Resources to guide assessment and improvement of the climate for Black students, staff and faculty at our academic institutions

Compiled by A4BL Liberation Bootcamp Group 2 on the topic "Black Liberation through University Accountability" (in reverse alphabetical order: Carolyn Springer, Nikolette Lipsey, Devon Golaszewski, Susan Collins, and Michael Belitz)

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Statement of the Problem/Rationale

For decades, Black academics and researchers have underscored the ways in which anti-Black racism negatively impacts the people, climate and overall functioning at institutions of higher education, particularly predominantly white institutions, including the toll on:

- Mental and physical health of Black students, staff and faculty (e.g. Beatty et al., 2021; Colen et al., 2020; Cokley et al 2012; Davis, 2021),
- Career opportunities, funding and advancements for Black academics (e.g., Bowden & Buie, 2021; Cook et al., 2019; Hoppe et al, 2019),
- The institution's performance on key indices including enrollment, productivity, and retention (e.g., Alexander & Herman, 2016; National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2021; Cook et al., 2019), and
- The institution's relationship with the community in which it resides (e.g., Beatty et al., 2020; Mwangi et al., 2018).

Thus, the health of the people, their communities, and the institutions of higher learning they work and learn within requires consequential action to address and counter anti-Black racism. Black academics have proposed theories and models of change to address anti-Black racism and move institutions of higher learning towards Black liberation (Mosley et al., 2021; Davis, 2021). Black academics have also outlined important, evidence-based and concrete ways that institutions of higher learning can measure and improve campus climate (Davis, 2021; Mwangi et al., 2018).

To this end, this document presents ways to assess and address anti-Black racism impacting students, staff and faculty at academic institutions. Caveat: Where we could not find resources specifically addressing anti-Black racism and ways to address it, we included resources addressing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion more generally that could be helpful.

Vision

Making the campus welcoming, equitable, just and supportive for Black constituents at the university and in the larger community.

Mission

This document outlines a multistep process or approach to guide means of improving the climate for Black people at our institutions and in the larger community. These steps include:

- Reviewing existing and gathering new information on the specific campus climate and the experiences of Black people, and current campus policies and procedures. This step should include the voices and perspectives of different constituents, centering Black perspectives, including students, faculty, staff, administrators/directors, alumni, members of the governing boards of the university and community members via a variety of tools.
- Creating a team or board to evaluate data and communicate results to broad audiences across power hierarchies. This group should center Black perspectives and collectively represent the voices and perspectives of different constituents including students, faculty, staff, administrators/directors, alumni, members of the governing boards of the university and community members.
- Considering viable models for anti-racist activism on campuses developed by Black scholars
- Using results and leveraging power to develop and implement action points.

Figure 1 below describes this process.

Figure 1: Multistep process to improving climate for Black students, faculty and staff at academic institutions
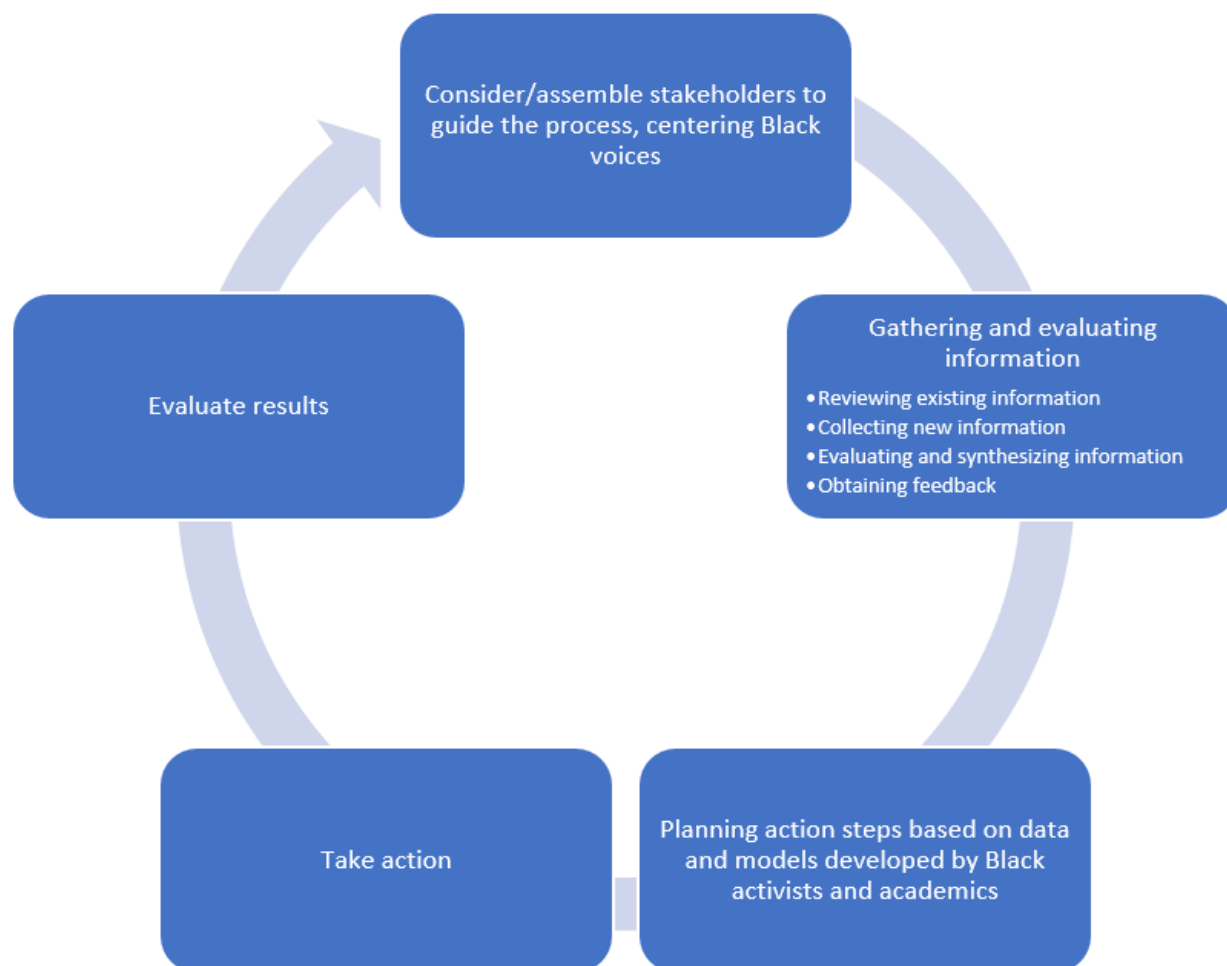
Who We Are/Context and Positionality

How our group formed. Our group was formed in 2021 during the Academics for Black Survival and Wellness (A4BL) conference[1]. The conference offered concurrent sessions for

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[1] From the Academics for Black Survival and Wellness website: "Academics for Black Survival and Wellness (A4BL) is a personal and professional development initiative for Non-Black academics to honor the toll of racial trauma on Black people, resist anti-Blackness and white supremacy, and facilitate accountability and collective action. A4BL also is a space for healing and wellness for Black people. A4BL was launched in the Summer of 2020 on Juneteenth in response to the countless murders of Black people at the hands of white supremacy. The initiative began as a week-long initiative and call to action for academics to support and be accountable to Black liberation. With over 10,000 participants from across the world, the initiative provided Non-Black participants with training materials to make actionable change to address anti-Black racism in their personal lives and academia. Black participants were provided with virtual community wellness events to build their coping and resistance toolkit. After a successful week and requests for more, we 'rewinded and remixed' the original materials for new and returning participants for 21-days in August [2021]."

Black and non-Black participants (i.e., healing resources for Black people and anti-racist training for non-Black people). Conference attendees could elect to make an additional commitment to join small teams, comprised of individuals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, based on mutual interests in working towards Black liberation. This commitment was called the "A4BL Liberation Bootcamp," and comprised the 2020 A4BL Conference trainings as well as 2 bootcamp-specific seminars, and small group assignments to meet outside of the larger conference proceedings. Our group was assembled and assigned by the A4BL organizers as one of 7 groups working towards "Black liberation through accountability for anti-Blackness in the university."

Who we are. Our group comprises Black and non-Black academics at different stages in our careers, including a graduate student as well as early- and mid-career faculty members at four-year academic institutions. We represent an interdisciplinary team, including psychologists, biologists and historians. We have varying levels of prior involvement in organizing and working in diversity, equity and inclusion. However, we do not position ourselves as experts in this area.

For all these reasons, we acknowledge that our group does not represent all the various intersections of identities that this work can affect, including but not limited to different lived experience, organizing experience, and professional experience. Due to these limitations, we preface this work with an acknowledgment that we have certainly made mistakes and have overlooked important resources. We also acknowledge this resource is not comprehensive but an initial introduction to this area. Further, work in accountability for anti-Blackness and toward liberation is a constantly growing area of work. Thus, we have made this document adaptable for those readers who have additional resources or considerations we have missed in our review of available practices.

How we work together. Our team began meeting virtually on a daily basis during the A4BL conference in June 2021. After the conference, we began meeting weekly to review our group's progress towards our agreed upon vision and mission.

Our meetings follow a repeated format. Different members volunteer to lead each meeting and take notes on a shared GoogleDoc document. We follow the anti-oppression resource and training alliance ([AORTA](#)) meeting guidelines. We start meetings with a check-in, and then focus on the agenda we created in the prior meeting. We cocreated the above mission, vision and processes in our weekly meetings and divided up sections to work on between meetings. These were then subject to review by all group members, both individually and as a group. We review our ability to commit and timing at the beginning of each semester.

In creating our current document, we were particularly inspired by the format and process of the "[Creating and Sustaining a Diversity Committee: Process, Development and Implementation](#)" created by the Diversity Committee of the UMass-Boston Clinical Psychology Program.

How to Use this Resource. There is no single "right" way to use this resource. Instead, as the reader, we suggest that you think about the context in which you work while using this resource. This material should be adapted based on the context of your workplace, the dynamics of your university, and larger social and political context. An important first step is to

clearly articulate your goals in relation to addressing anti-Black racism. We recognize that these goals may change over time; however, we encourage ongoing reflection on these goals and where your institution may be in relation to those goals. Some things you might consider while reading this resource are:

- What is your position on campus?
- What is the history of your university (PWI, historically Black University, etc)?
- What potential biases may you hold?
- What resources are already in place in your program/institution that are combating anti-Black racism? How can you support or add to these groups?
- If you are not Black, how will you listen to and welcome input from Black people without placing excessive burden on Black people to do the work?
- How will you ensure that you are including diverse voices and perspectives? How will you make sure this is a collaborative effort?
- How aware is your program/institution of anti-Black racism and what is their readiness for change?

Process Outlined in the Current Document

This resource shares processes and approaches to guide means of improving the climate for Black people at academic institutions through a multistep process. We highlight different models, approaches, and opportunities to review and gather information in regards to making academic campuses more welcoming, equitable, just and supportive for Black constituents. This suggests five potential aspects of this process – assembling stakeholders, reviewing existing information/resource mapping, gathering new information, obtaining feedback (from people from different communities, especially Black constituents), taking action, and evaluating actions. Steps 1 and 2 (below) are included in this particular document.

