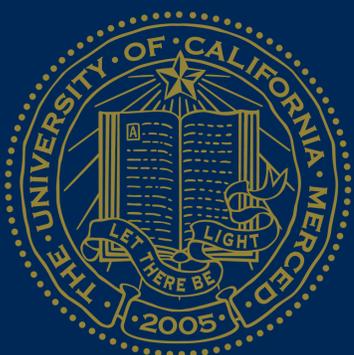


Valuing Black Lives Initiative



Annual Report 2020-2021



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Report Summary

Valuing Black Lives Dashboard

- Contextualizing campus petitions and responses thus far
- A summary of and link to the Valuing Black Lives Dashboard
- A summary of the methods used and their limitations

Valuing Black Lives Task Force

- The timeline of the Valuing Black Lives Task Force (VBL TF)
- The structure, scope, and processes of the VBL TF
- A snapshot of what the VBL TF produced

Valuing Black Lives Initiative

- The framework for moving forward
- UC Merced's commitments to valuing Black lives



Valuing Black Lives Dashboard

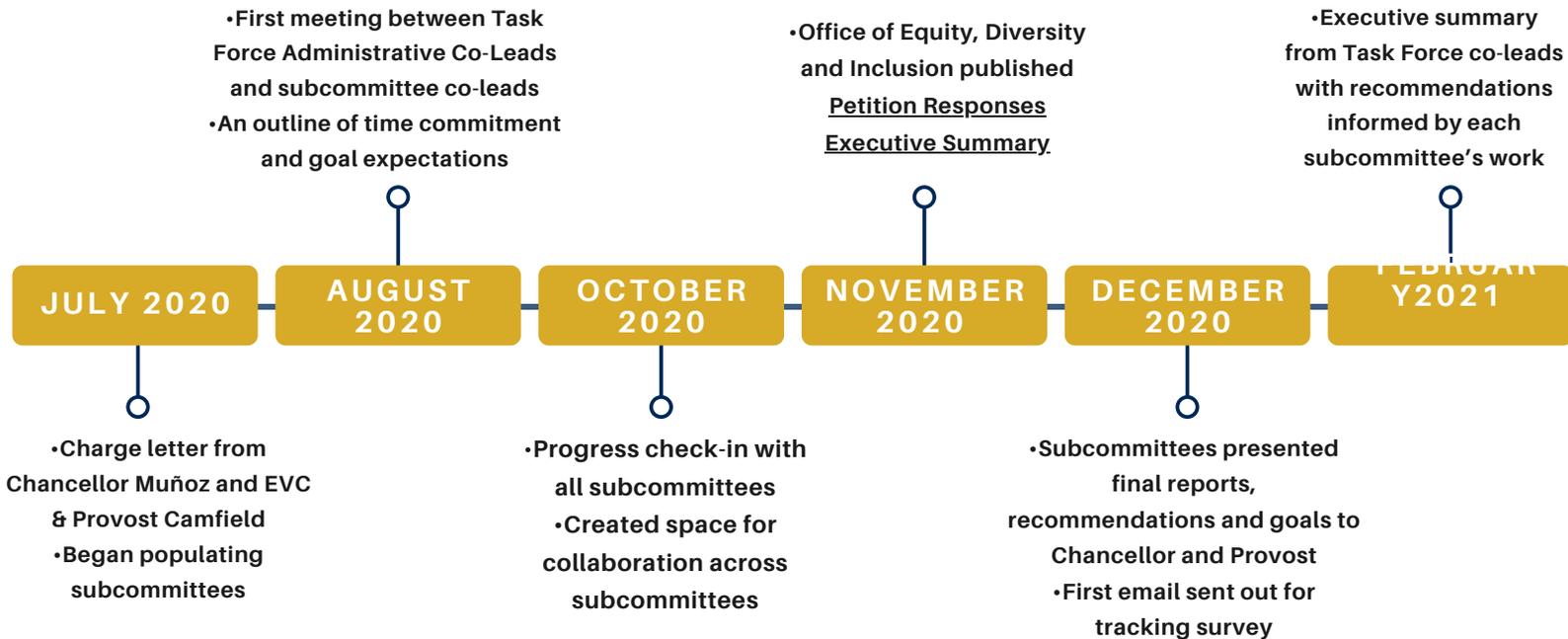
After the tragic murder of George Floyd and the social movements it inspired across our nation, members of our UC Merced community voiced their concerns to leadership on campus through various petitions. Several constituency groups engaged leadership to establish a dialogue on how the university could proactively combat anti-Blackness and systemic racism to better align with our Principles of Community and facilitate the success of our Black and African American community and by extension that of the entire university enterprise. In response, campus leadership committed to a series of actions that addressed the concerns raised by the campus community.

