



REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BYU COMMITTEE ON

Race, Equity, and Belonging



FEBRUARY 2021



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

**Report and Recommendations
of the BYU Committee
on Race, Equity, and Belonging**

Presented to President Kevin J Worthen

FEBRUARY 2021

Cover photos (clockwise from top left): Andrea C., communications major;
Batchlor J., communications graduate student; Kyoo K., BYU employee; Lita G., BYU employee.

Dear President Worthen,

In June 2020, you directed the formation of the BYU Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging. We are grateful to have been appointed by you to serve on this important committee at this crucial time.

You charged us to review processes, policies, and organizational attitudes at BYU and to “root out racism,” as advised by Church President Russell M. Nelson in his joint statement with the NAACP.¹ In setting the vision and mandate for our work, you urged us to seek strategies for historic, transformative change at BYU in order to more fully realize the unity, love, equity, and belonging that should characterize our campus culture and permeate our interactions as disciples of Jesus Christ.

As a committee, we have endeavored to carry out that charge with an aspiration to build such a future at BYU. Our work has included numerous meetings with students, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators as well as more than 500 online submissions of experiences and perspectives from members of the campus community. This effort has been revealing and has illustrated many opportunities for improvement and growth at the university. We anticipate that realizing our aspiration to bring about historic, transformative change will require a longstanding institutional commitment, searching internal reviews, and innovative thinking from each sector of the university community. As a first step in this process, we have developed this initial report and a set of interim recommendations for your consideration.

This report proceeds in four parts: an executive summary, the committee’s findings, the committee’s recommendations, and an important note addressing historical issues associated with racism.

We thank you for your leadership, support, and consideration as, together, we seek to root out racism and build a Christlike culture of unity, love, and belonging at Brigham Young University.

Respectfully submitted,



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Academic Vice President (Chair)



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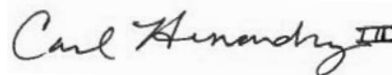
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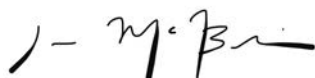
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1. Russell M. Nelson, Derrick Johnson, Leon Russell, and Amos C. Brown, “Locking Arms for Racial Harmony in America,” *Medium*, June 8, 2020, https://medium.com/@Ch_JesusChrist/locking-arms-for-racial-harmony-in-america-2f62180abf37.



Talavao F., English major

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an October 2020 general conference address, President Russell M. Nelson said, “Today I call upon our members everywhere to lead out in abandoning attitudes and actions of prejudice. I plead with you to promote respect for all of God’s children.”² At the same conference, President Dallin H. Oaks of the First Presidency said that as citizens and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, “we must do better to help root out racism.”³ Echoing the theme, Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles urged us to “celebrate diversity” as we seek to be unified, noting that “unity and diversity are not opposites. We can achieve greater unity as we foster an atmosphere of inclusion and respect for diversity.”⁴

The current impetus to root out racism, build unity, and enhance diversity at Brigham Young University has been motivated in part by the tragic killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others, which have laid bare the brutal costs of systemic injustice. These horrendous events prompted BYU president Kevin J Worthen to state in June 2020:

We know there is work to do, on campus and throughout the nation, for us to better come together, to address injustice and to truly love one another. It will take sustained effort from all of us to make things better. We remain committed to doing that. We can do that in a unique way at BYU because of our understanding of the important truth that each of us are children of heavenly parents.

*BYU stands firmly against racism and violence in any form and is committed to promoting a culture of safety, kindness, respect, and love.*⁵

President Worthen then invited us to serve on the Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging and urged us to seek strategies for historic, transformative change at BYU in order to more fully realize the unity, love, equity, and belonging that should characterize our campus culture and permeate our interactions as disciples of Jesus Christ. While recent events were the catalyst for the current effort, as a committee, we have understood our charge as beginning an effort that must be sustained on an individual as well as institutional level—as the responsibility of each member of the BYU community—if we are to create lasting change.

We have endeavored to carry out this charge to develop interim recommendations to achieve these aims through an ambitious schedule of meetings with key stakeholders, most significantly Black, indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) at BYU. In addition, we have received and reviewed hundreds of relevant electronic communications. In the effort to identify the scope and effects of racism at BYU, we have invited the participation of students, faculty, alumni, staff, administrators, and other concerned members of the community; we have sought the input of a broad cross-section of the university community; we have listened to understand, to identify the ways in which the university has fallen short, and to identify the strategies that have been effective here and in other communities.