Step 1: Assembling stakeholders to guide the process, centering Black voices

Step 2: Gathering and evaluating information
- Reviewing existing information
- Collecting new information

Step 3: Planning action steps based on models, using information gathered

Step 4: Taking Action

Step 5: Evaluation

Stand-alone Resources that Span Multiple Steps

The bulk of this resource provides information about and resources for the abovementioned steps. Looking through the steps we list below and associated resources that could be used for each step may be helpful for a mix-and-match approach. However, if you are looking for one-stop-shop resources, we have listed in this section some suggestions for resources or toolkits that provide comprehensive, self-contained processes to address anti-Black racism and promote justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

- Damon Williams books:
  - Strategic Diversity Leadership
  - The Chief Diversity Officer
- Berkeley Strategic Planning Document
- TECAID Model: Leading Engineering Department Culture Change in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Step 1: Assembling stakeholders to guide the process, centering Black voices

It is helpful to convene a group of stakeholders as close to the beginning of this process as possible to inform the development of your evaluation questions, processes and procedures. When convening stakeholders it is essential to center the needs and interests of Black faculty, students and staff. There are various models for convening groups of stakeholders that have been cited in academic reports, including deliberative governance, community based participatory research, Indigenous methodologies, and participatory models of evaluation. Processes that include community feedback require more time and flexibility. However, greater community involvement leads to more productive partnerships, better research programs, and stronger implementation (Minkler et al., 2009).

Assembling the stakeholder partnership. Without undue pressure on more marginalized groups, the initiators of the effort should be inclusive invitations to the stakeholder partnership, always asking, "Who is not yet at the table?" and "Is this a space that is welcoming to people who are more marginalized in this system?" If not, assess what can be done to make it so, and continue to work on this issue. This is initial data for your evaluation. Ensure stakeholders are involved at different levels of the hierarchy of the institution. Ensure course releases, payments or other desirable incentives to compensate stakeholders, particularly Black stakeholders, for their time serving in the partnership. Serve refreshments at in-person meetings.

Creating the stakeholder partnership. Research studies have elucidated evidence-based factors for successful stakeholder partnerships, including adherence to agreed-upon and cocreated principles and strategies (Cyril, Smith, Possamai-Inesedy, & Andre, 2015), a commitment to building trust among partners (Jagosh et al., 2015), and formal structures to ensure equitable community involvement (e.g., written agreements; Oetzel, Villegas, et al., 2015). Stakeholder partnerships must take into account all partners' strengths and challenges and work together to maximize the former and build in support for the latter. Partnerships can and should be measured and assessed over time, including relational dynamics in the partnership (e.g., leadership, influence, participatory decision-making), systems and capacity changes (e.g., new academic leadership), and priority outcomes.

Considering frameworks. The ensuing steps could be guided using a theoretical process, a conceptual framework, and/or an empirical process with assessment tools. This process might involve defining conceptual frameworks for examining diversity, assessing readiness for change, building a diversity team (knowledge, skills and competencies etc.) (See Damon William's Strategic Diversity Leadership Institute and publications: Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education and The Chief Diversity Officer: Strategy Structure, and Change)

Cocreating the evaluation questions. Evaluation questions must be grounded in the interests and needs of the Black community in your system. If there are stated needs,

evaluation questions, or desired directions from key stakeholders representing the Black community, these should be prioritized. Evaluation questions may be built on prior efforts. Foremost, stakeholders must consider the evaluation questions that are most relevant, important and actionable and must take into account the needs of the Black community in the most inclusive way possible.

Mutually deciding on the division of labor. Once the evaluation questions are established, the strengths and needs of researchers and community members must be discussed to establish the division of labor. There must be an equitable—not necessarily equal—partnership in research implementation. Some stakeholders have the interest and resources (e.g., time, training) to implement certain aspects of the research project (e.g., participant interviews, qualitative coding, writing). Other stakeholders may need administrators or those in positions of greater power to take on tasks that would otherwise put them at risk, be burdensome, or move beyond their scope of influence (e.g., locating university funding to support the work; finding on-campus space for meetings; arranging meetings with high-ranking administrators to relay findings). These decisions should be made as a team with a focus on equity, capacity building and sustainability.

Step 2: Gathering and Evaluating Information

The goal of this section is to provide resources and suggestions for gathering information on the experience of Black students, faculty, and staff on your campus. It suggests two potential aspects of this process -- reviewing existing information (resource mapping) and methods for collecting new data. In the **resource mapping section**, we offer an overview of some initiatives, groups, and documentation that may already exist and can provide information about campus climate and existing efforts towards Black liberation and wellness. These include student groups, university history projects, etc. In the **how to collect new data section** we provide an overview of several methods for gathering new information about Black liberation and wellness on your campus, such as climate surveys, qualitative methods, town halls, etc.

- **Resource mapping to understand current climate and existing initiatives and resources**
  - Document review
  - Student Groups
  - Study Circles/Reading Groups
  - DEI Offices
  - University History Projects
  - Social Media
  - Staff-specific information gathering
  - Administrative Review
- **Collecting new data to further understand existing campus climate and potential points for intervention towards Black liberation**
  - Interviews
  - Climate survey
  - Town Halls

- [Delphi Method](#)
- [Focus Groups](#)

Format of Step 2 Subsections

Below, we include multiple nested sections that all follow a similar format in an attempt to make the resource navigable and intelligible to the reader.

1. **Definitions:** First, there is a brief definition about what the section will be about and provide the necessary background information about the section.
2. **Highlighting importance:** The importance of the section is highlighted.
3. **Recommendations/Resources/Case studies:** Recommendations about how to gather information through the opportunities described in the section are noted. If relevant, our own experiences or case studies are noted.
4. **Pearls and perils:** Benefits (pearls) or risks (perils), either through our own experiences or documented in the experiences of others, are noted when applicable in relation to each section.
5. **Additional resources (as available/needed):** Finally, we include additional resources where readers can find more information and specific documents about the section and list our references at the end of our section.

Resource Mapping of Existing Initiatives and Information

There are often existing resources, initiatives and information on campus climate and how that impacts Black students, faculty and staff. It is important to take stock of the existing resources, initiatives, and information prior to taking action to ensure you are not duplicating efforts and that you can effectively build these out in an informed way. This can be done using a formal method such as "resource mapping," which takes into account populations served, and sometimes other detailed information like the physical environment, or more informally, via the creation of a simple list.

In the following sections, we review various information sources you may seek out to identify existing resources, initiatives and information documenting anti-Black racism and efforts towards Black liberation on your campus. Again, we note these categories may serve as a starting point for your efforts but are not exhaustive.

- [Document review](#)
- [Student Groups](#)
- [Study Circles/Reading Groups](#)
- [DEI Offices](#)
- [University History Projects](#)

- [Social Media](#)
- [Staff-specific information gathering](#)
- [Administrative Review](#)

Document Review (Susan)

Definition

Before starting a new process, it is important to access and review existing official, institutional documents on campus climate to understand what has been done to date, ensure the work will build on that in a positive way, and benefit from lessons learned from prior efforts.

Highlighting the importance

This step is important because even smaller-scale campus climate assessments done well are necessarily time-consuming and effortful. When new efforts are made that do not build on (or mindfully separate from) the institutions' prior efforts, there is a disconnect in information and potentially a waste of labor.

More importantly, when institutional documentation of anti-Black racism is paired with inaction or defensiveness, these efforts can be less productive and even more harmful for Black students ([Ledesma, 2016](#); [Arellano & Vue, 2019](#)). Ensuring this effort is as well-informed as possible is important to a successful next step.

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

- Expanding upon quantitative climate survey results for Cornell University, [Hurtado et al (2014)](#) conducted an additional qualitative and "transformative evaluation," centering the experience of marginalized communities, examining power dynamics and linking findings to action points. One key aspect of their analysis was a review of existing institutional documents: "In addition to the survey data, public documents such as campus statements about diversity, targeted diversity program materials, and the campus website, as well as any internal documents (e.g., strategic plans and policies) were examined for themes related to a diverse organizational climate. The campus provided an extensive list of documents including previous reports, studies, memorandums, and announcements that provided context for understanding the campus climate. The research team also reviewed and coded recent reports, documents, and resolutions related to diversity, inclusion, and incidents" (Hurtado et al, 2014).

- A "diversity audit" has been described by [Williams (2013)](#) in Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education. This process entails secondary analysis of existing data as well as surveys, focus groups, interviews with key constituents; Review prior diversity plans and implementation processes; Examine other successful campus planning and implementation processes not involving diversity.

Pearls/Perils

- Pearls: Document review can serve as a key starting point for assessing campus climate to ensure there is an understanding of existing data, policies and procedures assessing inclusion, equity, and more specifically, anti-Black racism and efforts towards Black liberation.
- Perils: Document review should not be relied upon solely to support the information gathering step. Assessing campus climate should be, as shown in following sections, a multidimensional, multimethods process.

Student Groups (Mike)

Definition

Many institutions have Black Student Organizations (BSOs) that are dedicated to serving Black students within their institutions. These groups may be focused at undergraduate or graduate levels (e.g., Black Grad Student Associations) or may even make up a coalition of students, faculty, staff, and alumni (e.g., UF Black Effort (UFBE)). BSOs often are composed of students who have been working towards improving the campus environment for Black folks through a variety of different initiatives.

The first Black Student Union (BSU) was formed at San Francisco State University in 1966 (Robinson, 2012). Since the late 1960s, BSUs have been started at college campuses across the United States and work to create a Black student experience that is welcoming, supported, and advocated for (McGregory and Pulliam, 2009)

The purpose of this section is to highlight the importance of BSOs as a resource for gathering information about the campus' climate for Black students, faculty, and staff.

Highlighting the importance
- At many institutions, Black student groups may have already administered climate surveys in the past (e.g., The State of Black GW).
    - If the climate survey addresses the goals of your group, then you can begin working towards and following the leadership of Black student groups to disseminate information to groups in power and implement action plans.
- Many student groups have also put out lists of campus-specific demands, which have been compiled and can be found on the Black Liberation Collective website and thedemands.org).
    - These demands can help shape the framing and structure of future information gathering processes and can be taken into consideration when implementing action plans.
    - Addressing these demands brought forward by students is critical to transform and disrupt institutions that engage in and protect anti-Blackness.
- Black student groups have been instrumental in implementing change on campuses across the United States. A few examples of change that were driven by Black student groups and unions include:
    - The hiring of Black professors
    - The establishment of Black Studies departments
    - Removing statues and renaming buildings with ties to racism

- ○ [Ending prison labor contracts](#)
- ○ [Burt and Halpern (1998)](#) wrote that, "Unfortunately, the experience of African Americans was, and in many cases is, viewed through the lens of the dominant culture which has resulted in a consistent misdiagnosis or distorted interpretation of the African American experience" (p. 5).
    - ■ The experience of Black students, faculty, and staff at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) may also be misconstrued by colleagues summarizing campus climate.
    - ■ BSOs represent a space that recognizes and supports Black people, culture, and history which may provide opportunities for the Black student experience to be shared without being translated through the lens of whiteness.
- Student groups that hold space, celebrate, and prioritize the support and wellness of individuals with intersecting marginalized identities are of utmost importance in transforming a campus to be more welcoming, equitable, and just.
    - ○ Examples of these groups include groups focusing on Black Feminism such as the [Black Women's Organization at the College of Wooster](#) and also Queer and Trans People of Color groups such as the [QTPOC group at The University of Arizona](#) and the [QTPOC group at Loyola Marymount University](#).