Survey and Valuing Black Lives Dashboard: The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI), in partnership with the Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) team, created the Valuing Black Lives (VBL) Dashboard to track progress towards some of the measures described in the executive summary of campus responses. (Please note: viewing the VBL Dashboard requires a single sign-on with a UC Merced account). First, OEDI created a survey that was sent out on a monthly basis to unit leads to gather updates on their progress. IRDS then used this data to update the VBL Dashboard. Some of the things we are monitoring in the dashboard include: 1) progress towards diversifying faculty and staff through equity-based hiring practices, 2) admission, retention, and graduation rates of our Black undergraduate students, and 3) allocations of funds for Black success across constituencies (i.e., students, staff, and faculty).

Limitations: To maintain our promise of accountability and transparency, we attempted to track the monthly progress of the various campus responses via the monthly tracking survey mentioned above. However, the bulk of this work was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as a hiring freeze across campus which significantly impacted campus efforts to hire more diverse faculty and staff. Additionally, individuals tasked with providing monthly updates did not always respond to the surveys. This limited our ability to accurately track the progress of some of the campus responses in combatting anti-Blackness.



Valuing Black Lives Task Force Timeline



Chancellor Muñoz and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Camfield created the charge for the Valuing Black Lives Task Force (VBL TF) in July 2020. A goal of the VBL TF would be to bring together a multitude of perspectives to develop concrete goals and recommendations for how we as a campus can best value Black lives. The charge of the Task Force spanned the Fall 2020 semester, with the final report of recommendations being finalized and sent to the Chancellor and Provost in February 2021.



Valuing Black Lives Task Force Structure

Task Force Sponsors

Chancellor Juan Sánchez Muñoz
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Gregg Camfield

Task Force Administrative Co-Leads

Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer Dania Matos
Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Jonathan Grady
Academic Senate Liaison Robin DeLugan

Student Support

Subcommittees

Community Engagement

Policing and Anti-Black Violence

Staff and Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Research, scholarship and funding opportunities



Valuing Black Lives Task Force Structure

As sponsors of the Task Force, Chancellor Muñoz and EVC and Provost Camfield assigned Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer Dania Matos, Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Jonathan Grady, and Academic Senate Liaison Robin DeLugan as the Administrative Co-Leads of the Valuing Black Lives Task Force, who would directly oversee the work of the five subcommittees. The five subcommittees included: 1) student support, 2) community engagement, 3) policing and anti- Black violence, 4) staff and faculty recruitment and retention, and 5) research, scholarship and funding opportunities.

The Administrative Co-Leads convened the co-leads of the subcommittees in August 2020 to outline the goals and processes of the VBL TF. Each subcommittee convened in individual meetings throughout the semester. The Administrative Co-Leads met monthly with subcommittees to receive updates, provide resources and support where needed, and offer subcommittees the opportunity to connect with one another to identify areas of overlaps.

In December 2020, subcommittees presented their recommendations and goals to Chancellor Muñoz and EVC and Provost Camfield. In February 2021, the Administrative Co-Leads submitted a final report to Chancellor Muñoz and EVC and Provost Camfield. This report included all the final recommendations and goals of the subcommittees as well as recommendations from the Administrative Co-Leads.



Valuing Black Lives Task Force Subcommittees

Subcommittee Selection Process

- Co-leads were selected to ensure inclusive representation of staff, Senate and non-Senate faculty, and graduate and undergraduate students
 - Targeted nominations were sent to specific stakeholders wherever representation was low
- Administrators for each subcommittee were selected based on their oversight and to be sure that administrative support was provided at the subcommittee level
- Campus-wide announcements were sent out to solicit interest
- Requests for nominations were sent to the UC Merced Black Alliance
- Student nominations were requested from the Pan-Afrikan Council as well as various clubs, organizations, fraternities and sororities
- Senate faculty nominations were received through the Academic Senate's Committee on Committees
- Non-Senate faculty nominations were sent in via the Non-Senate Academic Council
- Subcommittee co-leads were encouraged to recruit any additional members, particularly to identify community members they could work with

