

Moving Forward Together
Steering Committee

Final Report
July 30, 2020



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

July 30, 2020

With the endorsement of the Board, President and the Leadership Team, *The Moving Forward Together* Steering Committee was created on June 22, 2020, and given the unique assignment by President Bob Staton “to develop a comprehensive plan that puts into action Presbyterian College’s commitment to create a more perfect and inclusive campus for all.” In fulfilling the charge, the Committee recognized that its work would involve examining PC’s past, present, and future in the areas of racial discrimination, systemic and implicit biases, reconciliation, diversity and inclusion. Over the years, our African American alumni and other students of color have shared with us some of the painful events and circumstances that they have experienced while attending PC. It is important that we acknowledge those experiences and work to insure that they never occur again. A major question that faced us as we began our work is how do we inculcate in all of our community members the democratic and Christian values, ideals and beliefs that define our Mission and Diversity Aspiration Statements in our efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive community?

Or, as President Staton noted in his June 10, 2020, statement to the PC community, “How do we deliver on this commitment, and how do we move forward in 2020 to ensure that every member of our campus community not only grasps the harmful effect of racism and discrimination in all of its forms, but also commits to developing a campus culture where the norm for each community member is to respect the dignity of all people?” The Committee realized that such a commitment requires a systematic and intentional approach to create a campus culture that is free of all forms of racism and discrimination. It was also discerned that a comprehensive plan that promotes the concepts of diversity, inclusion and equity requires a shared understanding of key values that undergirds the previously mentioned concepts and the recognition that many of the concepts, terms, ideas and definitions are evolving and will require a commitment to continuous learning over the course of time.

In a nation where many studies show that the demographics of college-age students are shifting toward more minorities and students of color, we are proud to note that PC has adjusted to this shift and now has a student body that is comprised of 25.6% minorities. So, one can conclude that we have done well in enhancing the diversity of our student body, but we know that diversity is but one component necessary for achieving our goals. Inclusion and equity also support our College’s Diversity Aspiration goals and mission and its Strategic Plan. This Committee’s work reveals that we must also critically examine and change our institutional structures, practices, and policies to create an environment that is welcoming, collaborative, productive, and inclusive; or run the risk of losing many of our students of color which impacts retention.

It is within the areas of inclusion and equity that the Committee focused a great deal of its efforts and work. The committee began its work on June 24 and completed the report on July 30, 2020. So, there was no time to waste in having the 20-member committee fulfill its charge. In order to expedite its assignment, the Steering Committee was divided into four subcommittees and each of the four were given specific policy areas to examine and make recommendations. The four subcommittees were: 1) Training, Staff and Space; 2) Student Conduct; 3) Curriculum and Advising; and 4) Statements and Culture. Each of the four had 5 – 6 members, and at least one Board of Trustee member was assigned to each subcommittee. Each of the subcommittees

provided reports that are included in the body of this document, and each was responsible for developing policy recommendations to address the issues or reforms that are needed for achieving greater diversity, inclusion or equity.

The subcommittees completed their reports on Monday, July 27, 2020. Collectively, they identified **22** policy recommendations that could potentially enhance inclusion or equity in their assigned areas. An online survey was administered on Tuesday, July 28, that asked each member to prioritize each of the 22 recommendations according to their importance and policy impact. Listed below are the results of the survey that identifies the **11** recommendations that received the highest vote from the members. At least 2/3 of the Steering Committee ranked each of these as priorities of “the highest importance” (though many had unanimous ranking as a highest priority item). While the committee viewed these 11 recommendations as the ones of highest priority, readers of the following report should make note of 11 additional recommendations that are included in the report, and we believe that they, too, are also important for your consideration moving forward.

The 11 Highest Prioritized Action Items

- Issue the statement of accountability / apology to students and alumni of color (that was crafted by our Statements & Culture subcommittee) to the campus community.
- Hire a full-time, trained D&I director and appropriate support staff.
- Require annual training in diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism for all faculty, staff administrators and students.
- Add a 3-credit requirement to the General Education curriculum to require students to take a course in racial justice / history.
- Create a Student Conduct Committee that would develop training for Student Conduct panel members, propose education programs for new students, faculty and staff, review and revise the Garnet Book annually and evaluate alignment of past precedent and current expectations for sanctioning.
- Charge the (new) Student Conduct Committee to create an anti-racism policy that includes a definition of racism, examples of racist behavior (e.g., celebrations of white supremacy, including the Confederacy), and tiered-sanction guidelines that specifies the range of sanctions for violations related to racism and discrimination.
- Adopt a common definition of what racism means on PC's campus (that was crafted by our Statements & Culture subcommittee).
- Provide greater transparency from leadership, faculty & staff in the timeliness and communication on Bias Incident Reports (and sustained marketing of the report form).
- Hire a full-time grant writer or contract a grant writer for the College.
- Create a policy in the faculty handbook, non-faculty handbook, and with Human Resources that requires departments and offices to interview candidates from under-represented groups and make intentional efforts to hire faculty and staff of color.
- Identify a subsequent committee or group to convene annually to evaluate the progress of these diversity & inclusion recommendations.

It is the view of the Steering Committee that, taken together, these recommendations provide a solid basis upon which to build trust, understanding and healing among our students, alumni and employees as we begin to address endemic wrongs that for too long have been part of the cultural orthodoxy (i.e., the prevailing or majority view, beliefs, norms and stereotypes that advantage some and harm others) of our campus community. We realize that there are some other important issues that we were unable to tackle at this juncture given the time constraints to complete this project, but we believe very strongly that this is a very important step. We also understand that in order to address each of the areas within this report, it will require commitment, as well as dedication of time and resources, to implement the policy recommendations. This is a crucial point in our nation's history as well as PC's history as we strive to fulfill the vision of our Mission and Diversity Aspiration Statements and the *2017 Promise of PC Strategic Plan*, which specifies the priority of "extending our focus on diversity and inclusion." We look forward to your support.