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

Campus-specific Black student organizations can be found for your specific campus by:

- Checking institutional websites for e.g., Black Student Union, Black Cultural Center, NAACP chapters)
- Nationally, the [Black Liberation Collective](#), has a list of national demands as well as hosts a collection of demands that are tailored to specific College Campuses. Similarly, demands from students at institutions across the country have been aggregated at https://www.thedemands.org/.
- Many groups use social media to publish information and organize.
- Additionally, student newspapers may be reporting on the experiences of Black people on their respective campuses (e.g., https://www.alligator.org/article/2021/02/is-uf-doing-enough-for-its-black-students)
- Black alumni groups often organize direct support of current Black students, given their experiences and the the experiences they want current students to have at the university ([McGregory and Pulliam, 2009](#), pg. 17-18)

Pearls/Perils

Pearls

Although students are often exploited by universities that rely on and benefit from students that engage in diversity work without compensation or accountability, these efforts can lead to important shifts in institutional policies. For example, following a grassroots campaign by Black activists, [the University of Michigan began paying graduate students to implement various parts of its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategic plan](#).

Perils

Black students are often relied upon to educate and train others on topics of equity at their own expense and without compensation. If possible, students and groups working and improving the climate for Black students should be compensated and at the very least, institutions and departments should be willing to change in response to demands listed by student organizations if their time is requested for diversity work.

Study Circle/Reading Group (Devon + Mike)

Definition

Study circles and reading groups focused on combating racism are initiatives that may already exist within your campus or department and may provide opportunities to learn more about the experience of Black students, faculty, and staff on your campus. Study circles/reading groups can create a space for people at different levels of a department (graduate students, faculty, etc.) or they can function across departments or schools. Study circles and reading groups can create a space for individuals to raise their racial awareness and critical consciousness of anti-Black racism, and to develop their own ideas and share information. Depending on your position as student, staff, graduate student or faculty, you can look for these groups through:
- Your department or program
- Student groups
- Faculty Senates or other, less formalized, faculty groups
- Center for Teaching (or equivalent center)
- Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Highlighting the importance

Study circles and reading groups may be useful resources in gathering and evaluating information about the experience of Black students, faculty, and staff on your campus, as these groups may assist in uncovering existing initiatives that are working towards Black liberation and wellness. Additionally, these study circles and reading groups may allow oneself to gather information about where people or larger groups may be in their journey of critical consciousness of anti-Black racism. Study circles and reading groups may also provide a space to identify advocates and allies.

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

Case studies
- One member of our group learned about a faculty reading group via an email announcement from their University's Center for Teaching Excellence. At Loyola Marymount University, two faculty members organized a "Faculty Learning Community" (FLC) on the subject of 'decolonizing the university." This model built on an existing structure of faculty reading groups, an existing program supported by the Center for Teaching Excellence (including a $1000 stipend for the organizers). The group met monthly and brought together faculty from multiple schools and departments. For each

meeting, the FLC organizers assigned a reading, which participants discussed in small groups and large groups via Zoom The format allowed them to share experiences across the University, with the goal of designing projects. Members of this FLC led a syllabus re-design workshop in the following semester for the wider faculty community. One important element of this group was that it was organized not simply to increase knowledge, but to create specific implementable projects to respond to anti-Black racism at the school.

- At Adelphi University, two reading groups exist which speak to the needs of different groups. The school's Humanities Reading and Discussion Group on Black Literature is convened by the Center for African, Black and Caribbean Studies each Spring/Summer. This group uses a critical analysis of literary texts to increase awareness of the lived experience of Black Americans. The group is supported through a grant from Humanities New York. Members vote on the texts to discuss. Recent authors have included James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and Isabel Wilkerson. The group is led by the former Director of the Center, an historian with expertise in African American and Women Studies. Additionally, a separate White Allies Discussion Group was created in 2019 by white faculty for white faculty interested in combating Anti-Black racism.

Pearls/Perils

Perils
- Consider the labor involved: Is the person or people coordinating the group being paid or receiving a course release? Keep in mind the tendency for the burden of this sort of labor to be placed on Black faculty/students.
- The power dynamics within the group need to be explored and explicitly acknowledged (UMass Doc).
- Depending on the racial make-up of the reading group, they can be a space for non-Black individuals to learn without 'doing harm' or placing undue burden on BIPOC colleagues to explain anti-Black racism.
- However, there is an important criticism of reading groups, especially those aimed at white members, specifically that they devolve into a space which replaces other forms of potentially more uncomfortable but more effective action. In an [op-ed for the Washington Post](#), writer Tre Johnson juxtaposes his pain at personal experiences of racism, and at publicized instances of the deaths of Black individuals, with his white friends' responses, which were primarily to 'learn more' via reading, including in book club spaces. Although not specific to academic contexts, he explores this as an example of performative allyship, writing that "their book clubs will do what all book clubs do: devolve into routine reschedulings and cancellations; turn into collective apologies for not doing the reading or meta-conversations about what everyone should pretend to read next; finally become occasional opportunities to catch up over wine."

Recommendations and resources
- Community guidelines ([see example from Tufts University](#)) should be drafted and agreed upon before initiating study circles or reading groups.
- Discussion guides for popular antiracism book clubs can be found [here](#)

Offices of DEI or equivalent (Devon)

Definition

One place to look for information about existing initiatives to address anti-Black racism on campus is your university's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (or equivalent). Many universities include detailed information on subjects such as admissions, ongoing initiatives, and models for action which you can adapt to your own institution or department. However, each website represents the choices of the office and school, and the same kinds of information are not shared by all offices.

Highlighting the importance

An Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion can serve as a clearinghouse for information on your campus, including ongoing initiatives, and models for action, so it is an important resource to 1) understand existing actions on campus and 2) decide which might be adaptable to your institution or department.

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies
- Some universities create campus-wide mechanisms for sharing information. UC-Berkeley, a large state institution, posts a [data dashboard](#) on their website which compares the racial make-up of the university vis-a-vis state population. Other websites offer a clear indication of the demands placed on the university and the response of the University over time (via a timeline function). The [African American Initiative](#) (Berkeley) site shows both the University's progress in meeting some demands and provides ideas for the kinds of initiatives which can be undertaken in response to a hostile campus climate.
- Also in California, the DEI Office at Loyola Marymount University has [shared video reports](#) of systemic analysis conducted by different departments, offering an accessible method of learning about existing campus initiatives, challenges, and specific projects undertaken. For example, the Career Services office has prospective employers agree to certain values before attending recruiting fairs on campus, and has limited ties with policing agencies.
- Other universities, like UC San Diego, have created specific programs to unify initiatives around Black life on campus. The [Black Academic Excellence Initiative](#) includes scholarships and specific programs to support faculty.

Pearls/Perils

Perils
- Public websites may not discuss implementation, but rather offer a set of goals. This can make it difficult for the reader to assess how the institution has or has not moved forward. Additionally, not all websites are up to date, which may reflect many things, from simple disorganization to a sign of flagging commitment.
- Existing critique of DEI offices, by current or former members of these offices, identify challenges ranging from the marginalization of DEI offices from administrative decision-making, to a lack of funding, resources, and support from institutions, demands to 'play

nice' or a sense that these offices serve to highlight existing work, rather than push for true accountability for harm. Other authors have suggested the need for these spaces to incorporate a focus on justice. As one review noted: "As Dr. D.L. Stewart states in the 2017 piece "Language of Appeasement," diversity and inclusion rhetoric asks fundamentally different questions and is concerned with fundamentally different issues than efforts seeking equity and justice."
- In a broader sense, social critic Sara Ahmed has described the bureaucratic response to diversity work (especially around race and gender) in terms of institutional double speak.

Additional resources
- Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*
  - On Being Included "explores the gap between symbolic commitments to diversity and the experience of those who embody diversity. Commitments to diversity are understood as "non-performatives" that do not bring about what they name. The book provides an account of institutional whiteness and shows how racism can be obscured by the institutionalization of diversity. Diversity is used as evidence that institutions do not have a problem with racism. On Being Included offers a critique of what happens when diversity is offered as a solution. It also shows how diversity workers generate knowledge of institutions in attempting to transform them"
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development and Office of the Under Secretary, *Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education*, Washington, D.C., 2016. [Copy and paste link if necessary]
  - Gives a rationale for why the administration needs to support diversity efforts. Provides data on current inequities in higher education related to race and ethnicity.
- Penn State Office of Educational Equity "DEI-Focused planning assessment rubric"

Social Media (Nikolette)

Definition
- Social media is an important tool for anyone on and off campus to:
  - Share their experiences
  - Share information
  - Call for specific actions
  - Connect with others
- Specifically, relevant to this project, there have been many great examples of Black students/faculty/staff/alumni using social media to share their experiences of racism & discrimination on their campus, share information about current events both on and off campus, disseminating specific demands or petitions, and connecting with other Black students, faculty, staff, or alumni.
- The purpose of this section is to (1) highlight the importance of social media as a space to advocate for Black liberation and wellness, and (2) offer some

recommendations/resources for how those interested in making change on their campus can gather information about campus climate and concerns from social media.

Highlighting the importance
- Sharing experiences of racism in academia
  - Social media can be a space for Black students and students with other/additional marginalized identities to share their stories and their experiences (Peña, 2020)
  - Examples:
    - On a larger scale (i.e., across multiple universities), there are social media accounts such as @dearpwi and @blackivystories
    - On a smaller scale (i.e., one specific university), there are accounts like @BlackAtFurman, @DearBowdoin, and many others (Peña, 2020; Smith-Barrow, 2020)
- Sharing Information
  - Social media can be used to share all kinds of information. Pertinent to this guide, some examples of information that may be shared on social media could be general resources (e.g., general anti-racism information, book/podcast/account recommendations) or campus-specific resources (e.g., information about current events on campus) (Richards, 2017)
  - General resources - there are many accounts that provide general anti-racism information. Some examples specifically geared towards academic spaces include: @DiversityInAcademia, @decolonize_the_classroom, @AntiRacistEducationNow (Note: there are many more accounts and resources beyond what is listed here)
  - Campus-specific resources - students/faculty/staff/alumni may wish to use social media to draw attention to particular concerns on campus, share information about specific events (protests, rallies, wellness events, etc.), or share information about specific opportunities (opportunities to join clubs/organizations/committees, opportunities to participate in studies, etc.)
- Demanding accountability and action
  - An often-held sentiment is that "social media is the only way to hold people and universities accountable" (Peña, 2020)
  - Indeed, social media does offer a platform for Black students, faculty, staff, and alumni to demand accountability and encourage action both within the university community and the larger community
  - Example: Black Liberation Collective - A centralized collection of demands from Black students at 86 (and counting) universities
- Connecting with others/Coalition-building (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018; Richards, 2017)
  - Social media can be a space for Black students/faculty/staff/alumni to connect with other Black students/faculty/staff/alumni and be in community.