Subcommittee Guiding Questions

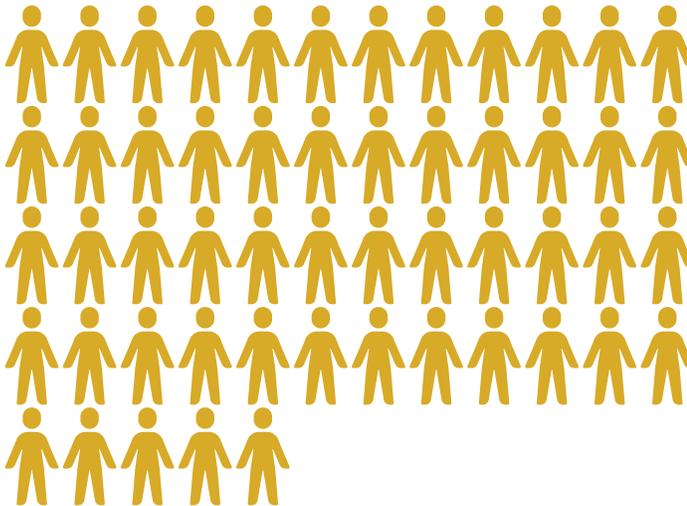
All subcommittees received the following guiding questions in order to ground their work in a consistent framework and provide concrete guidelines for the formulation of their goals:

- Using the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion's [strategic framework](#): how are you advancing the strategic framework through the subcommittee with a particular focus on valuing Black lives?
- What do we currently do in this area?
- What are we missing in this area?
- How can we be anti-racist? And work on combatting anti-Blackness?
- Produce immediate, mid-term, and long-term goals. Evaluate each goal.
 - How much will it cost?
 - Are there specific units or campus actors involved?
 - What should we prioritize? If you could do only 2 in a year, what would they be and why?
 - What are the most pressing issues? There may be a long-term goal that should be prioritized because of the current climate as it relates to addressing anti-Blackness.