In closing, President Staton has often stated that "Our mission and values at PC, developed within the framework of Christian faith and committed to the development of the mental, physical, moral, and spiritual capacities of each student, demand no less of each of us." His statement affirms our shared belief that we must better live our mission so that everyone has a positive and fulfilling experience as part of the PC community.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Prof. Booker Ingram, Chair
The *Moving Forward Together* Steering Committee

List of Steering Committee Members & Charge from President Bob Staton

Office of the President

June 22, 2020

To: Members of Moving Forward Together Steering Committee

- Dr. Booker Ingram, (Chair of the Steering Committee)
- Dr. Serge Afeli, (Associate Professor of Pharmacology & Director of I & E)
- Dr. Justin Brent, (Professor of English)
- Mr. Willie Cooper '81, (Board of Trustees)
- Ms. Maya Evans '21, (Student, President of the Multicultural Student Union)
- Rev. Racquel Gill, (Assistant Chaplain for Multicultural Community Engagement)
- Dr. William Harris, (Assistant Professor of History)
- Ms. Stephanie Keene, (Assoc. Director of Academic Success & Presby First+ Coordinator)
- Mr. Tommy Lawson '71, (Vice-Chair, Board of Trustees)
- Dr. Erin McAdams, (Associate Professor of Political Science)
- Rev. Dr. Danny Murphy, (Board of Trustees)
- Mrs. Dee Nichols, (Sr. Associate Athletic Director for Compliance and Sr. Women's Admin)
- Mr. Reagan Osbon '21, (Student, President of the Student Government Association)
- Rev. Rachel Parsons-Wells'02, (Director of Religious Life & Community Engagement)
- Dr. Austin Shull '11, (Assistant Professor of Biology)
- Mr. Steve Smith '84, (Board of Trustees)
- Dr. Emily Taylor, (Associate Professor of English and World Literatures)
- Ms. Kennedy Wright '23, (Student, Secretary & Treasurer of Multicultural Student Union)
- Mr. Joe Wideman '13, (Chair, African American Alumni Council)
- **Ex Officio Member:** Mr. Drew Peterson, (Associate Dean of Students/Director of Residence Life)

From: Bob Staton, President

Re: Committee Charge

Thanks to each of you for your willingness to serve as a member of the Moving Forward Together Steering Committee established, with the endorsement of the Board of Trustees, to develop a comprehensive plan that puts into action Presbyterian College's commitment to create a more perfect and inclusive campus for all.

You are charged with developing a series of recommendations to be presented first to the President and then to the Board of Trustees, that sets forth, within the context of Christian faith and PC's mission, the college's approach to responding to our context, addressing our needs and aspirations, and moving forward together to build a more diverse community. The statements made in my June 10, 2020 statement should serve as a guide for your work.

As an educational institution, grounded in the context of the Christian faith, it is imperative that we seize this moment to acknowledge that we individually and collectively have fallen short of who we should be and must act to better educate the entire campus community--students, faculty and staff--in order to create a community welcoming to all.

It is my belief that developing and enhancing dialogue across our community is critical to changing our campus climate. I would request that you, in addition to other recommendations you may develop, particularly focus on steps that can happen quickly for engaging in communications and training across campus to encourage active listening and respect and an understanding of our differences.

The makeup of this committee represents a cross section of the PC community, including trustees. You are charged to represent and reflect all segments of PC. Your recommendations should represent your collective view on moving forward. You will no doubt receive requests, concerns, and even demands to take certain actions. Your responsibility is to consider the various viewpoints and create what you collectively believe is the correct path to create an environment that is welcoming to all, even those with whom we disagree or are different from us.

The plan should be realistic both in terms of the time it will take to develop and implement, as well as the ability of PC to fund items requiring financial resources. As each of you are aware we, and all other colleges, are confronting a difficult financial environment. Any recommendations you make that require additional resources should, therefore, specify both those resources and potential sources for those resources. It is my belief there are many items you might recommend that can have a significant impact but do not, at this time, require significant financial resources.

In undertaking this work, each of us on campus, including me, need to recognize we have contributed, by our actions or inactions, to creating our current campus climate. As one of our trustees suggested, we should each follow the words found in Matthew 7 to guide us in this regard. This will require all of us to not just look at what or how others need to change, but to look first inward at how each of us must change, both in our thoughts and actions. I would welcome the opportunity to share with you some examples of my shortcomings.

This group, along with the leadership team, must set the tone and example needed to create a more inclusive climate. As you conduct your work, you should set an example for the campus in how you communicate, especially in listening to understand others' points of view, and to foster an environment that stresses and models open communications.

As you move forward to develop your recommendations, you should provide periodic updates to me. I will in turn provide you any feedback or guidance as appropriate. Your final recommendation must be completed by July 30, 2020 and submitted to me: I will then forward it to PC's Board of Trustees as a part of the materials for the August 4-5, 2020 board meeting. At its August meeting the board will be asked to discuss your recommendations, provide guidance, and if appropriate take action.

Again I appreciate your willingness to be a part of this important work and look forward to working with you, receiving your report and having our board take action on your report.

