Task Force Progress

Presidential Task Force for Opportunity and Equity
Task Force Timeline

**June 2020**
- Presidential Task Force formed

**July 2020**
- Taskforce charged to develop recommendations leading to meaningful change and which we can implement administratively

**Aug – Sept 2020**
- Subcommittees formed - DEI Education; Black Student Recruitment and Retention

**Sept – Nov 2020**
- Subcommittees formed - Black Faculty & Staff Recruitment & Retention

**Feb – May 2021**
- Subcommittees formed - Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention, Institute

**June – Sept 2021**
- Subcommittees formed - Black Student Retention, Institute
Subcommittee:

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Education
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Education

Goal: Promote EEO/DEI* education across the campus and provide an opportunity for students, faculty and employees to complete a common learning module. Develop strategy to ensure access to EEO/DEI resources for foundational and continuing EEO/DEI education.

Implementation Steps

- Procured EverFi Title IX, EEO and DEI education modules.
- Developed institutional strategy for EEO/DEI foundational and continuing education.
- Developed and launched foundational Title IX education modules for all faculty, staff, administrator and professional employees.
- Develop and launch foundational EEO/DEI education module for faculty, staff, administrator and professional employees.
- Develop and launch foundational EEO/DEI education module for students.
- Develop and launch Auburn EEO/DEI micro-credential.
- Conduct climate studies to determine current strengths and opportunities to improve campus experience for faculty, staff, and students. Student study was completed in Spring 2021.

Progress Tracker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Takeaway: The Taskforce has embraced a continuous learning pathway approach to DEI education for faculty, staff, administrator, and professional employees and students at Auburn. From learning modules, to in-person learning opportunities to micro-credentials, we are making DEI education resources available to meet individual learning needs across our campus.

*Equal employment opportunity (EEO) and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
Subcommittee:
Black Faculty Recruitment & Retention
**Black Faculty Recruitment & Retention**

**Goal:** Utilize diversity and EEO-informed tools to increase the presence of faculty who identify as Black/African American.

**Progress Tracker**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Takeaway:** The Taskforce has endorsed the implementation of evidence-based promising practices like bias education, cultivating an inclusive excellence mindset towards hiring, vigorous outreach, SEC prospective faculty talent sharing, and greater college and school accountability for progress on the recruitment and retention of a more diverse and inclusive faculty with increased representation from Black and other historically underrepresented populations.

**Implementation Steps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Steps</th>
<th>Not Started</th>
<th>In Progress</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leverage SEC network through the SEC Emerging Scholars Career Preparation Workshop, initiating in Fall 2021, to recruit diverse graduate students and to identify new PhDs with diverse backgrounds for postdoctoral and Assistant Professor positions at Auburn University.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop faculty position descriptions that clearly embed the values of diversity, equity and inclusion.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop guidelines to encourage the hiring of faculty who will enhance the diversity of each of its units. Colleges/schools will have the ability to track the diversity of the pool of candidates at various stages for all tenure-track faculty positions.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assure that each member of a faculty search committee receives robust and intentional education relative to implicit or unconscious biases.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish policies and procedures that hold search committees and departments accountable and responsible for their faculty hiring policies, procedures and outcomes.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly conduct equity audit of all faculty searches to determine progress and impact; ensure diversity in hiring pools overall and diverse candidates among finalists.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subcommittee: Black Student Recruitment & Retention (Undergraduate)
Black Student Recruitment & Retention *(Undergraduate)*

**Goal:** Increase Black student enrollment, increase aid allocated to Black students, improve racial climate, improve retention and graduation rates of Black students.

**Progress Tracker**

| 25% | 50% | 75% | Complete! |

**Takeaway:** The Taskforce will continue to advocate for long-term commitments to support need-based aid, utilizing collaborative partnerships, and removing enrollment barriers. Auburn’s commitment of $3.5 million (compared to $1.1 million) in institutional aid directly impacted students with demonstrated need and increased Ever to Conquer awards by 288%. While we expect a notable increase in new Black students, it’s clear there is more work to be done. Our long-term commitment to increasing diversity within the Auburn Family will remain an ongoing work in progress.

**Implementation Steps**

| Pilot a flexible admissions model, expanded access by guaranteed admission to Alabama’s valedictorian and salutation and launched the Common Application. | Complete! |
| Shifted at least 10% of scholarship funds towards need/non-merit aid and shifted oversight of PLUS Scholarship to Enrollment Management to ensure strategic deployment of funds. | Complete! |
| Document and celebrate the history of diversity at Auburn. Updated campus tour script. Develop hometown news, student showcases with clear messaging on Affordability, Ability and Fit. Leverage social proof opportunities Why Auburn? | Complete! |
| Establish full benchmarks with SEC, SREB and top-performing institutions for Black students. Leverage partnerships with GearUp Alabama and Black Belt Community Foundation. Increase enrollment of students participating in DiCE. Track and report annually on funds allocated towards diversity scholarships | Complete! |
| Conduct a climate survey in the spring 2021. Division of Student Affairs commissioned a vendor to administrate the survey and analyze results during summer 2021. | Complete! |
| Identify new funds to increase need-based aid. Ensure students with the greatest need can experience the full Auburn experience. Increase the number of diversity scholarship. | Complete! |
Subcommittee:
Black Staff Recruitment & Retention
Black Staff Recruitment & Retention

**Goal:** Increase the number of full-time staff who identify as Black/African American.

**Implementation Steps**

- Add proactive and specific language encouraging diverse applications to all staff postings at Auburn University.
- Deploy inclusive hiring practices and develop and inclusive hiring toolkit. Increase search committee DEI education, evaluation rubrics and search documentation.
- Expand and fully support university’s Onboarding Center to connect new faculty and staff with Auburn affinity groups and include culturally specific community and university resources.
- Implement exit interview surveys that captures strengths and opportunities to improve experiences for all Auburn employees.
- Conduct ongoing tracking and monitoring to improve advertising and outreach sources.
- Audit all staff postings at multiple checkpoints to ensure diverse applicant pools are achieved. Additional outreach will occur if not achieved.

**Progress Tracker**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Takeaway:** The Taskforce has endorsed the implementation of evidence-based promising practices like search education, vigorous outreach, inclusive hiring toolkits, exit interviews, and campus cultural affinity groups toward the recruitment and retention of a more diverse and inclusive staff workforce with increased representation of Black and other historically underrepresented staff.
Additional Task Force Subcommittee Progress and Next Steps

In addition to updates from the previous subcommittees, the following subcommittees are continuing to work towards their goals and will report out on progress in the next quarterly update.

Institute Subcommittee
• Explore the feasibility of an Institute for African American and Black Studies to serve as an empowering space to promote scholarly research and academic excellence.

Black Student Retention Subcommittee
• Fully understand the Black student experience and recommended strategies and systems Auburn can employ to improve the satisfaction of our Black undergraduate students.
• In Spring 2021, Auburn built on its previous climate study to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of current students. In Spring 2022, Auburn University will further this effort by administering a comprehensive climate survey to faculty, staff, and students.
• Student Advocacy Center Progress
• Bias Education and Response Team (BERT) Progress

Graduate Student Subcommittee
• Seek to identify and find solutions for specific issues of equity, diversity and inclusion impacting Auburn University graduate students.