○ Additionally, social media can be a space for coalition-building: for students/faculty/staff/alumni invested in Black liberation and wellness to be in collective and to share information about specific actions/events

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

- If you are interested in advocating for change and taking action towards Black liberation and wellness on your campus, social media is a helpful tool to better understand the experiences and demands of Black students, faculty and staff.
- As noted in the previous section - you can examine social media to get general anti-racism information, to get information about what other campuses are doing and what Black students/faculty/staff/alumni are demanding on other campuses or are advocating for on your specific campus.
- Some recommendations for finding information specific to your campus:
  ○ Check the university website for student group information. Student groups (e.g., Black Student Union, etc.) may have websites that provide information and link directly to social media.
  ○ Try searching hashtags specific to your university (e.g., #BlackAt_____).
  ○ Check university-wide accounts. These accounts may highlight particular student groups or respond to specific demands or concerns.
    ■ Additionally, if student affairs professionals provide a platform, students may engage with university accounts that are student-centric (see Richards, 2017 for some recommendations to student affairs professionals).
  ○ If you are at a smaller campus where website/social media presence seems minimal, you can look at accounts/information from other similar universities. For example, if you are at a small liberal arts PWI, can you find other small liberal arts PWIs that have more social media presence?
- It is important to account for the perspectives of many groups, always centering Black voices, including undergraduates, graduate students, staff, faculty, alumni, administrators, community-members. If you are gathering information from social media, take note of whom you are gathering the information from, and ask yourself whose perspectives are missing, especially at the intersections (e.g., Black trans womxn, Black immigrant voices).

Pearls/Perils

- Pearls:
  ○ Social media can provide a window into the experiences of people in various roles on campus, and it can be a place to gather information on the fly quickly (e.g., instagram story polls, twitter polls, etc.). Think creatively about how social media can be a medium for gathering info.
  ○ Social media is useful to examine in real-time as events unfold on campus.
  ○ Social media may serve as a good launching point for more in-depth conversations.

- - ○ Social media can be particularly critical in advocating for/demanding change because it is a public platform that can be leveraged to garner support not just locally but nationally and internationally.
- Perils:
  - ○ Note that not all individuals and campus groups will have or desire to have a social media presence, so don't use social media as your only way of gathering information.
  - ○ Social media is often public to at least a subset of people, so there may be some element of self-presentation/impression management.

Additional resources

- [How Social Media is Helping Students of Color Speak Out About Racism on Campus](#) (**Author:** Christian Peña)
  - ○ Provides examples of broader (i.e., across many universities) social media accounts such as @dearpwi & @blackivystories
  - ○ Also provides examples of university-specific accounts such as @dearbowdoin
  - ○ Sentiment is that "social media is the only way to hold people and universities accountable"
- ["Black At" Instagram Accounts Put Campus Racism on Display](#) (**Author:** Delece Smith-Barrow)
  - ○ Offers several examples of "Black At" Instagram accounts - including what types of posts different accounts are making. For example, some accounts focus on sharing the experiences of racism that Black students face at their particular university, some focus on raising money for social justice organizations, and some focus on educating and providing resources
- [An Analysis of Black Undergraduate Students ' Social Activism through Social Media Usage](#) (**Author:** Tayla Richards)
  - ○ Article examines in-depth narratives of Black undergraduate students and their use of social media as a form of activism ("Information acquisition and dispersal, discourse with peers, or mainstream media critique").
  - ○ Also provides suggestion to student affairs professionals for social media engagement: "One practical way that social media can be used by student affairs professionals to reach students is utilizing social media platforms as a means to distribute alerts and updates for emergency purposes and otherwise. If one is present and active on social media platforms, one should build a presence, be visible, set examples of responsible social media use, and be vigilant and receptive of information being shared by students about issues that they face. Having a professional presence on social media with the appropriate amount of self-disclosure based on individual comfort levels can create approachability. Students will engage with others, such as student affairs professionals, besides peers if they choose to and feel comfortable doing so. Allowing students to initiate contact with you on social media can serve as a different type of relationship or rapport building between professionals and students. Both participating in and facilitating training on effective and appropriate social media

use for student affairs professionals could be a beneficial potential professional development undertaking"

- [Black Liberation Collective - Our Demands](#)
  - A centralized collection of demands from Black students at 86 (and counting) universities: "These demands listed represent collective efforts by Black students to address widespread institutional inequity. These student led efforts are crucial to addressing larger systemic issues and serve as a catalyst to dismantle institutions that promote and engage in anti-Blackness"
  - Black student groups/coalitions can submit their demands to this website and also get examples of what other Black student groups are demanding from their universities
  - College admin/faculty/staff can visit this website to gather consensus for what actions they can take on their campus, even if formal demands have not been submitted to them
- [Black Liberation Collective guide to demands](#)
  - Useful guide to share with students/faculty/staff/admin who are interested in making demands for Black racial justice on their campus
- [Scaling Social Movements Through Social Media: The Case of Black Lives Matter](#) (**Authors**: Marcia Mundt, Karen Ross, and Charla M Burnett)
  - Although the article is not focused on students/campuses specifically, this article does provide information about the ways in which social media can be used as a mobilizing tool (building internal connections, generating external resources), a coalition building tool, and a narrative amplification tool within the Black Lives Matter movement. This article provides insights into the importance of considering social media in assessing campus climate.

University History Projects (Devon)

Definition
- Since the early 2000s, many universities have undertaken, or been pushed to undertake, projects exploring their own historical connections to anti-Black violence - from financial links to the slave trade, participation in the appropriation of Indigenous land (e.g., [violence-backed land cessions](#)), hoarding bodily remains for forensic or anthropological research, or resistance to racial or gender-based integration.

Highlighting the importance
- Historical research often sets the ground for demands about changes to university spaces, policies, or even implicit norms. Different research projects have led to [reparations](#), scholarships, and changes to campus space by removing names and statues. They can also offer inspiration based on successful activism in the past or help you identify spaces of current/future activism. The goal of this section is to introduce some existing projects, some strategies for conducting historical research, and examples of concrete activism which has resulted from historical research or responded to past harms.

Recommendations/Resources/Case Studies

Histories of enslavement
- Universities had a range of relationships with enslavement. In many cases, the wealth accumulated via the labor or sale of enslaved people was vital to the financial viability of universities. At Georgetown University the sale of enslaved people owned by the Jesuit order allowed the solvency of the University. In other cases, profits from the slave trade helped establish universities, build campus buildings, or fund endowments, even in locations where slavery was not legal, as was the case at the University of Chicago (Illinois) and MIT (Massachusetts). In other cases, students were accompanied to school by enslaved servants, some of whom ran away. Enslaved people also labored on different university campuses.
- Brown University, Georgetown University, University of Virginia, Furman University and others have developed projects or offices focused on the specific history of enslavement on campus or in the geographical region. Many of these universities form part of the Universities Studying Slavery Consortium.
- In many cases, these histories have returned to public knowledge via faculty and student research (see section below). You might ask - does this kind of research exist about your campus? One place to start is to look to the University archives (within the library), University History Department, and Google searches. You can also look to resources like the book Ebony and Ivory, by Craig Steven Wilder for the broader history of higher education and slavery in the US. If this kind of initiative does not exist, are there resources (faculty, archives) which make it possible? Could you pressure your administration to undertake this work?
- The research process is a step towards meaningful actions to address this local history of the university. In response to histories of enslavement, universities have undertaken a range of actions to alter campus memorials (shift historical memory) or support contemporary student needs, including:
    - Removing or contextualizing campus memorials by renaming campus locations and/or removing or contextualizing heroic imagery of individuals connected to the slave trade or to the defense of slavery, such as at the University of Oregon. In many cases, this has been pushed by student activism, History Department faculty, or administrators.
    - Creating public memorials such as plaques, statues, memorializing enslaved people and their contributions to the university, or other Black students or employees
    - Conducting genealogical research and developing a scholarship program for the descendants of enslaved people owned by the institution
    - Developing scholarship programs for Black students.

- However, there are also other arenas for action.If your university has not made changes to the historical memory on campus, what spaces are related to donors, to alumni, who benefited from the enslavement of Black people - how to challenge this memorialization?

If the university has focused on symbolic gestures, could they move towards providing financial support - For descendants? For Black students? Are scholarships being offered? Is something more than renaming on offer?

Case Studies
- A significant partition of research on university's histories of anti-Black racism has come from History faculty, who have created courses in which students conduct research using University archives, or individual graduate students or faculty members have conducted historical research, published in peer-reviewed or open fora. Additionally, student involvement, has been key - including student activism. Finally, in some cases, the institution has supported or commissioned research into their own institutional histories.
  - At Columbia University, faculty have regularly offered a [research seminar for undergraduate students](#) on the history of slavery, manumission, and post-abolition Black life in New York City. In this course, students conduct their own independent primary source research, using university and city archives. Their research established the multiple relationships between enslavement and the university, including: the fact that many New York merchant families,whose children attended the university, made their wealth via the trade in slaves or the trade in products produced by enslaved people; the runaway slave ads placed by university students, the role of wealth from Caribbean sugar plantations in building campus buildings. Only [in 2020](#) did the University commit to using this scholarship to create public history references (memorials, naming) on campus.
  - At [Furman University](#), student activists and professors began a project to research the [history of slavery and the university in three area](#)s: the financial role of the sale of enslaved people at the foundation of the university, the role of the university's founder in justifying slavery within the Southern Baptist Congress, and [the labor of enslaved people and their descendants on the campus](#). This research was conducted by students and faculty, especially through classes and faculty research projects within the History department.
  - At the [University of Chicago](#), graduate students, faculty, and post-doctoral researchers in the history department including Caine Jordan, Kai Parker, and Guy Emerson Mount conducted archival research, identifying that the financial grants used to establish the first campus of the University of Chicago came from the sale of enslaved people - via the intermediary of Stephen A. Douglas, who benefited from the labor of over 140 enslaved people (via his wife and father-in-law) in Mississippi. Material from this research was published in peer review journals and online. This led to the [removal of two plaques](#) honoring Douglass in 2020, a move critiqued by the Reparations at the University of Chicago group, who noted that symbolic actions were not part of their core demands, which focus instead on [community calls for "affordable housing, health care, education, a #CBA for the Obama Library, an end to the University of Chicago's private, unaccountable police force, and, perhaps most importantly, a permanent Center for Reparative Justice](#)."

○ [Tamara Lanier has sued Harvard to the rights](#) to daguerreotypes of her ancestors, who were enslaved.

Segregation and post-slavery anti-Black racism
- Other subjects of historical research or activism, which engage with university-based anti-Back racism might include [histories of eugenic scholarship](#), [the retention of human remains used in research without families permission or knowledge](#), as was the case of the bones of Black children who died in police bombing of the Move community. Another space for research is the histories of segregation or racialized red-lining. Many institutions excluded Black students until the 1960s; how do different universities talk about and respond to this past? Other research projects have focused on the relationship of institutions with Black communities. [Dr. Stefan Bradley](#) has published on the relationship of Columbia University with the majority-Black neighborhood of Harlem, as well as student activism.