FULL REPORT

The *Moving Forward Together* Steering Committee was created by President Bob Staton to develop a comprehensive plan that implements the commitment of Presbyterian College (PC) to create a more perfect and inclusive campus. As the Steering Committee chair and PC Director of Diversity & Inclusion, Dr. Booker T. Ingram, Jr., indicated in his opening statement to the Committee, this charge gives the Steering Committee “the unique charge to spearhead an initiative designed to address the past, present, and future of Presbyterian College in the areas of racial discrimination, systemic and implicit biases, reconciliation, diversity and inclusion.”¹

Comprised of 20 members (including students, staff, faculty, alumni and members of the Board of Trustees), the Steering Committee considered several recommendations from a variety of constituents on campus and submitted new recommendations for its members to consider. Each of these suggestions were vetted extensively by the Steering Committee and its subcommittees to determine which would be recommended to the President. **We present the following recommendations – each of which has earned the full endorsement of the Steering Committee – to President Staton for his endorsement and their implementation.**

The most urgent recommendation by the Steering Committee is the following:

To issue a statement of accountability / apology to students and alumni of color

The Steering Committee recognizes that, PC has been complicit in the maintenance of racism on its campus and that the experiences of our past and present students have left them feeling unsafe, unwelcome and ostracized. **To demonstrate PC’s renewed commitment to diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism, we believe that it is essential that the President endorse the following statement of accountability and apology, and immediately issue it in its entirety to the entire campus community:**

“History is full of watershed moments – moments that mark a shift in the way we engage the world around us. In the wake of the civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd, America is at such a watershed moment. Presbyterian College, like institutions across the nation, finds itself drawn into the discussions of our times. Nationwide protests around police brutality, social and economic injustice and the Black Lives Matter movement have become constant images in traditional and social media. As questions of racism and racial injustice rise to the forefront of our society, we recognize our responsibility as an institution founded upon Christian principles to take an often uncomfortable look at where we stand as a college. We understand as an institution that it is not enough for us to remain neutral or silent on issues of race, that we have failed to adequately act to eradicate racism in our community thus far, and that we must be intentional in our efforts to end racism on our campus. It is our commitment to our alumni, current and future students, faculty and staff that we will not only work to recognize our failings of the past, but that we will work diligently to confront all forms of racism across our campus.

¹ Communicated via email to the Steering Committee on June 24, 2020

It is important to be clear that what we are addressing are not abstract discussions of racism. We are proud of the success and contributions of our Black alumni. They continue to represent PC's mission of moral and ethical development with a mission to serve others. Likewise, through their achievements inside and out of the classroom, our current students of color continue to impress and give great promise for success in the future. However, our current and former students of color, as expressed in written statements from the Multicultural Student Union and the African American Alumni Council, give detailed descriptions of racism experienced in our classrooms and across a variety of venues on campus. These are not solely incidents of the past, but continue to this day. In addition, these groups speak of the impact of the lack of diversity among our faculty and staff. Perhaps most significantly, they express a lack of faith that their concerns will be adequately addressed by our faculty, staff, and administration. To address these concerns, we as an institution must commit to being anti-racist. As recently deceased Civil Rights icon, Congressman John Lewis, stated, "If you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have a moral obligation to do something about it." Racism is not right, just or fair, and we share a responsibility to oppose and eradicate its presence in our community.

For us to work effectively with our current students of color and alumni moving forward, it is essential that we rebuild trust. This will be accomplished through actions rather than words.

To begin this process, a Steering Committee consisting of faculty, staff, student leaders, members of the African American Alumni Council and the Board of Trustees, working under the guidance of Dr. Booker Ingram, Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, has proposed specific policies and changes to enhance our campus experience. The Committee has examined a number of issues, including curricular changes, strengthening and clarifying our response to student and faculty misconduct in regards to race, diversifying faculty and staff representation, and creating anti-racism training opportunities for members of the PC community. These changes are designed to not only increase diversity on campus (among students, faculty, and staff), but to create an inclusive environment where all members feel welcome.

As such, the Committee also recommends to eliminate the presence of Confederate symbols on campus. We oppose the presence of symbols and language that represent hatred and division. It must be acknowledged that symbols celebrating the Confederacy or the legacy of Jim Crow remain symbols of oppression and violence for our students of color. Accordingly, their presence only serves to further the divisions and pain that we have committed ourselves to end.

Let us be clear; Presbyterian College stands in support of racial equality and against deeply ingrained prejudices towards Black Americans and other people of color simply because of the color of their skin. We see this moment as a starting point rather than an end. We understand that much work must be done to fulfill the promise of PC and to create an environment that fully lives up to the ideals of the College. However, we believe that this is an important first step. We welcome the efforts of all parts of the campus community to continue to build bridges and bring people together. In the spirit of the faith and values upon which PC was founded, values which remain at our core to this day, we once again express our unflinching commitment to create an anti-racist campus environment of which all students and alumni can be proud"

In addition, the Steering Committee recommends that:

A subsequent committee or group be identified to evaluate the progress of the implementation of these action items on an annual basis, with appropriate representation of constituencies across campus.

To ensure that PC’s effort to become a more inclusive, welcoming and affirming campus, regular assessment and evaluation of the progress of these items – and have the ability to proposed additional recommendations to address the needs of diversity and inclusion – is needed.

The remainder of the Steering Committee’s final report presents 22 additional policy recommendations that have the full endorsement of the Committee. These policy items are organized by the topics of each of its four subcommittees, which were:

- [Training, Staff and Space](#)
- [Student Conduct](#)
- [Curriculum and Advising](#); and
- [Statements and Culture](#).

Each recommendation to the President includes the Committee’s rationale for this recommendation, an indication of the level of impact and investment that each would require, and a suggested timeline for implementation. In terms of the level of investment, items that we estimate will be less than \$50,000 is considered a “low” investment; items estimated to cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000 is considered a “moderate” investment; and items estimated to cost above \$100,000 are considered as a “high” investment.

In addition to this Final Report, **the Steering Committee also recommends that the President and Board of Trustees have access to some of the data and documents on which the Committee relied in determining its recommendations as well as a collection of direct quotes of students of color who transferred from PC** (see the addendum “Student Experience Report: Being of Color at PC”).

Training, Staffing and Space

Presbyterian College is an institution that prides itself on its mission to create a more diverse and inclusive campus community. In order to achieve this, the *Moving Forward Together* Steering Committee recommends the following to the Office of the President:

1) Require all faculty, staff, administrators and students to undergo yearly diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism training. PC would also require any long-term vendors, contractors, and outside organizations undergo diversity and inclusion (D&I) training, whether it be through PC or provided through their company.