Valuing Black Lives Task Force Snapshot

53
INVOLVED



20 STAFF

16 FACULTY

7 STUDENTS

6 ADMIN

3 COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1 ALUMNI



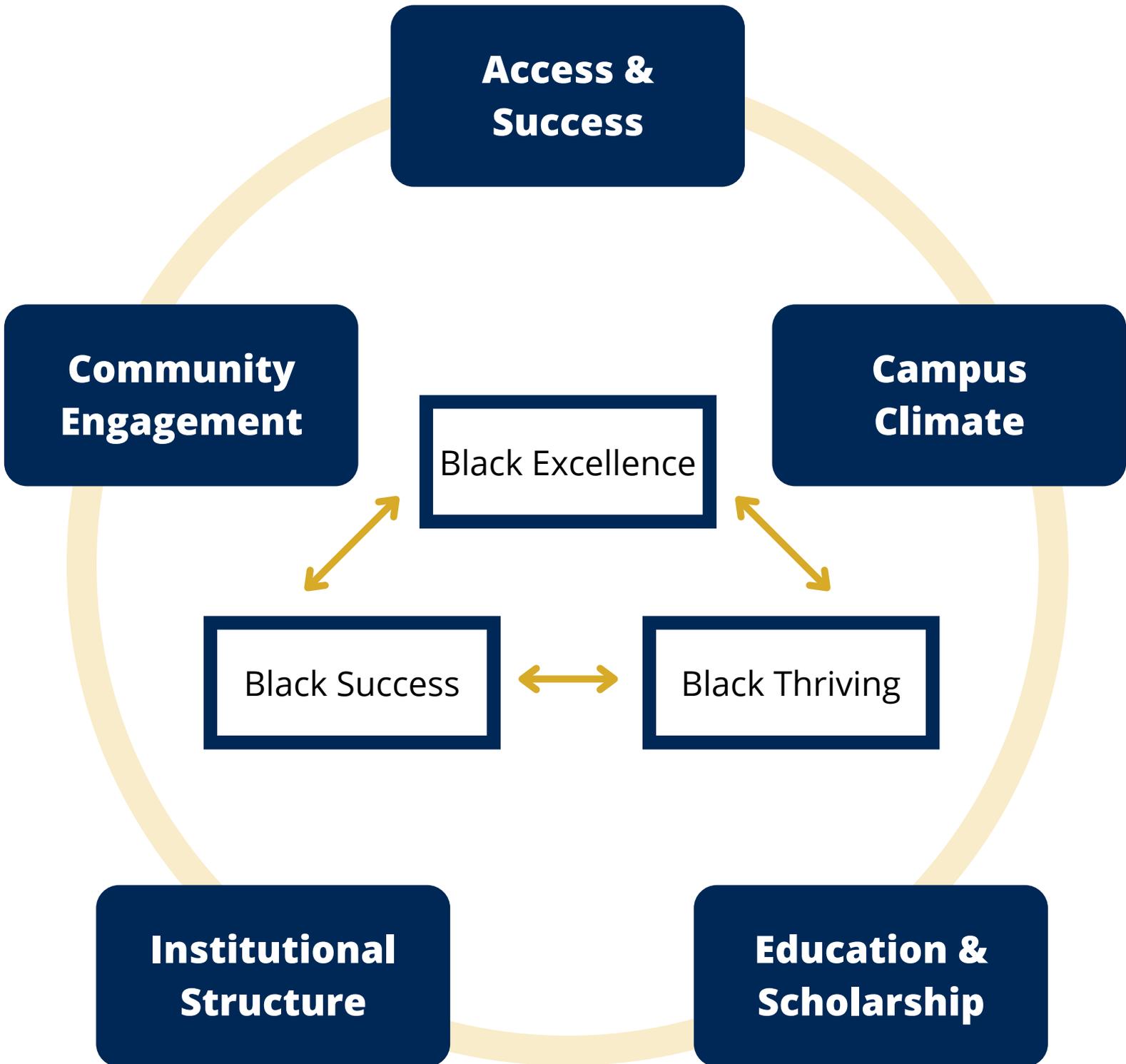
46
MEETINGS



61
RECOMMENDATIONS



Valuing Black Lives Initiative: Inclusive Excellence Framework





Valuing Black Lives Initiative: Inclusive Excellence Framework

The culmination of the work listed above and the beginning of the Valuing Black Lives Initiative can be found in a [memo authored by Chancellor Muñoz and EVC and Provost Camfield](#), which was developed in response to the VBL TF Administrative Co-Leads final report of recommendations. This memo outlines the commitments being made at an institutional level for valuing Black lives on our campus and presents short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals towards this end, as well as the financial commitments necessary to move this work forward. To ensure the success of this initiative, we ground this work in the Inclusive Excellence Framework.

The Inclusive Excellence Framework presents five models that set the path for achieving excellence that is inclusive: 1) Access and Success; 2) Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations; 3) Education and Scholarship; 4) Institutional Infrastructure; and 5) Community Engagement (adapted from Williams, Berger and McClendon 2005). These models encompass the three pillars of Black Excellence, Black Success, and Black Thriving. These three pillars work reciprocally with one another – we must recognize the Black Excellence that exists on our campus and in our local community, ensure that there are structures in place to promote Black Success, and to continuously develop these structures to maintain Black Thriving in our community.

We can use these five models to ensure that we encourage Black Excellence, Black Success and Black Thriving on our campus:

- Access & Success: Thinking through goals and initiatives from an institutional and organizational perspective, we must remove any structural barriers to access and success.
- Campus Climate: We must ensure that we are engaging in active dialogue around anti-Blackness as it exists in our campus and globally.
- Education & Scholarship: We must create and build on existing Black research, Black creativity, and anti-racist curriculum.
- Institutional Infrastructure: We must develop and sustain accountability through mission-driven metrics that hold all campus actors and leaders responsible for pushing forward Black initiatives.
- Community Engagement: We must think beyond our campus and ensure that we address anti-Blackness in the communities we serve in the San Joaquin Valley.

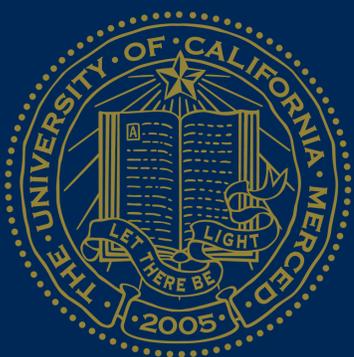


Valuing Black Lives Initiative: Inclusive Excellence Framework

Our Valuing Black Lives Initiative is rooted in the acknowledgement that anti-Blackness is detrimental to our mission as a public research university. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion's [Strategic Framework](#) grounds our work using an anti-oppression, critical consciousness and justice lens. This framework posits that *community, access, transparency, inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability* (BobCAT IDEA) are key enablers and critical components to accomplishing our mission.

A similar framework is reflected in the [UC Regents Principles Against Intolerance](#) (2016), which presents 10 principles that are all integral to our work and mission as a higher education institution. For the specific purposes of this initiative, we would like to highlight the following principles: a) our mission is centered around inclusive excellence; b) discrimination is absolutely prohibited and antithetical to the values of the UC; c) UC leaders must challenge any speech or action that reflects bias, stereotypes and/or intolerance; d) freedom of expression and freedom of inquiry are paramount; e) the UC must educate its community to engage in discourse that does not reflect biases, stereotypes or prejudice; & j) university leaders should have processes in place to respond fully and promptly against intolerance and/or discrimination.

It is no coincidence that the first of the UC Regents Principles Against Intolerance is about centering inclusive excellence in our mission. It goes without question, then, that we must ground the work of the Valuing Black Lives Initiative in the Inclusive Excellence Framework to provide the long term strategic direction to ensure its permanence in the service of our mission and broader social enterprise.



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