Activism and Inspiration
- Another avenue for research, memorialization and action is to look to the actions of previous generations of activists, and to take inspiration from their work.
- One such topic is a[nti-slavery or abolitionist activism](#). At Columbia University, the History department offered a course for several years, [in which undergraduate students conducted research on the history of slavery at the University](#), including the different movements for abolition and manumission (like the Manumission Society) which also existed on the campus. They also continued this with research about [Black people's relationship with Columbia University after 1865](#).
- You may also want to look to histories of activism and Black success on your campus, to identify positive (inspirational) historical examples and to serve as an example for contemporary activism. In New York, Teachers' College [also supported Black educators in the 1940s, when they were restricted from studying in the South](#). Your campus might also have a history of Black student activism - for entry into the school, for the creation of [Black/African-American/African Diaspora study programs,](#) etc - or anti-racist activism.How are these histories recognized, remembered, and memorialized on your campus? How are they celebrated? These historical events can provide positive inspiration for people doing activism today.

Intersectional histories
- Although the goal of this specific text is to identify ways in which we can explore legacies of anti-Black racism and anti-racist activism on our campus, there are other initiatives which focus on institutional complicity in other forms of violence, which have or can interact with anti-Black racism, or which may share goals (like creating a campus space which does not memorialize violence against a specific group) and strategies (like demands to rename spaces).
- One major space for recent activism concerns I[ndigenous land dispossession](#), through which many land-grant universities gained their campus space and funding (via the sale of dispossessed land). At the Jesuit-affiliated school Loyola Marymount University,

Indigenous students have critiqued a prominent statue of [Father Juniper Serra](#), one of the founders of the California Mission system, and thus implicated in the dispossesion and cultural genocide of California's Indigenous populations. The statue was removed for cleaning. However, like in the case of many other statues, the process has been complicated by the fact that some groups on and off campus identify Serra positively as the founder of a faith community with which they identify. One can also look to histories of your university's complicity in anti-Asian discrimination, gentrification, and globalization (as many invest in [international satellite campuses](#)).

Pearls/Perils
- One thing to also consider is how the people affected feel about the response. For example, some descendants of people enslaved by the Jesuit leaders of Georgetown University have c[ritiqued the reparations plan](#) for not fully representing all descendants, and for emphasizing reconciliation programs and scholarships, rather than financial investments for the descendants.
- Alumni can be a source of resistance, especially with regards to symbolic acts such as renaming buildings, sports teams, or removing artwork. In some cases, these changes affect alumni nostalgia, or even their own experiences of anti-racist positions which then produces resistance to these changes ([as debates about the name of a sports team named in honor of a specific Indigenous staff member](#) *or* alumni commitment to restoring a [mural at Portland Oregon's Grant High School](#)*).* Likewise, some attempts to reveal new elements of a university's historical connection to racist actions have produced p[ushback from family members](#) or descendants of individuals now implicated in the racism of their era.

Additional resources
- *https://nyslavery.commons.gc.cuny.edu/how-religious-institutions-can-study-and-redress-historical-enslavement/*

Staff-Specific Information Gathering

Definitions

The purpose of this section is to review specific resources for learning about the experiences of Black staff and to learn about the relationship between staff and other Black individuals on campus. For the purpose of this section, we use the term university staff to include janitorial, maintenance, grounds crew, libraries, campus security, dining hall workers, secretaries and administrative assistants, and other workers on our campus.However, we distinguish between staff and administrators (sometimes brought together when people refer to "students, faculty, and staff" as they have a different role and different forms of power within the institution of the university.

Highlighting the importance

- Thinking about the experience of staff in anti-Black racism requires us to pay attention to the multiple forms of interaction between people on campus who might have different experiences of anti-Black racism, depending on their race, sexual identity, class status, gender, education level, position, etc. We might say that staff impact students, but also that students impact staff; likewise, staff impact faculty members, and faculty members impact staff. Some Black staff members may serve as support people for Black students, while other staff members might act in exclusionary ways towards Black students. In other cases, some students might act in racist ways towards Black staff members.
- Some examples of these varied interactions, dependent on the specific experiences of the people involved, observed by members of our group include:
  a) A Black admissions officer recognized as a key mentor for Black students
  b) Grounds crew members can be more friendly to Black students
  c) A campus security worker denying Black students entry to campus or certain campus buildings or a janitor reporting a Black student
  d) A Black dining hall worker who broke a historic stained glass window depicting slavery in a positive light
  e) A university department where a majority-Black office staff worked for a majority-white faculty and student populations
  f) A Black administrator who defended his white female supervisor to two Black women colleagues
  g) Students who did not interact with Black campus bus drivers
  h) Parents of color who see Black and POC staff members as more supportive than faculty and administrators, as do some students

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies
- Gathering information about staff on campus thus requires paying close attention to the intersectional experiences of staff members in relation to other groups on campus. To learn about staff experiences on you campus, you can:
  - Look into whether staff are already included in diversity training programs, initiatives, campus climate surveys.
  - Look to Human resources offices, which such as within the UC system
  - Talk to unions about staff experiences. Some campuses have several unions representing different groups of workers, from administrative staff, to health workers on campus medical centers, to graduate students, to faculty unions, and labor solidarity groups. You can explore the websites and platforms of each, as well as reporting on any recent strikes (which can reveal the issues union members feel motivated by. The National Labor Relations Board also holds records of anti-union activity, such as wage-theft, harassment and intimidation over unionization. However, we acknowledge that unions are not necessarily anti-racist spaces; there is a long history of race-based exclusion in unions within the US.
  - Hold focus groups with staff working in different areas of your institution. This might include disaggregating the 'staff' category to think about how different

workers (administrative assistants versus campus security for example) experience or enact anti-Black racism vis-a-vis other groups on campus.
- You can look at whether your university follows the common [exemption of universities from paying minimum wage](#).
- Talk with contracting agencies to conduct focus groups with their workers, who may have different experiences than workers directly employed by the University. Many universities also contract with companies, especially in dining services, who then hire their own workers. Many contracting companies, such as [Aramark, have](#) been critiqued for their engagement in anti-Black actions like taking on private [prison](#) [contracts](#), serving [rotten food](#) in prisons. Even on campus, you can explore the pay policies, unionization policies, etc. Many companies which staff dining halls hire largely immigrant work-forces, which can create another intersectional space
- If there are affiliated entities (like hospitals) try to conduct information gathering in these spaces as well, which can impact student experiences
  - University Medical Center University of Washington/Medical School unions- SEIU Healthcare Union

Administrative review

Departmental Level (Carolyn)

Definition

This section provides strategies that departments can use to address diversity issues in their academic departments. It includes tools for gathering information about the course syllabi and curriculum and sample questions that can be added to class and teacher evaluations to gather information about DEI.

Highlighting the importance

Administrators can use this type of review to shed light on the extent to which current academic programs, course offerings, course content, instructional practices and assignments are inclusive of diverse perspectives.

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

Syllabi Review

These tools can be used to assess if current syllabi create a welcoming classroom environment.

Curriculum Review Checklists

- Adaptation of "[Decolonize My Counseling Psychology Syllabus](#)" Special Task Group members (Anneliese Singh, Elizabeth Cardenas Bautista, Germán Cadenas, Della

Mosely, and more Special Task Group members who were inspired by Yvette DeChavez to do this work and we appreciate feedback from Christopher Busey)

- This [Syllabus and Course Curriculum Self-Assessment and Audit Tool](#) designed by Dr. Sylvia Mac at the University of LaVerne, CA presents "rubrics to evaluate syllabus content and classroom culture"
- [Dr. Kim Case Syllabus Challenge](#) offers a toolkit to help assess if a syllabus is inclusive and welcoming to diverse students
- [University of Kansas Center for Teaching Excellence Assessment Tool for DE](#)I in course climate, pedagogy and content
- [Inclusion by Design](#) from the Yale University Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. Allows instructors to assess their syllabi and design of their courses Designed by: Ed Brantmeier, James Madison University, [brantmej@jmu.edu](#); Andreas Broscheid, James Madison University, [broschax@jmu.edu](#); Carl S. Moore, University of the District of Columbia, [carlsmoore.phd@gmail.com](#)
- This [DEI ONLINE COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL CHECKLIST](#) was developed by John Bricklemyer as part of the University of Kansas Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) Diversity Scholars program, for assessing Inclusion in online courses.

Questions added to Class Evaluations

- [Sample questions to gather information about diversity and equity](#) from the Center for Teaching Excellence, Boston College

Case Studies

- Washington University St. Louis [Question added to course evaluations in 2015](#) Students were asked to rank on a 1 to 7 scale and explain whether faculty promoted "an inclusive learning environment with regard to the diversity of student personal backgrounds and identities."
- Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) [“Course Evaluations: Culturally Inclusive Curriculum Question](#) Since Summer 2018, students have been asked on their course evaluations, 'What and how material is taught encouraged me to explore aspects of mine or others' diversity to enhance our thinking.' Diversity is defined as important and interrelated dimensions of human identity such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, socio-economic status, nationality, citizenship, religion, sexual orientation, ability/ disabilities, and age."

Pearls/Perils

Pearl

- As syllabi and course evaluations must be generated every semester, these data are readily available and can be easily gleaned for information about campus climate for Black students, centering their needs.

- Assessment of existing syllabi and curricula is not only a good initial step to evaluating campus climate, it can also create an opportunity for action-oriented self-reflection and indicate how racial justice may be better addressed to enhance the classroom environment for Black students. We will discuss more about action in response to assessing campus climate in later sections.