To become a more inclusive and welcoming community, the Steering Committee recommends that all PC faculty, staff, administrators and students be required to complete a yearly diversity,

inclusion, equity and anti-racism training to become educated as to the various forms of bias and discrimination that exist. This recommendation is important because it provides a uniform and annual training requirement that does not currently exist for the College. To be an inclusive campus and show faculty, staff, administrators and students that PC is committed to progress, diversity and inclusion education is vital. Faculty, staff, administrators and students must be educated on how to come together as a community as well as identify acts of hate, racism and prejudice. Training on Title IX, sexual harassment, and other components of to progress PC as an institution should also be required.

Due to COVID-19, the 2020-2021 training may be online, but we recommend future training be in person.² Each yearly training will be different and encompass different aspects of diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism. All long-term vendors, contractors and outside organizations associated with the College should also be required to complete a yearly diversity and inclusion training, whether it be through their company or provided by the College.³ . It is important that the companies and their employees who interact with our students adhere to PC's anti-discrimination policies. We recognize the College cannot require external organizations with current, ongoing contracts with PC to abide by this policy recommendation; however, we request they adhere to College policies and implement this requirement in all future long-term contracts.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Implement online D&I training starting in Fall 2020 and (contingent on COVID-19) move to in-person training Fall 2021.

2) The new President hire a full-time, trained Director of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) with appropriate support staff.

Peer institutions like Wofford College, Furman University and Agnes Scott College have Offices of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) with multiple full-time D&I staff members. To demonstrate to students and the PC community that we are committed to moving forward, a department with full-time staffing dedicated to diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism on campus is essential. Funding the hiring of a full-time Director and support staff would also demonstrate to students and alumni that PC's commitment to diversity and inclusion is a top priority.

The roles of the Office will include, but are not limited to: creating diversity and inclusion programming; maintaining the Bias Incident Report; addressing and assessing areas of improvement related to equity; training for faculty, staff and students about diversity and inclusion; collecting data relative to the campus climate and creating a sense of belonging within the campus culture. We recommend that the Director of D&I continue to report directly to the President and serve on the Leadership Team.

² Our Training, Staff & Space Subcommittee has researched online training programs for 2020-2021 that are estimated to cost between \$1,000 and \$6,000, depending on the company used and package purchased. Moving forward, the Office of Diversity & Inclusion could work with the Office of Human Resources to develop in-person training to lower costs.

³ We recognize that some of the college's long-term contractors (i.e., The Budd Group and Aramark) already require their employees to complete the company's own diversity and inclusion training.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / HIGH INVESTMENT

***Suggested Timeline for Implementation:* The search for full-time D&I director and staff would begin Spring 2021 for full implementation in Fall 2021.**

3) Create a highly visible, centralized physical location for the Office of Diversity & Inclusion as well as a “Third Space” for students of color and other students that would provide them with a meeting place for socializing and entertainment (outside of class, residence halls and Fraternity Court).

A fully staffed Office of D&I will need a tangible, concrete and easily accessible location. The Committee recommends that part of the Harper Center be used for the D&I Office. As the College continues to grow, other departments can also be housed in the Harper Center. We recommend the Harper Center because the D&I Office needs to be visible and centralized on campus. Since the Harper Center is not currently being utilized, it would be an easy transition to an Office of Diversity & Inclusion. Moreover, the Harper Center could provide a “Third Space” centered around the needs of students of color, where all PC students are welcome to learn and engage. We recognize that there are limited social outlets on campus and in the City of Clinton, given our rural location, and that such a space could help to lower students’ feelings of isolation and provide them with a greater sense of belonging, especially during the weekends, when they are outside of class. This recommendation would provide the students with a larger designated “Third Space” for social functions outside of the residence halls and Fraternity Court.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

***Suggested Timeline for Implementation:* Coinciding with the search and hire of a full-time Director of Diversity & Inclusion, the physical office location should be in place in Spring 2021. “Third Space” renovation should be completed in Spring 2021.**

4) Create a policy in the faculty handbook, non-faculty handbook, and with Human Resources that requires departments and offices to interview candidates from under-represented groups and make intentional efforts to hire faculty and staff of color.

Currently, there is no policy of diversity hiring in the faculty or non-faculty handbooks. We recommend that PC adopt a diversity hiring policy that has the following components:

- a) Position advertisements need to be posted across diverse publications to intentionally recruit more diverse candidates and obtain a more diverse hiring pool.
- b) Between 25 - 30% of under-represented populations (i.e., racial minorities, women, etc.) who meet the position qualifications must at least receive a phone interview. At least one member of an under-represented population who meets the qualifications must be invited to an on campus interview.

Faculty, staff and student workers on campus should be reflective of the student body. With no diversity hiring policies in place, faculty and staff not from under-represented groups may tend to hire those with whom they easily identify. By requiring search committees to actively recruit a more diverse hiring pool, we are increasing the likelihood that PC will have faculty, staff and student workers that are more reflective of the student body.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: During the 2020-2021 academic year.

5) Hire a full-time grant writer or contract a grant writer for the college.

A grant writer is a position that pays for itself over time. A grant writer will be tasked with pursuing foundation grants (i.e., Carnegie, Mellon, Ford, Teagle, etc.) and federal and state government grants to provide funding for diversity initiatives, civic education and engagement projects, programs promoting ethics and democratic value, etc. For example, the TRIO program is an outreach and student services program (administered and funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education) that identify and provide student services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g., Upward Bound and Gear-Up programs). However, without a full-time grant writer with experience and training in best practices, obtaining this type of funding is out-of-reach for PC. While some areas on campus have been able to obtain external grants (e.g., SC-INBRE program; Mill Oral History project), PC cannot be competitive without an experienced grant writer in place. As a result, PC needs a grant writer who can procure foundation and governmental grants can provide the College with additional revenue streams.

