



**Moving forward:  
24-month update of the**

# **Black Unity Forum initiative**

**SMU**<sup>®</sup>

**Office of Diversity & Inclusion**



## Moving Forward Together: A 24-Month Update

Over 24 months ago, SMU embraced the call of our Black community to continue to work every day to make tangible systemic and sustainable change that would positively impact the lives of every Mustang who has felt underrepresented on our campus. With the goal of ensuring that the Black community is heard, valued, supported and successful, since September 2020, the University has continued to work tirelessly to increase the communication, transparency and collaboration between the SMU administration and the BUF constituency.

**We believe that our progress toward this commitment is best measured by answering the following questions:**

- **How are we demonstrating our institutional accountability to the Black community of SMU?**
- **How are we demonstrating our commitment to recruiting, retaining and promoting Black faculty and staff?**
- **How are we demonstrating our commitment to Black students?**



# Demonstrating our institutional commitment to accountability





## We established the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

By appointing a chief diversity officer and establishing the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, including staffing and budget allocation.

By establishing the role of unit diversity officer.

By beginning our national search for an ombuds in July.

By appointing 13 unit diversity officers for:

- Cox School of Business.
- Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences.
- Dedman School of Law.
- Lyle School of Engineering.
- Meadows School of the Arts.
- Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.
- Perkins School of Theology.
- Simmons School of Education.
- Department of Athletics.
- Office of Business and Finance.
- Office of Development and External Affairs.
- Office of Information Technology.





## **We are requiring mandatory cultural intelligence training for our faculty, staff and students.**

- By recruiting and hiring a training and learning coordinator in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.
- By working with Human Resources to require Hidden Scripts training for all new University staff within 90 days of hire.
- By working with the Office of the Provost to require cultural intelligence training for all new faculty members during faculty orientation.
- By working with Student Affairs to require cultural intelligence training for all new students, residential assistants and candidates for Greek recruitment.
- By working with the Office of Information Technology and Human Resources to track enrollment and training compliance through [my.smu.edu](https://my.smu.edu).
- By requiring every undergraduate and graduate student in the Cox School of Business and the Dedman School of Law to complete Hidden Scripts as a part of their required course work.



## **We strengthened our commitment to responsive community policing.**

- By developing the SMU Police Advisory Board consisting of four student members, one faculty member and one staff member who meet monthly with SMU PD to review community concerns.
- By developing and implementing a new six-course mandatory training, including community engagement and use of force, for new police officers.
- By having all officers complete four hours of training in ethical policing and eight hours of de-escalation training.
- By developing and implementing a new “duty to intervene” policy.
- By having SMU PD engage in more community-based activities, including projects to support the homeless, and participate in student philanthropy.



## We reaffirmed our commitment to public accountability.

- By engaging in a performance-based funding model that holds SMU's academic leadership accountable to the metrics of the BUF plan.
- By holding quarterly meetings with the executive leadership of BUF and President R. Gerald Turner, Provost Elizabeth Loba and Vice President for Student Affairs K.C. Mmeje.
- By holding annual meetings for ABS and President Turner; Black faculty and Provost Loba; and Black staff and the associate vice president for Human Resources.
- By publishing quarterly updates of our institutional progress to our University website.



**Demonstrating  
our commitment to  
recruiting, retaining,  
and promoting Black  
faculty and staff**







## We updated our faculty and staff recruitment and hiring practices.

- By developing a new mandatory training component for all faculty search committee members titled *Searching Intelligently*.
- By requiring that all faculty recruitment plans are reviewed and approved by the chief diversity officer and academic deans prior to ad placement.
- By increasing our emphasis on networking with HBCUs and programs with a history of producing Black Ph.D.s to create pipelines for our faculty vacancies.
- By requiring the use of Interfolio to enable the Office of the Provost, chief diversity officer and executive director of IAE to review applicant pool demographics in real time.
- By investing over \$100,000 in FY2021–22 for ad placements in high-traffic areas for diverse staff and faculty recruitment.
- By training 257 faculty search committee members for FY2021–22 faculty search season in culturally intelligent faculty recruitment.



## **We updated our faculty and staff recruitment and hiring practices.**

- By developing a faculty retention protocol among deans, the Office of the Provost and the chief diversity officer to respond to the recruitment of SMU faculty and other universities.
- By recruiting diverse and inclusive professional coaches to assist the staff of color in identifying opportunities for personal and professional development.
- By incorporating the chief diversity and unit diversity officers at each stage of the staff and faculty search processes.
- By recruiting and hiring a FY2021–22 faculty class composed of 1/3 underrepresented minorities, including 8.8% African Americans, for the first time in SMU's history.
- By establishing the work equity policy to create greater equity within and between academic units regarding expectations of faculty teaching and service loads, as well as the utilization of course releases.



## We committed to gathering more real-time feedback.

- By establishing a faculty exit interview protocol, overseen by the chief diversity officer.
- By establishing a partnership with JDXpert software to digitize SMU staff job descriptions and career progression ladders for easier career and professional development.
- By developing a demographic dashboard for use by vice presidents, deans and hiring managers that provides real-time data on unit faculty and staff demographics.
- By partnering with recruitment vendor Broadbean to enhance our ability to expand our recruitment efforts to Black staff and other underrepresented minority populations.
- By reviewing our staff exit interview protocol to ensure feedback provides greater detailed information to examine issues that may contribute to the failure to retain minority staff.



**Demonstrating  
our commitment  
to the success of  
our Black students**







## **We strengthened our commitment to providing financial, academic and social support.**

- By establishing a matching funds partnership with the Black Alumni Association that has raised over \$65,000 for distribution in FY2021–22.
- By establishing and raising over \$3 million toward a \$10 million endowment of the Mustang Excellence Scholarship fund.
- By establishing a Black alumni and Black student mentoring program including a commitment from 16 alumni to serve as mentors in spring 2022.
- By establishing the Thrive Scholars Program in the Lyle School of Engineering, employing 10 junior and senior engineering students to serve as paid peer mentors to underrepresented students for first-year students.
- By recruiting and admitting 28 underrepresented first-year students to participate as the inaugural class of Thrive mentees.
- By collaborating with the Sumners Foundation to revise application and review requirements for the Sumners Foundation Scholarship for incoming SMU Dedman Law students.
- By raising over \$52,000 for the Black/Africana Church Studies program in the Perkins School of Theology.



## **We strengthened our commitment to providing financial, academic and social support.**

- By convening a task force to review the student code of conduct and submitting recommendations for strengthening accountability for bias actions.
- By utilizing the generous gift of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Alley to support expanded opportunities for underrepresented students to participate in SMU Study Abroad.
- By collaborating with the Hegi Family Career Development Center and the Black Alumni Association to establish a paid summer internship program for underrepresented students.
- By funding and opening the student-athlete Lounge.
- By increasing opportunities for Black student-athletes to engage with Black alumni student-athletes through the Black Excellence athletic brunch and the Black Excellence men's basketball game.
- By recruiting and hiring a mental health professional specializing in treating Black student-athletes.
- By reorganizing the Department of Student-Athlete Success and hiring Senior Director Teiana Jones to support opportunities for a wide range of academic majors for student-athletes.
- By hiring Brenda Scott as our incoming director of inclusive excellence for SMU Athletics.
- By training 15 out of 17 of our athletic teams in Hidden Scripts.



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## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

SEPTEMBER 2022