Perils

- Some faculty might be concerned about submitting information about their syllabi for review
- Concerns that syllabi review is in conflict with academic freedom
- Given the common prioritization of academic freedom in academic institutions, there are not necessarily institutional processes or pathways in place to systematically evaluate syllabi.
- Concerns about how to phrase questions on student evaluations given the biases inherent in student evaluations (e.g. Bavishi, Madera, & Hebl, 2010; Chávez & Mitchell, 2020)

Additional resources

- Nelson Laird, T.F. (2011). Measuring the Diversity Inclusivity of College Courses *Research in Higher Education* 52:572–588
    - Asked 7,101 faculty members about the extent to which diversity was included in a course using 12 questions. Diversity was higher in classes taught by faculty of color and women.
- Johnson, S, (2019, April 2) A University Wants to Assess Bias in the Classroom. Are Student Evaluations the Best Way to Do It? *Chronicle of Higher Education*
    - Raises the issue of whether student evaluations are helpful in assessing diversity in the classroom
- Scholars Strategy Network
    - "The Scholars Strategy Network is an organization of university-based scholars who are committed to using research to improve policy and strengthen democracy.
    - In 2011, the Scholars Strategy Network (SSN) was created to channel the expertise of America's top scholars to help solve the nation's toughest policy problems."
    - Research Briefs
        - Example: Dr. Bedelia Nicola Richards discusses strategies to enhance the social integration of Black students at PWIs
- University of Chicago Diversity and Inclusion Questions and Tools
    - Provides questions and tools for assessing diversity and inclusion in class content
        - Provides questions that can be used to reflect on the extent to which instruction is inclusive of diverse student populations as well as provides

strategies for creating an inclusive environment https://inclusivepedagogy.uchicago.edu/diversity-and-pedagogy:
- ■ Provides tools for reflecting on " teaching, underlying assumptions, and the impacts of pedagogy" https://inclusivepedagogy.uchicago.edu/assessment
- University of Denver Office of Teaching and Learning Inclusive Teaching Practices
  - Discusses the importance of assessing DEI to improve teaching and learning
    - ■ Iturbe-LaGrave, V. (2020). About the University of Denver's Inclusive Teaching Practices Website. Retrieved from http://inclusive-teaching.du.edu/about.
    - ■ https://operations.du.edu/inclusive-teaching/inclusive-assessment
- Carnegie Mellon University Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation
  - Diversity Statements that can be included on a syllabus
  - "A diversity statement is a paragraph or section in institutional, department, or course language that welcomes the range of student identities, experiences, and perspectives, particularly those that have been traditionally marginalized. Instructors can use the diversity statement to welcome diverse perspectives, set expectations for civil discourse, and communicate standards of engagement both within a course or discipline and surrounding controversial events. At root, the diversity statement signals belief that all students belong, have value, and bring unique perspectives worthy of consideration." (https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/DiversityStatements)
  - Examples of Possible Diversity Statements
    - ■ Carnegie Mellon Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation

How to Gather New Information to inform your effort

After the resource mapping step is completed, it may become clear that new information is needed to improve campus climate for Black folks. In the following sections, we review various methods to gather new information to document anti-Black racism on campus and inform efforts towards Black liberation. The following methods present different challenges and opportunities, so the methods used to gather new information should be chosen given the particular context and goals of each effort. As always, we note these categories may serve as a starting point for your efforts but are not exhaustive.

- Interviews
- Climate survey
- Town Halls
- Delphi Method
- Focus Groups

Interviews (Nikolette)

Definition
- Interviews are an opportunity to meet one-on-one with an individual and have an in-depth conversation - "conversation with a purpose" (Community Tool Box)
- The purpose of this section is to (1) highlight the importance of interviews as a method for gathering information about campus climate for Black students/faculty/staff, and (2) offer some recommendations/resources for how those interested in making change on their campus can gather information about campus climate and concerns using an interview method

Highlighting the importance

Interviews are a chance to gather in-depth information from individuals and to allow them the opportunity to share their experiences and wisdom in ways that other forms of information gathering may not (Community Tool Box; McGrath, Palmgren, & Liljedahl, 2019)

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies
- Interviews versus Focus Groups? You may wish to ask potential interviewees whether they would feel more comfortable meeting one-on-one or if they would feel more comfortable in a focus group session. People have different preferences, and if you are planning to use both methodologies, allowing people to select the mode they are most comfortable with can be helpful. See Maheshwari (2019) for more information about interviews vs. focus groups.
- Type of Interview/Location:
  - Interviews can take place in a variety of settings: in-person, via phone, Zoom, email, etc. As the interviewer, be sure to accommodate the preferences of your interviewee so that they are in a setting that feels most comfortable/accessible to them.
  - "Utilizing the Walking Interview to Explore Campus Climate for Students of Color" (Harris, 2016) - This article provides an important case for implementing more dynamic and interactive interviewing -- specifically, "walking interviews" (if feasible and if participants are able). The author notes that walking interviews allow for "in situ understandings of participants' perceptions, spatial practices, biographies, social architecture, and social realms within the campus environment"
- Make sure to prepare for the interview. See Community Tool Box for some recommendations. A few highlights:
  - Prepare questions that are straightforward and don't ask leading questions
  - You may wish to send interviewees questions beforehand
  - Understand the importance of your interviewee's time - let them know how long the interview will last and stick to that timeframe

- ○ Consent process: assure participants that you will keep their identity confidential. Oral consent is an option for participants who do not wish to have their name on any documents.
  - ○ Make sure to take good notes and/or record if permission is granted.
  - ○ Leave time to ask interviewees to add their own comments - your list of prepared questions may not have covered everything that is important to the interviewee.
  - ○ Make sure to properly compensate participants for their time!
- McGrath, Palmgren, & Liljedahl (2019) provide some basic tips for conducting qualitative research interviews that may be useful to consider
- Some examples of studies that used an interview method to gather information about campus climate and experiences from Black students, faculty, staff, and/or alumni:
  - ○ "#AdultingWhileBlack: Encountering in the Campus Climate and the Formation of Racialized Adult Identity Among Traditional-Age Black College Students" (Kutten, 2020) - see methods section starting on page 104 for some detailed descriptions of sampling methods, questions asked, etc.
  - ○ "Exploring the Relationship Between Campus Climate and Minority Stress in African American College Students" (Clark & Mitchell, 2018) - see page 76 for methods section
  - ○ "Queer Faculty and Staff of Color" - Ch. 4 within the book "Queer People of Color in Higher Education" (Aguilar & Johnson, 2017)
  - ○ "Surviving Whiteness and White People: The Coping Strategies of Black, Entry-Level Student Affairs Professionals" (Phelps-Ward & Kenney, 2018) - this paper starts on page 121 within the PDF journal document
  - ○ "Managing at the Intersection: The Negotiations of Racialized Role Strain of Black Mid-Level Student Affairs Administrators at Predominantly White Institutions" (Hibbler, 2020)

Pearls/Perils
- Pearls:
  - ○ Interviews are an opportunity to get an individual's perspective in great depth, in their own words. These narratives are important in pushing for change.
  - ○ Interviews are a good chance to hear from experts - and expertise comes in many forms: lived experience, academic expertise, social expertise, etc. Pay attention to these different forms of expertise and make sure different voices are represented in your interviews.
- Perils:
  - ○ Interviews can be potentially time-consuming and inefficient in some settings - make sure to consider the pros and cons of interviews vs other similar (but sometimes more efficient) options like focus groups, town halls, etc.
  - ○ Confidentiality is an important issue to consider. Be sure to report results in a way that individuals cannot be identified, especially if the sample size of interviewees is small.

○ Conducting new interviews, particularly in the absence of gathering existing information, places the burden of explanation of anti-Black racism and solution-generation on Black staff, students and faculty.

Climate Surveys (Susan)

Introduction

Campus climate has been described as multifaceted and can include physical spaces; resources that are involved directly in teaching and learning (e.g., instructors, syllabi, books, course materials, portals to access other sources of information such as library access); the institutional structures; and the perceptions, attitudes and social and emotional states of the people making up the institution, including administrators, staff, faculty, teaching support, students, among others.

More recently, some scholars have argued that "campus climate" is too removed, binary (warm, chilly), and inaccurate a metaphor for the necessary embodied action of anti-racist efforts, citing a health metaphor as more accurate in "diagnosing the problem" and an easier means of locating a "treatment." (Ledesma, 2016; Abrica, E. J., Hatch-Tocaimaza, D., & Rios-Aguilar, C.,2021)

Climate surveys are means of formally assessing climate at a campus to better understand different stakeholders' perspectives on the campus climate, to identify areas of need, and to monitor institutional progress toward fulfilling those needs

The purpose of this section is to highlight climate surveys as a means of gathering information about the campus' climate for Black students, faculty, and staff.

Highlighting the importance

Climate surveys have been one of the most common and, for some institutions, the only means of systematically collecting information about the campus climate. Few have focused on the experience of climate for Black students, staff and faculty more specifically (see Tamaami 2016 and Thomas 2017 for some notable exceptions).

In Tamaami 2016, there is noted the distinction between a more general climate survey and a survey assessing campus racial climate more specifically: "A campus climate, a seemingly vague concept at first, can be used to refer to 'the current perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that define the institution and its members' (Bauer, 1998, p. 2). A campus racial climate on the other hand, looks at how the perceptions, attitudes, and expectations 'about issues of race, ethnicity, and diversity' shape the 'institutional community' (Hurtado, Milem, ClaytonPedersen, and Allen, 1999)."

Climate surveys have most commonly been administered by campus administration at various levels of the institution, from the overall university level down to departmental or program level. More recently, climate surveys have begun to be administered by students, student groups, or mixed student and faculty-led groups on campuses, which is providing a different and perhaps less top-down survey of climate.

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

- Climate surveys provide an important starting point for understanding climate from the perspectives of various stakeholders.
- It is notable that many are so broad that they do not provide in-depth information about the experiences of Black students, staff and faculty. More comprehensive and mixed methods (e.g., qualitative + quantitative) data should be gathered and bias in responses should be examined and reported on. (e.g., Do response rates reflect the demographic composition of the institution? Are their concerns about confidentiality or backlash about reporting on incidents?)
- Administration-led climate surveys should be supplemented with information from other sources to better triangulate information and reduce bias (e.g., student-led or student/faculty/staff-led climate surveys, focus groups, and information gleaned from university-related publications, websites, social media, etc). This will better ensure administration, which may be more removed from the immediate experience of some aspects of climate, does not prematurely or narrowly limit the focus of their information gathering to their own understanding of important climate factors.
- Questions should be asked at the institutional level: Does our institution regularly assess the campus climate and Black students' sense of belongingness?
- It has also been suggested to take an intersectional approach and disaggregate data results by race, ethnicity, and gender to surface nuances for various demographic groups (Fairfax, 2020).
- Examples of climate surveys variously across groups, departments, campuses:
  - This campus-wide survey was developed by community psychologist, Dr. Dominique Thomas, for his dissertation and it has Black students in mind in particular.
  - Climate survey conducted through UMASS Boston Diversity Committee (Umass Boston DEI committee)
  - Strategic planning equity, inclusion and diversity. Division of Equity & Inclusion University & Inclusion, UC Berkeley: This document is a guide to strategic planning of DEI issues that includes making a climate survey: Steps in the process are 1) map out planning process, 2) gather information and conduct self-assessment, 3) develop vision, 4) review plan with equity and inclusion, 5) adapt plan and communicate vision, 6) implement plan. Another section of the document I found helpful was the "Information gathering & data guide." In it, you are asked to think if there are any additional internal data sources that can be useful in thinking strategically about DEI. And if there are any obvious gaps in our data collection. If so, track those gaps, since they can be useful in determining if there is a need for developing other internal data sources.
  - University of North Carolina – Wilmington did a campus wide climate survey and did not collapse across race.
  - Havard climate survey in the psychology department. This effort expanded beyond just a clinical program or just students. It included the whole department. It also looked very well planned out and documented. However, authors admitted to the lack of diversity represented that led to collapsing across racial groups (eg Latinx and Black responses were collapsed).

- ○ [Overarching campus surveys](#) for people in different groups at a university and different types of institutions. Note: These surveys are not specific to addressing anti-Black racism, but seek to address the following more broadly: "1) Create dialogue that is centered on the things that matter most when serving diverse populations, 2) Diagnose their campus environments from an inclusion and equity perspective, 3) Identify where these environments can be improved, 4) Develop plans to cultivate more inclusive and equitable environments, and 5) Create environments that maximize success among all people regardless of their backgrounds and identities" (from website above).