A full grant office would require a physical location to house this staff. We recommend that one component of this position will be to seek funding to provide financial aid for minority students and reduce the current \$10,000 unmet need for PC Promise Scholarship recipients.⁴

Level: HIGH IMPACT / MODERATE INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: During the 2020-2021 academic year

6) Establish a restricted fund to which people can make donations to be used for Diversity & Inclusion initiatives. This new fund should be promoted in the Fall 2020 with a Diversity & Inclusion Giving Day and included in the annual Giving Day in the future.

The African-American Alumni Council resolution inspired the recommendation that the Advancement Office develop a fund to which the PC community can donate money; this fund would be dedicated to diversity and inclusion efforts, including programming, training, financial aid to minority students (e.g., Pell grant and PC Promise Scholarship recipients) and other D&I initiatives, as determined by the Director of Diversity & Inclusion. We also recommend that a Diversity & Inclusion Giving Day be held in the fall to establish a marketing campaign for this fund and that this be included in annual Giving Days in the future. This action would demonstrate PC's commitment to provide financial aid to minority students and provide a source of revenue for PC's D&I efforts, thus improving student satisfaction and retention.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: During Fall 2020

⁴ Though not this position's only role, it would be an essential component of their job responsibilities. The Training, Staff & Space Subcommittee also notes that it would be beneficial to create a cohort of students receiving these grants as to create a support system among the student body.

7) Hire a black therapist/counselor.

Hiring a black counselor/therapist has been frequently suggested by our students of color. Our minority students have expressed that they would feel more comfortable and can relate more to a black counselor/therapist. Currently, the director of the counseling center actively seeks interns of color but it is not guaranteed she can secure one every semester. We recommend that that PC hire a part-time counselor of color or contract a black telehealth/virtual counselor.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / MODERATE INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: During the 2020-2021 academic year

8) Strengthen the training of Campus Police on how to interact with students from different races and backgrounds and enhance initiatives to increase the diversity of Campus Police.

PC's Campus Police is consistently understaffed due to the difficulty in recruiting trained and qualified officers. Although one Black male officer was hired in July 2020, the rest of the makeup of Campus Police is all white males. The subcommittee recommends that Campus Police increase its efforts to recruit and train a more diverse staff reflective of the campus community. In addition, current and future officers should receive more in-depth training on working with students from diverse backgrounds, anti-racism training and training in de-escalation strategies. We also recommend conducting an assessment of Campus Police to determine other areas for improvement on diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism issues.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / MODERATE INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: During the 2020-2021 academic year

Student Conduct

The Garnet Book and its accompanying student conduct process are foundational to community life at Presbyterian College. It explains in detail how we live out the shared values in our compelling purpose and draws clear distinctions for behavior that is not in line with those values. Across institutions of higher education, there are two primary purposes for a code of conduct: to foster learning from mistakes and to protect the college community. Student conduct responds to problematic student behavior by creating an opportunity for learning and growth. As is stated in our Garnet Book, "Even where sanctions are appropriate to help maintain community and civility, it remains part of the College's goal to educate individual students and to help them grow concerning their responsibilities as members of a community."⁵ Therefore to further our institutional goal to create a more diverse and inclusive campus, it is necessary to update the student-conduct process to be more explicit in outlining unacceptable behaviors that make students of color feel unwelcome and unsafe within our institution. **To create a more welcoming community, the Steering Committee makes the following recommendations to the President:**

⁵ Garnet Book 1A General Principles: Purpose

1) Create a Student Conduct Committee (SCC) with the following responsibilities:

- develop training for Student Conduct panel members
- propose education programs for new students, faculty, and staff
- review and revise the Garnet Book annually, and
- evaluate the alignment of past precedent and current expectations for sanctioning, and provide policy recommendations accordingly

Membership on the SCC should consist of the following:⁶

- Associate Dean of Students [i.e. Drew Peterson]
- the Director of Diversity & Inclusion (or their designee)
- three student representatives
- three faculty representatives (one from each academic division).
- Campus Life Staff primarily responsible for Greek Life
- Representative from Campus Police

The majority of student conduct cases are resolved through a meeting with a student conduct officer (usually a member of Residence Life Staff). Sanctions are determined based on the severity of behaviors, available evidence, and precedent. We propose this recommendation because, for a Code of Conduct manual to function effectively, it needs to have a committee that regularly attends to it, updates it as circumstances change on campus and keeps the campus community informed of those changes. If only one person maintains the Garnet Book and supervises hearings, then it is easy to blame a single individual when things go wrong. On the other hand, when stakeholders from across campus are involved, the Garnet Book gains greater legitimacy. Moreover, the creation of this committee offers an opportunity to integrate alternative perspectives, such as those from students of color.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

***Suggested Timeline for Implementation:* This committee would need to be formed as soon as possible during the fall semester, so that they can begin their work before the end of Fall 2020. All committee members would be volunteers, so there is no cost to the College.**

2) Charge the Student Conduct Committee with creating an anti-racism policy to be added to the Garnet Book. This policy should contain the following items.

- a. A **definition of racism** within the context of student conduct at Presbyterian College.
- b. **Examples of behavior to be prohibited** through this addition:
 - i. Events where one group is using the culture of another for entertainment or for celebrating institutions of white-supremacy
 - ii. Artwork, clothing or other objects that celebrate white supremacy, including those artifacts associated with the Confederacy.
- c. **Tiered-sanction guidelines** that specify a range of specific sanctions for violations related to racism and discrimination

⁶ Faculty and staff committee members will serve for a two-year renewable term. Faculty representatives shall be decided by the Faculty Committee on Assignments. Students will serve for a one-year term, then may re-apply to serve for the following AY.

