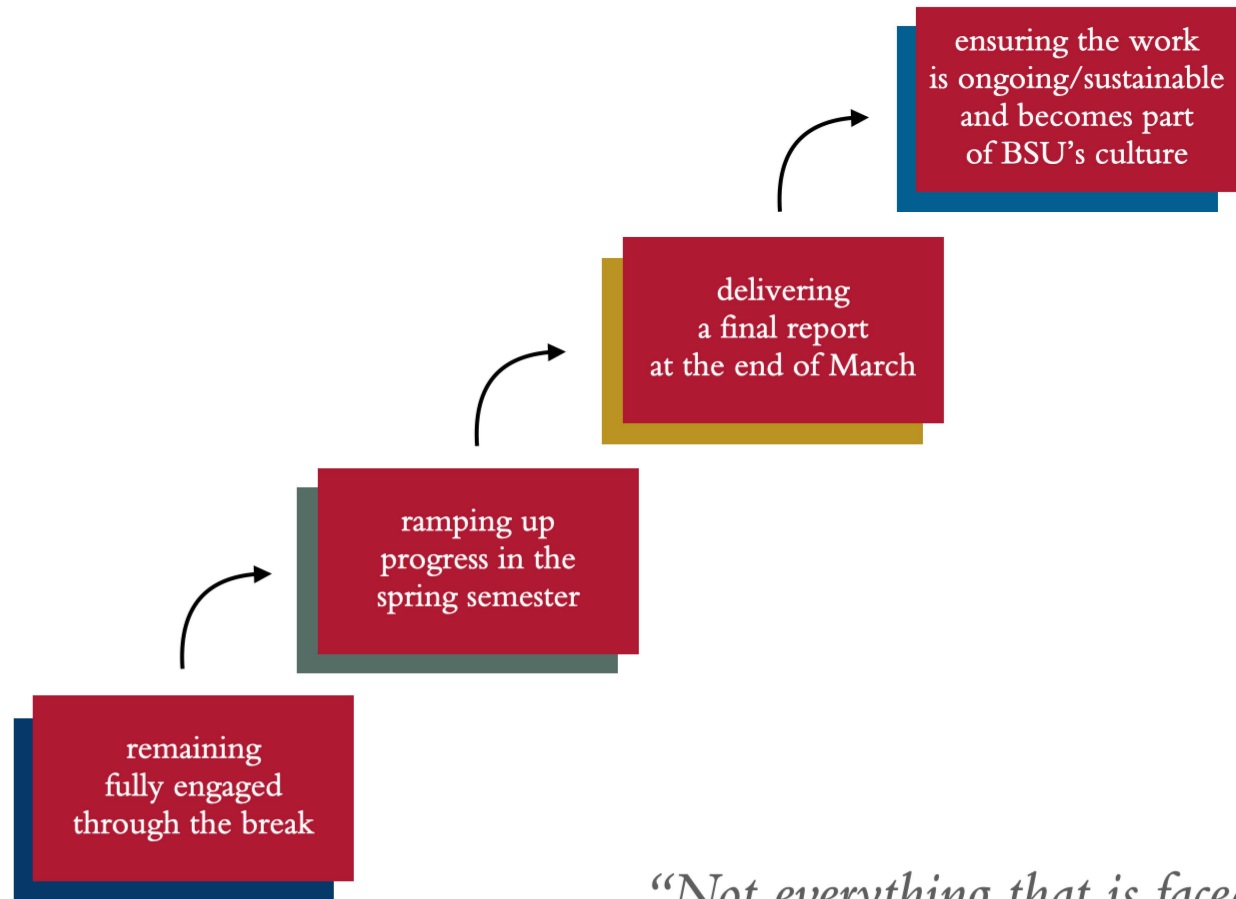
NEXT STEPS

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“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

— James Baldwin