Pearls/Perils
- **Pearls:**
  - ○ There are a lot of existing and good resources (a nonexhaustive list is found below) on climate surveys generally.
  - ○ Climate surveys can generate data to create locally informed and evidence-based solutions.
  - ○ Data can also be a helpful tool in negotiating discussions about improving campus climate; administrators are more inclined to embrace data-driven solutions.
  - ○ Involving more stakeholders in the creation of climate surveys-- even those conducted by administrators -- is important to ensuring that the perspectives of Black students, staff, and faculty are centered and most accurately reflected. This step may also reduce risk of bias towards maintaining the status quo. It is important to ensure that ensuing, anti-racist action based on climate survey responses, in conjunction with other key information sources, is community-driven. Action must entail the input of (but not creating burden on) Black students, faculty and staff.

- **Perils**
  - ○ Carefully considering response bias and bias built into the creation of the climate survey items is important.
  - ○ Effectively and inclusively creating structures around the survey creation, administration, report-out and townhalls is important-- not just doing the survey and recording the findings for the administration of the institution.
  - ○ Getting stuck with repeating collection of data on the already known problems versus solutions is a potential peril. For example, existing climate survey data have already adequately shown that Black students, faculty and staff experience inequities. At this point, more data should be collected on what Black students, faculty and staff need to feel supported and safe.
  - ○ White, male college students seem to be most vocal about their "aggrieved" status – based on a sample from a large, predominantly white and male college campus in red state ([DeKeseredy et al, 2018](#)). This sense could be a part of why addressing anti-Black racism is challenged on college campuses.
  - ○ The intersections of race, class, gender, disability status, LGBTQIA2+ are not often explored in campus climate surveys. Caution should be used when

considering data by professional titles or groups, such as faculty, students and staff. It has been pointed out that some of those groups may be too broad to create meaningful interpretations due to variability of experiences within the categories. Broad categories may miss nuances in class, social status, and overlapping affiliations (e.g., contractors working at the university).

Town Hall (Carolyn)

Definition

In general, Town Hall meetings or "Speak Outs" allow for dialogue and deliberation about issues. Town Halls can be convened on campus to provide an opportunity for different constituents on campus to share their experiences with oppression, express emotions and concerns and present ideas for how to address issues.

Highlighting the importance

- Town Halls can be used to build knowledge about a topic and aid in building consensus. It can be helpful in starting to build coalitions. Although some town halls involve speeches, presentations by panels or question and answer sessions, this section discusses how to use town halls to gather information from groups.
- Town Halls can be used in Higher Education to provide a forum for different constituents to air their perspectives on an issue. For example the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) in their Spring 2011, Vol. 97, No. 2 publication noted that "The Town Hall provides students with a range of possible selves both modeled for them by more experienced participants (i.e., faculty and community members) and directly, if inexpertly, experienced by them: the identities of scholar-participant, community participant, activist, public speaker, involved citizen, successful college student, voter, and engaged and contributing adult." See https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/town-hall-meeting-imagining-self-through-public-sphere-pedagogy

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

Strategies for Conducting Town Halls

Note: looking for a guide specific to higher education.

There are different Techniques that can be used to conduct town halls both in person and virtually.

- *How to Organize a Town Hall Meeting A Planning Guide* provides detailed instructions for planning and convening town hall meetings in community settings. https://guideinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Organizing-a-Town-Hall-Meeting.pdf
- Tips for running virtual town hall meetings
    - *Running Town Hall Meetings as a Shared and Engaging Experience* provides helpful hints for conducting in-person and virtual town hall meetings.https://medium.com/swlh/running-town-hall-meetings-as-a-shared-and-engaging-experience-f6ff87a1d308
    - These blog articles provide hints about how to conduct effective virtual town hall meetings
        - https://blog.pigeonholelive.com/how-to-run-an-efficient-virtual-all-hands-meeting
        - https://blog.pigeonholelive.com/dos-and-donts-for-a-successful-virtual-town-hall
        - https://blog.pigeonholelive.com/turn-your-virtual-town-halls-into-a-cosy-event-with-these-five-steps

- 21 Century Town Hall Techniques
    - The 21st Century Town Meeting engages diverse groups of participants who participate in round-table discussions (10-12 people per table) and deliberate about an issue. Participants receive discussion guides that present information about the issues under consideration and a trained facilitator moderates the discussion at each table. Technology presents an opportunity for real time reporting and voting. The recommendations of each group can be compiled and voting can be done using polls. The entire group votes on the final recommendations to submit to decision makers.
        - AmericaSpeaks, a non governmental organization, developed and refined a strategy for increasing public participation on policy issues. This document provides information on how to conduct this type of meeting. (see *https://www.civicus.org/documents/toolkits/PGX_B_21st%20CenturymeetingFinalWeb.pdf*
        - Participedia, "a global crowdsourcing platform for researchers, activists, practitioners, and anyone interested in public participation and democratic innovations' also describes this technique. See *https://participedia.net/method/145*
    - An evaluation of the America Speaks Model has been conducted by Agostino et al.

Helpful Strategies

- Discussing issues related to race and Anti-Black racism efforts can invoke a range of emotions. It is important to remember that not all individuals like to speak in front of others or feel comfortable sharing their experiences with others. Potential participants may also be concerned with confidentiality; this is especially true when painful issues are shared or the individuals involved might be identified. Strategies to offset this include collecting feedback by email, using live polls, or allowing participants to meet in small groups and having the groups provide feedback in an anonymous way and by having individuals prepare questions beforehand. Set a time limit for each individual speaking to promote equity.

Case Studies

- Undergraduate students

    - Albert Nerken School of Engineering (Cooper Union, NYC)

      "At the beginning of the Coronavirus outbreak and following the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor protests erupted across the U.S. and spread around the world. Over the summer of 2020, the Albert Nerken School of Engineering responded by initiating a series of bi-weekly Improving Racial Equity Summer Series Town Halls and that subsequently transitioned to monthly Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Town Halls during the academic year. "

      https://cooper.edu/engineering/news/year-review-2020-diversity-equity-inclusion-town-halls

    - Foothill College, CA

      Presents videos of town halls conducted by students to address student needs and issues such as racial justice, disability awareness etc.

      https://foothill.edu/asfc/townhall.html

    - Chabot College, CA

      Presents agendas and handouts on diversity convened by the President of the university on diversity issues

      https://www.chabotcollege.edu/president/townhalls.php

    - Kent State University, OH

      Kent State used town halls to discuss the experiences of different racial and ethnic groups

https://www.kent.edu/diversity/shaping-better-future-town-hall-series-continues

- Graduate students
  - At one university, a town hall between faculty and grad students in the clinical psych program at did not go well (last one happened after an incidnt in our dept but before my arrival on faculty). The net result is that faculty are fearful of having another Town Hal and feel like it could be a negative experience. However, graduate students seem more interested in this way of moving forward.

- Non specific level
  - University of Rochester

    This is a transcript of a Town Hall meeting held at the University of Rochester. Convened by the President's Race and diversity Commission, it focused on issues related to diversity https://www.rochester.edu/president/transcript-of-town-hall-meeting-january-18-2016/

  - Eastern CT State University

    A series of university wide town halls on racism and social justice were conducted by the Multicultural Leadership Council and the school administration to inform DEI efforts

    https://www.easternct.edu/news/_stories-and-releases/2020/08-august/eastern-holds-second-town-hall-on-racism-and-social-justice.html

Pearls/Perils

Pearls

- Town halls show that the leadership is aware of and concerned about an issue.
- The process can be used to reinforce the culture and values of an organization, provide information and obtain feedback (positive or negative).
- By engaging constituents of an organization in dialogue and conversation it can build trust, motivation and team spirit.
- It can establish communication among different constituents and promote collaboration.
- Town Halls can "foster diverse opinions, authentic communication, mutual understanding, and transparency between organization and citizen"

(https://www.readwritethink.org/sites/default/files/resources/lesson-docs/Town_Hall_Meeting_Guide.pdf)

 Perils

- Town Halls may be difficult to organize
- Speakers may have agendas for voicing opinions, for example, be invested in presenting politically correct answers or advancing their own causes.
- Power dynamics may also lead to a reluctance to voice opinions.

Additional resources

- Enhancing the Prospect for Deliberative Democracy: The AmericaSpeaks Model
  - Presents an evaluation of the America Speaks Model which convened meetings in which citizens deliberate about critical policy issues and devise recommendations to send to policy makers. See https://www.innovation.cc/peer-reviewed/holzer_usa_l2gostino_schwester_holzer.pdf
- Town Halls on Diversity, Inclusion, & Belonging: Opening Up the Conversation at Holler
  - Holler is a technology company who used town halls to discuss gender diversity and racial diversity. See https://www.holler.io/insights/town-halls-on-diversity-inclusion-belonging-opening-up-the-conversation-at-holler

Delphi Method (Carolyn)

Definition

- "RAND developed the Delphi method in the 1950s, originally to forecast the impact of technology on warfare. The method entails a group of experts who anonymously reply to questionnaires and subsequently receive feedback in the form of a statistical representation of the "group response," after which the process repeats itself. The goal is to reduce the range of responses and arrive at something closer to expert consensus." (https://www.rand.org/topics/delphi-method.html)
- The Delphi method is a systematic process used to gather information from different individuals who have "knowledge, experience and expertise". Using this method, you can explore different perspectives to identify priorities and reach a consensus to inform decision making and planning.

Highlight the importance

- "Its unique contribution is the 'boiling down' of differing expert opinions or other stakeholders into consensus for decision making – without creating direct confrontation or allowing strong individuals to dominate the process (as often happens in face-to-face discussions)." https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/delphitechnique

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies

- A search of the literature across several databases in education and the social sciences and internet sites, showed limited information about the technique applied to diversity issues. The articles below describe how the technique has been used to gather info on individual experiences, supervision and diversity in organizations

Description of Technique

- The Delphi Method is a quantitative method helps groups to reach consensus. Originally done via email, it can also be adapted for use in person.
- It is an iterative process which involves sending repeated rounds of surveys to a selected group of respondents who you consider to be subject matter experts (including individuals who have a vested interest in the topic). Summarize responses to the first round survey and use the responses to create the next round survey. questionnaire that seeks agreement, disagreement and insights.
- After each round the responses are summarized and resent for discussion in the next round. Each round serves to collect insights and identify areas of agreement and disagreement. You repeat the process until you have a set of comments and recommendations that you can use to make decisions. Through a process of convergence involving the identification of common trends and inspection of outliers, a consensus is reached. Rounds can range from 2 to 4.
- The basic steps include:
    - Creating a team to administer and analyze the surveys.
    - Identifying participants
    - Contacting and inviting participants to take part- use letters and phone calls to initially engage participants and to encourage continued participation
    - Developing and pilot testing the survey to use in the first round
    - Administering the first round survey and collecting responses.
    - Coding and analyzing responses
    - Creating and piloting the second survey and distributing to participants
    - Analyzing the second survey
    - Continuing the process until agreement is reached
    - Preparing a final report to disseminate to participants

Additional Resources:

- Quick tips for using the technique can be found at AEA Connect and betterevaluation.org
- Information about conducting a Delphi Study in person can be found at aral.com
- For a case study and methodology commentary, see McGeary (2009)

Case Examples

- Edwards, W.J & Henry H. Ross, H.H. (2018). What are they saying? Black faculty at predominantly white institutions of higher education. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment,* 28 (2), 142-161.
  - Used the Delphi method because it "allows a group of participants (usually identified as experts) to form an anonymous panel in order to express their opinion on a designated topic, complex issue, or problem. Through iterations (rounds), the panel (without face-to-face contact) eventually arrives at a consensus about the importance and ranking of topics or items, perceptions, beliefs and experiences associated with a particular topic. Participants are made aware of other participants' perspectives and given opportunities to clarify or change their views through various rounds. Quantitative analyses are performed at every round, allowing the panel to eventually come to a consensus"
  - Aim: "identify and elaborate on the concerns (beliefs, experiences, and perceptions) of Black professors employed at predominantly White research-extensive universities
  - Sample: Sent letters to admin at 142 universities that granted doctorates. 64 faculty identified and 46 agreed to participate. 24 completed 3 rounds.
  - Procedure: Used email; 3 rounds. Participants asked to rank a list of 8 concerns culled from the literature and to add their own suggestions (added 17).   25 concerns were ranked in round 2 and concerns given low priority were removed. Resulted in 13 final concerns.
  - Conclusion: Panel "identified and agreed, to an extent, on 13 concerns (experiences, beliefs, occurrences) that produced hardship and set them apart from the remaining faculty members and their colleagues at their place of employment".
- Ross, H.H. & Edwards, W.J. (2016) African American faculty expressing concerns: breaking the silence at predominantly white research oriented universities, Race Ethnicity and Education, 19:3, 461-479, DOI: 10.1080/13613324.2014.969227
  - Summarized the Delphi process and findings from the same study.
  - Heitner, K. L., Kahn, A. E., & Sherman, K. C. (2013). Building consensus on defining success of diversity work in organizations. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65*(1), 58–73. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032593
  - Aim: "build consensus among a range of experts on diversity on what definition constitutes success in terms of diversity initiatives."
  - Sample: Outreach to "more than 300 potential participants, with an initial response of 78 who accessed the survey link" via email "drawn from personal and professional networks throughout the United States to solicit preeminent members of leading diversity associations and professional groups who have pertinent expertise working within and external to organizations"
  - Procedure: 3 questionnaires administered via SurveyMonkey (First open ended; other 2 Likert type questions)

- ○ Findings: Created "a framework for effective diversity work with and inside of organizations". Identified factors that might lead to success but need further research to develop specific measures.
- Dressel, J.L., Consoli, A.J., Kim, B. S.K. and Atkinson, D.R. (2007, January) Successful and Unsuccessful Multicultural Supervisory Behaviors: A Delphi Poll. *Journal Of Multicultural Counseling And Development*, 35, p 51- 64
  - ○ Aim: "University counseling center supervisors with significant experience in multicultural supervision generated and ranked elements of successful and unsuccessful multicultural supervision" Identify supervisors' actual behaviors used to supervise ethnically different supervisees.
  - ○ Sample: "training directors identified 34 university counseling center professionals who had extensive experience supervising ethnically different interns". 21 responded.
  - ○ Procedure: 3 rounds
  - ○ Findings: "Twenty-seven of 35 successful elements and 24 of 33 unsuccessful elements" were related to culture/ethnicity but also identified general practices and ones related to race

Pearls/Perils

Pearls

- Can be relatively low cost to administer and can obtain a lot of data
- The technique allows for the involvement of individuals with unique perspectives and expertise.
- Participants generate their own perspectives on issues and have the opportunity to weigh their own and other's responses
- Can gather information from individuals located at different geographical locations as in the case of alumni
- Reduces conflict, the influence or dominance of any one individual, group pressure, or "group think"
- Can achieve consensus or agreement in groups

Perils

- Selection of participants - need to identify "experts" who are highly motivated
- Individual members and/or the facilitator may have biases
- Need to discuss confidentiality, informed consent and how data will be stored
- Can lose participants per round so need to start with an adequate sample size
- Since the participants do not directly interact the synergy that may come with group dialogue may not occur
- May be difficult when opinions vary widely
- The process can be time consuming - it is an ilterative process that takes time-panel members may change answers necessitating more analysis
- Need to make decisions such as how much time to allow for each round

- Need to define the criteria for deciding that consensus has been reached
- Consider the stability of responses over time as a way of checking on conforming to group pressure (intrarater reliability); ask members to explain large deviations from previous responses
- Consider using independent raters for analyzing and interpreting findings

Additional resources

- This link provides information and examples on how the RAND corporation has used this methodhttps://www.rand.org/topics/delphi-method.html
- Provides information on the use of the method in health care settings https://www.healthknowledge.org.uk/public-health-textbook/research-methods/1c-health-care-evaluation-health-care-assessment/use-delphi-methods
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (2005), B*ook 3: The Engagement Toolkit.Effective Engagement: building relationships with community and other stakeholders*, The Community Engagement Network Resource and Regional Services Division Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment. https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resource/guide/engagement_toolkit
- *Articles*
  - Dawson, M. & Brucker, P.S. (2001, March). The Utility of the Delphi Method in MFT Research *American Journal of Family Therapy,* 29(2):125-140 DOI: 10.1080/01926180152026115
  - Vázquez-Ramos, R., Leahy, M., & Estrada Hernández, N. (2007). The Delphi Method in Rehabilitation Counseling Research. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 50*(2), 111–118. https://doi.org/10.1177/00343552070500020101
  - Landeta, J. (2006, June). Current validity of the Delphi method in social sciences. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change,* 73(5):467-482 DOI: 10.1016/j.techfore.2005.09.00
  - Niederberger, M. & Spranger, J. (2020). Delphi Technique in Health Sciences: A Map. *Frontiers in Public Health,* (8), Article 457, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2020.00457
  - du Plessis, E. and Human, S.P. (2007). The art of the Delphi technique: Highlighting its scientific merit *Health SA Gesondheid: Journal of Interdisciplinary Health Sciences* , 12 (4), 13-14.
  - Skulmoski, G. J., F. T. Hartman, and J. Krohn (2007). The Delphi Method for Graduate Research. *Journal of Information Technology Education*, 6, 1–20.

Focus groups (Nikolette)

Definition
- Focus groups are an opportunity for a trained leader to meet with a small group and discuss a specific topic.

- Focus groups are useful for gathering information about a specific topic in ways that can complement other methods of gathering information
- The purpose of this section is to (1) highlight the importance of focus groups as a method for gathering information about campus climate for Black students/faculty/staff, and (2) offer some recommendations/resources for how those interested in making change on their campus can gather information about campus climate and concerns using a focus-group method

Highlighting the importance
- Focus groups and the qualitative analysis they can fuel provide an important complement to other types of assessment (e.g., quantitative survey data).
- Focus groups "allow for fluidity in conversation among participants" and "allow for subjects to create shared meaning of an experience through their dialogue and interactions" (Walls & Hall, 2018)

Recommendations/Resources/Case studies
- For an overview of what focus groups are, why you might find them useful, and how to conduct focus groups, this Community Tool Box guide is helpful, as is this Better Evaluation guide. Some key takeaways:
    - Make sure that your focus group has:
        - A trained leader
        - A recorder (someone to take notes, and/or someone to audio-record and transcribe)
        - A representative sample within the focus group - for instance, if you want to gather information about experiences of Black campus-members broadly, make sure you have faculty, students, staff, etc. If you want to gather information about experiences of Black students specifically, make sure you have a representative sample of students - different genders, grade-levels, majors, lived experiences, etc.
    - Prepare for the meeting properly:
        - Make sure to properly compensate focus group participants
        - Prepare a list of questions and be prepared to ask follow-up questions
        - Read up on specific methods for conducting focus groups
        - See this video by Krueger and colleagues for a demonstration of how to moderate a focus group.
    - The Community Tool Box guide also includes links to additional online resources that are useful for learning about focus groups in general, such as: Krueger (2002), Eliot & Associates (2005), & Omni's Focus Group Toolkit
- Versher (2020) used a variety of qualitative methods to assess implementation of restorative justice practices in high schools, including focus groups. See pages 94-111 for recommendations of establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research, methods and considerations for qualitative data collection, and methods for thematic analysis of information gained from qualitative data collection. Some highlights from this work:

- ○ The focus group in this study was conducted virtually, via Zoom. This paper serves as a useful guide for those who may wish to conduct focus groups virtually (vs. in-person).
  - ○ One important element of trustworthiness discussed in this paper is credibility. The author emphasizes the importance of making sure the qualitative data collected reflects the participants' voices accurately and truthfully. One recommended technique is "member-checking" which involves having participants provide feedback. Specifically, after the focus group, participants were sent a transcript of the focus group session and were asked to provide any corrections they saw fit, or confirm that the transcript is an accurate reflection of their voice. Additionally, participants were sent preliminary findings and were asked again to provide their feedback on the accuracy of these findings.
- For conducting focus groups that aim to specifically address campus climate and concerns for Black campus community-members:
  - ○ Case Study: Walls & Hall (2018) - conducted a focus group examining Black students' experiences discussing race in classrooms at a PWI.
  - ○ Case Study: "Recruitment without Retention: A Critical Case of Black Faculty Unrest" (Kelly, Gayles, & Williams, 2018) - conducted a couple of focus groups examining the experiences of Black faculty
  - ○ Case Study: "Examining Practices of Retaining Black Female Faculty and Staff in Independent Schools" (Cooke & Odejimi, 2021)
  - ○ "Assessing Campus Climate of Cultural Diversity: A Focus on Focus Groups" (Morrow, Burris-Kitchen, & Der-Karabetian, 2000)

Pearls/Perils
- Pearls:
  - ○ Focus groups are a unique opportunity to learn from multiple perspectives in one setting. People can hear from one another and build off of each other's ideas and perspectives in a more organic way.
  - ○ Focus groups don't have to be one and done. Involve the focus group members in each step of the process - as Versher (2020) highlights, trustworthiness & credibility are improved when participants have the chance to provide feedback on the transcript, the preliminary findings, etc. This responsibility could also be expanded to the extent of a community advisory board.
- Perils:
  - ○ Focus groups require time and energy. Make sure to properly compensate group participants and be considerate of location and make sure to accommodate focus group members -- would it be more accessible to conduct the focus group online via Zoom (e.g., Versher, 2020)? Would focus group members benefit from walking around campus (e.g., Harris, 2016)? Is there a specific location on- or off-campus that participants feel most comfortable?
  - ○ It is important to also make the focus group space comfortable and accommodating. For example, provide food and beverages for focus group

participants, and make sure that these provisions fit the expectations, accommodations, and cultural norms of group participants.
- ○ It is important to discuss issues of confidentiality:
    - ■ Discussions should stay in the group, but focus group facilitators should warn participants that parts of the discussion may leave the group. One option is to give focus group participants the chance to turn off the recorder to talk "off the record"
    - ■ Informed consent is vital. Clearly lay out in the informed consent how confidentiality will be kept, how the data will be stored or used, etc.