Having this anti-racism policy is an essential component of making Presbyterian College a more inclusive community, where under-represented populations feel not only safe but welcome. This larger goal is part of the Promise of PC Strategic Plan, which specifies the priority of “extending our focus on diversity and inclusion.” From a recruitment standpoint, we surely were right to target diversity and inclusion. A wealth of research is available to show that D&I initiatives help to address student achievement gaps, contribute to the richness of the learning environment, promote students’ cognitive development, improve student satisfaction, and promote more capable leadership qualities.⁷

Unfortunately, the Campus Climate Report from 2019 shows that PC has significant work to do to make under-represented populations feel more included. Specifically, the report indicated that “African American and Bi-/Multi-racial students have significantly lower scores, on average, on the Inclusion Scale than their white/Caucasian counterparts ($p \leq .05$).” Moreover, the “vast majority” of African American students claim to have experienced “bias or discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity.” Members of the Multicultural Student Union (MSU) have expressed repeatedly to members of this committee a sense that PC turns a blind eye to racist behavior.

These patterns and impressions must change, and we believe that the Garnet Book can play a role in bringing about this change. If we are to “respect the dignity of all people,” as encouraged by President Staton to the PC community,⁸ then our Code of Conduct book needs to show that the college is serious about discouraging racism. It can help by providing a common frame of reference by defining racism, listing examples of racism, and spelling out the consequences for those who commit racist acts. An anti-racism policy, moreover, is consistent with the Presbyterian Church’s own language released in 2016, which reads in part, “Racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ.”⁹

America at large has struggled to define racism, so perhaps it is no surprise that our Student Conduct Subcommittee struggled as well. But the struggle is crucial and must continue. We feel our community must have a common definition of racism. Without it, offensive acts will continue, and sanctions will never seem fair. On the other hand, a shared definition and understanding of what constitutes racism and discrimination can help us build a more inclusive and respectful community that will strengthen PC in numerous ways.

With regard to the ban on articles celebrating white supremacy, this language reflects a very high priority for students of color at PC who represent a sizable (and growing) portion of the student body. Some may argue that students should be able to express their personal beliefs, as guaranteed by the First Amendment; but First Amendment rights do not protect the right to be hurtful and intimidating to other groups. Moreover, as a private institution, Presbyterian College has the right to define appropriate behavior more narrowly, in a manner that we feel will make our students more capable citizens and leaders. For these reasons, we believe it is important to

⁷ Anderson, S., Medrich, E., Fowler, D. (March 2007). “Which achievement gap?” *Phi Delta Kappa*, 88(7), p. 547. Astin, Alexander W. “Diversity and Multiculturalism on the Campus: How are Students Affected?” *Change* 25;2 (1993): 44-49.

⁸ Sent via campus-wide email on January 28, 2020

⁹ “Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community.” Approved by the 222nd General Assembly, 2016.

condemn expressions of white supremacy, including those associated with the celebration of the Confederacy.

In recommending a tiered sanction system, we recognize the value of having specific consequences laid out for specific violations. If students are aware of standard penalties in advance, they are much more likely to self-police their behavior. On the other hand, every episode is different; if sanctions are too specific about their punishments, they may not be appropriate for all violations. Our committee, therefore, feels that a “tiered” system -- with level 1 specifying less-severe penalties and level 3 specifying more-severe ones) allows both for specificity AND for flexibility at the sanctions stages of a trial.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Ideally, the Student Conduct Committee will be able to review and edit the Garnet Book continually. This initial addition can hopefully be completed before the end of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Curriculum & Advising

As an institution of higher learning, we recognize that PC’s curriculum and advising are key mechanisms through which to fight racial injustice. As a result, the Steering Committee recommends to the President the following:

1) Add a 3-credit requirement in the General Education curriculum in the College of Arts & Sciences to require students to take a course on racial justice / history.

A liberal arts education within the context of the Christian faith requires an awareness, understanding and critical examination of one’s role in society. As we instill in our students the ability and motivation to make responsible contributions to our democratic society, per PC’s Mission Statement, it is imperative that all students at PC be prepared to make meaningful contributions to an anti-racist society and that they are unable to do so if they are uneducated about the nature, context and legacy of systemic racism in the U.S. **We propose that all students be required to complete one 3-credit course that fulfills the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):**

Upon successful completion of this class, students will be able to:

- a) Describe the origins, evolution and effects of systemic racism
- b) Explain the historical context of systemic racism in the U.S. and its relationship to current events
- c) Explain central concepts and strategies of anti-racism approaches, and
- d) Engage in responsible democratic citizenship to advance racial justice and equity

We also recommend that the following goal be added to the General Education curriculum: “Students will understand the history and legacy of systemic racism in the United States to contribute to racial justice and equity.”

We recognize that the implementation of the General Education curriculum falls under the purview of the faculty. Our Curriculum & Advising Subcommittee envisions that the most feasible way to implement this would be to offer a menu of courses across a variety of disciplines that satisfy this racial justice requirement. Many existing courses already fulfill these SLOs (e.g., HIST 2300: African American History I; PLSC 301: African Americans & the Political System), and some other existing courses – including courses that already fulfill other General Education goals – could be modified to ensure that these SLOs are fulfilled (with approval by the Curriculum Committee and Director of Diversity and Inclusion).

However, we recognize that the faculty have the primary responsibility of the implementation of the General Education curriculum and strongly encourage the faculty to have the ability to determine the best way to implement this requirement. **As a result, we recommend that the President task the Curriculum Committee to develop (in conjunction with the Provost) a proposal to adopt and implement this new General Education requirement.**

Level: HIGH IMPACT / INVESTMENT TO BE DETERMINED

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Developed Fall 2020; approved by Spring 2021 for implementation in AY 2021-22

2) Revise the current advising structure in the College of Arts & Sciences to include a “developmental advising” system to aid First Generation and under-represented students

Currently, most incoming undergraduate students are assigned to a faculty member in their area of academic interest (where possible) to serve as their academic advisor for both short-term (e.g., registering for classes) and long-term (e.g., career interests) planning until students declare their majors and select their major advisor. However, research demonstrates that 1st Generation students and students from under-represented groups need additional support to navigate – and thrive – in college.¹⁰ We applaud PC’s efforts to establish the PresbyFirst+ program and hire a full-time position dedicated to this program for 1st Generation students. However, our current advising structure does not provide the level of support and advocacy that 1st Generation and under-represented students need.¹¹ Clearly, a different model is needed to ensure their success.

To provide this support, we recommend that the current advising structure be revised to train a cadre of 15-20 faculty to also serve as academic advisors – and advocates – for 1st Generation and under-represented students. This cadre of faculty would undergo extensive training in: best practices for mentoring First Generation and under-represented students; developmental advising; and anti-racism. We recommend a “developmental advising” approach, which emphasizes relationship-building and student empowerment. Minor funding will be needed to support this training, and we recommend that faculty who serve in this role receive a stipend. In addition to advising, this cadre of faculty will work closely with the Office of Academic Success to coordinate additional programming to further enhance students’ sense of belonging.

¹⁰ See, for example, Janet K. Holt and Laure B. Winter. 2018. “Improving College Outcomes for First-Generation Students.” *Journal of Public Affairs*.

¹¹ For example, the Associate Director of Academic Success now serves as the incoming academic advisor to 14 incoming 1st Generation students, though there are at least 108 1st Generation students (36% of whom are also students of color) who are matriculating in the Fall 2020 semester.

We recommend that the President task the Dean of Academic Programs and Office for Academic Success to work with the Faculty Senate leadership and the Committee for Excellence in Teaching to develop a plan to implement this developmental advising group for 1st Generation and under-represented students.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Approved by Spring 2021 for implementation in AY 2021-22

3) Create a mentoring program for PC students of color with PC alumni

We believe that providing additional support to our students of color is essential to ensuring that they thrive. As a result, we recommend that a voluntary mentoring program be established to connect PC alumni and students of color. We believe that this type of program will have additional benefits, such as facilitating networking opportunities (particularly for our undergraduate students), engaging in alumni relations, and further building community among PC alumni and students.

We envision this program being voluntary, working through the Executive Director of Alumni Relations and the African American Alumni Council (AAAC) to identify alumni of color who would be willing to serve as informal mentors to PC students. Students (at both the graduate and undergraduate levels) would sign up for the program by completing an online form with information on their race/ethnicity and other information, such as major field or career interest, to be “matched” to an alumnus of color through Alumni Relations. Opportunities to meet in person during Homecoming Weekend, for example, could also be coordinated.

As a result, we recommend the President task the Executive Director of Alumni Relations to work with the African American Alumni Council to develop this program.

Level: MODERATE IMPACT / VERY LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Implemented in Fall 2020

4) Require PC’s graduate programs to develop a Diversity Action Plan to address systemic racism and create a more inclusive environment.

Successfully addressing systemic racism and creating a campus culture that is inclusive and affirming for both students and employees requires a clearly defined, action-based strategy. In addition to identifying specific actions / policies to be taken, a Diversity Action Plan also addresses the specific mechanisms to implement, enforce and assess those actions and policies.

We recognize that the Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Council (DIAC) has been working with the Director of Diversity & Inclusion on such a Diversity Action Plan that largely focuses on the College of Arts & Sciences, and we believe that each of PC’s graduate programs – the School of Pharmacy, the Physician Assistant Studies Program and the Occupational Therapy Program – should also be tasked with the development of a plan to create a more inclusive environment and address systemic racism, particularly through the inclusion of mandatory curricular or co-

curricular initiatives. We also strongly recommend that those who develop the Diversity Action Plan (whether a committee or one individual) receive training in best practices for the development of Diversity Action Plans.

We recommend that the President task the Dean of the School of Pharmacy, the Director of the Physician Assistant Studies Program, and the Director of the Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program to implement a process to develop Diversity Action Plans for their unique programs and provide training to assist in the development of these plans.

Level: POTENTIALLY HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Present Diversity Action Plans to the Director of Diversity & Inclusion by the end of the Fall 2021 semester, with initial implementation of action items starting in Spring of 2022

5) Develop a “Race and Ethnicity Studies” minor in the College of Arts & Sciences and provide support for existing area-specific minors

While PC currently has three minors that are area-specific (Africana Studies; Latin American Studies; and Chinese Studies), PC does not currently offer a specialized education on the theories and methods of race and ethnicity studies more broadly. Dr. Jaclyn Sumner, associate professor of history, is currently developing an interdisciplinary “Race and Ethnicity Studies” minor that would provide such education, adding an “Introduction to Race and Ethnicity Studies” course to the undergraduate curriculum and relying on other already-established courses. **We encourage the President to endorse the development of the “Race and Ethnicity Studies” minor.**¹²

In addition, the existing area-specific minors require sustained marketing. **We encourage the President to task the Dean of Academic Programs to work with the directors of those three programs – as well as the new Race and Ethnicity Studies minor – to better market these curricular opportunities, update their websites, provide funding for programming, and ensure that courses in the minor are regularly offered.**

Level: MODERATE IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Approved Spring 2021 to be in place by Fall 2021

6) Engage in an Oral History Project to collect the personal narratives of PC alumni and employees of color.

We recognize that PC has not fully acknowledged the experiences of students and employees of color on this campus, and yet, historical remembrance is a core component for a community to move forward together toward racial justice. To acknowledge this past – as well as listen and learn from it as we heal as a community – we recommend that the College initiate a student-research-based Oral History Project to collect the personal narratives of PC alumni and former employees of color. A pilot of this could begin with the mentoring program above.

¹² Dr. Sumner plans to propose this minor to the Curriculum Committee in January 2021 for approval by the end of the Spring 2021 semester.

We realize that this project would be long-term and that such an endeavor would likely require funding through a substantial grant. We envision, though, that the College would be able to rely on faculty expertise in oral history data collection methods and work closely with students to gather this research (e.g., through the Summer Fellows Program, Honors Research projects, etc.). As a result, this will also provide additional education in racial history for these students as they gather, archive and reflect on the historical experiences of people of color.

While we do not view this as a short-term priority for the College, **we do recommend that the President endorse the initiation of this project as funding becomes available.**

Level: HIGH IMPACT / INVESTMENT DEPENDENT ON GRANTS OBTAINED
Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Dependent on available funding, though some student-based research could be implemented by faculty as early as Spring 2021

7) Investigate a process to develop a campus-wide common reading, such as Ibram X. Kendi's *How to be an Antiracist* (2019)

Engaging in a campus-wide common reading is an excellent means to have courageous conversations regarding race relations. While some colleges or universities employ common reading programs as a requirement for their first-year orientation seminars (e.g., Gustavus Adolphus College), others employ voluntary “listening and learning” audio-book clubs (e.g., College of the Holy Cross) or campus-wide readings with author visits (e.g., College of Charleston). Research demonstrates that – when implemented correctly – common reading programs can improve students’ intellectual engagement, build community, provide opportunities for exposure to diverse viewpoints, and generate “safe spaces” for discussion.¹³

However, research also demonstrates that these benefits are only obtained when a core structure exists to ensure that there is both motivation for the campus community to engage in the reading meaningfully and a mechanism through which small-group discussions can occur. Currently, this structure is not in place at PC. As a result, we believe that an investigation as to whether PC can develop a structure with the best practices associated with common readings be initiated.

We recommend that the President task the Department of English to work in conjunction with the Dean of Academic Programs and the Committee for Excellence in Teaching in the College of Arts & Sciences to investigate best practices in common reading programs to determine the type of structure necessary for this to be implemented.

Level: POTENTIALLY HIGH IMPACT / NO CURRENT INVESTMENT
Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Investigation to begin in Fall of 2020

¹³ See, for example, Andi Twiton. 2007. “Common Reading Programs in Higher Education.” A Patricia Lindell Scholarship Research Project. Gustavus Adolphus College.

Statements and Culture

The Steering Committee recognizes that the College's culture shall be a key component to our strategy through which to fight racial injustice. We propose that the President also endorse the following statements and actions:

1) Adopt a common definition of what racism means on PC campus

The Steering Committee recommends that the following definition of racism be adopted by the College to guide its efforts to be more inclusive, welcoming and affirming and to ensure a common understanding of the anti-racist work that the College will pursue:

“As we declare ourselves an institution opposed to racism, it is essential that we be clear as to how we define and interpret the term. At its root, racism is a belief in the superiority of one's “racial” group over “others.” These beliefs often lead to actions designed to emphasize perceived differences and to keep “others in their place.” Racism is a destructive force; a set of values and actions at odds with our desires to build bridges and to create what Dr. King termed “the Beloved Community” here at Presbyterian College. What we must pursue is not to simply avoid being racist, but instead to advocate for the establishment of an anti-racist community. The effort to be anti-racist requires us to exhibit empathy. It is not only what a word, a symbol, a gesture, or an action means to you that is important. We must also be cognizant of the historical and societal meanings that these symbols represent to other groups and individuals who are also present and make conscious efforts not to offend or denigrate those around us. As a faith-based institution, we must strive to live up to the ideals of equality and inclusion borne out of our values. As we strive to live up to these values with humility, we must hold one another accountable when our vision for the Beloved Community is fractured. In this way, we acknowledge the inherent worth and dignity of every member of our global society.”

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Immediately

2) Provide greater transparency and communication related to Bias Incident Reports

To accomplish this, the Steering Committee recommends the following:

- a) Timely sharing of information related to Bias Incident Reports
- b) Establish a system that will communicate investigation progress to the whole campus (while maintaining the confidentiality of the parties involved)
- c) Sustain marketing of the Bias Incident Report form
- d) Communicate aggregate data on Bias Incident Reports annually

The Committee estimates that transparency and timely communication of information related to bias and discrimination incidents on campus become a priority for the administration. Such actions will provide a sense of security and trust in the administration and prevent false rumors to spread while providing comfort to those afflicted by these acts. To establish this system of communication, we recommend that the President, the Provost, the Director of D&I or the Dean of Student Life be the person who issues such communication within 24 hours of an incident.

The communication should be specific enough, but must protect the identity of the party involved until an investigation is concluded.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: Immediately

3) Hire an external consultant to conduct an independent assessment of PC's culture

To improve PC's culture, a thorough assessment of where we stand as an institution is important. Unfortunately, conducting such assessment from within the College is inappropriate because (as members of the community) we may be biased or have a conflict of interest. Thus, we suggest that the President approves the hiring of a reputable external consultant to assess PC's culture and that the recommendations made by the consultant be implemented in a timely manner. This type of assessment will have great benefits and continue to improve our current efforts.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: By the end of the 2020-2021 academic year

4) Develop more minority-specific programming

To accomplish this, the Steering Committee recommends the following:

- a) Reach out to individual departments for ideas and contributions
- b) Ask Greek organizations and other RSOs to sponsor minority-specific programming with much guidance and oversight

The Steering Committee believes that the celebration of diversity should be a year-round effort. As such, we suggest that the administration provide financial support to individual departments, Greek organizations, Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) and other programs across campus aid in these celebrations. Ideally, an event celebrating diversity should be held on PC campus every month. We believe that such approach will allow PC to celebrate not only Black minority but also other groups such as LGBTQ, Latinx, etc. We also believe that additional coordination is required across these departments to properly market them.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT

Suggested Timeline for Implementation: By the end of the 2020-2021 academic year

5) Add images / portraits of alumni, faculty, staff, and students of color in buildings, library, gym, and marketing materials.

For PC to develop a culture of inclusiveness on campus, it is essential that the various faces and images that demonstrate the diversity that makes up our shared history be included. Well-positioned images, with descriptions of their meanings and importance, helps to build the shared identity necessary for the development of a multicultural PC community. Diversity in PC's marketing and admissions materials will further aid in the recruitment of a diverse student body.

Level: HIGH IMPACT / LOW INVESTMENT