Our work to identify the sources and effects of racism at BYU is ongoing. We are pleased to submit 26 key recommendations based on our initial finding that BYU can do much more to support and promote the thriving of BIPOC students at BYU. In his devotional address on January 7, 2020, President Worthen

2. Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” *Ensign*, November 2020.

3. Dallin H. Oaks, “Love Your Enemies,” *Ensign*, November 2020.

4. Quentin L. Cook, “Hearts Knit in Righteousness and Unity,” *Ensign*, November 2020. Such admonitions against racism are not new. In the September 2000 issue of the *Ensign*, Elder Alexander B. Morrison of the Seventy wrote, “Racism is an offense against God and a tool in the devil’s hands. In common with other Christians, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regret the actions and statements of individuals who have been insensitive to the pain suffered by the victims of racism and ask God’s forgiveness for those guilty of this grievous sin. The sin of racism will be eliminated only when every human being treats all others with the dignity and respect each deserves as a beloved child of our Heavenly Father.”

5. Kevin J Worthen, “A Message from BYU President Kevin J Worthen,” *BYU News*, June 2, 2020, <https://news.byu.edu/announcements/a-message-from-byu-president-kevin-j-worthen>.

emphasized the principle of enduring joy and described it as “a principle of power—power to survive and thrive spiritually and otherwise.”⁶ Among other important principles we learned in studying these issues, the most consequential and urgent is that many BIPOC students at BYU feel isolated and unsafe as a result of their experiences with racism at BYU. Current systems at the university are inadequate for coordinating services for students seeking assistance with challenges related to race, diversity, and belonging. Our 26 recommendations, listed in this executive summary (see p. 8) and discussed in detail later in the report (see Recommendations, p. 17), seek to promote student belonging and thriving through cultural and institutional change to diversify BYU and enhance structural support for BIPOC students. It is our sincere hope that these first steps will help to make BYU a place where more students are able to “thrive spiritually and otherwise” and partake more fully in the joy that is at the center of our heavenly parents’ plan and that is critical to the mission of BYU.

Background: Leading Out to Root Out Racism

Following President Worthen’s charge to the committee, we organized and drafted a mission statement (see Appendix A, p. 56) to be shared with the university community as part of our commitment to transparency and communication with stakeholders as our work progresses. The mission statement highlights our ongoing effort to listen to affected communities and individuals, to consider their views, and to convey their concerns and experiences as part of our reporting. It quickly became apparent that our mandate would require a sustained effort beyond the initial reporting period. To ensure continuity of institutional commitment to the issues raised by our mandate, we have proposed a charter (see Appendix B, p. 57) to the President’s Council with the recommendation that the Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging be established as a standing committee of the university.

Early in the process, our committee established a website to solicit input; through that website we received and reviewed more than 500 submissions sharing experiences and perspectives. As a full committee, we held 10 meetings with various stakeholders, including Black students and alumni, as well as other students of color, admissions officials, Honor Code officials, those working on redesigning general education courses, and others. We also met in smaller cohorts with students and other members of the university community. As committee members, we also received hundreds of email messages with stories and observations related to this issue. We thank each person who reached out or responded to help us understand their experiences and to offer substantive input on potential improvements.

We have heard heartbreaking stories from individuals who have felt the pain of racism at BYU, and we have felt to mourn with those suffering from these wounds. Our efforts to listen with love to our sisters and brothers have laid bare the pain so many of them have endured as part of their BYU experience. The recommendations we have developed are animated by our desire to improve the experience of BIPOC students at BYU, to ensure their gifts are welcome here, and to heal the pain of injustice and discrimination they have endured.

In his 2016 Neal A. Maxwell Lecture, “Latter-day Saints and the Problem of Pain,” Harvard Divinity School professor David F. Holland related an anecdote about an interaction between his father (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland) and Elder Neal A. Maxwell and noted the consequences of present and historic pain for some communities and individuals:

6. Kevin J Worthen, “Enduring Joy,” BYU Devotional, January 7, 2020, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kevin-j-worthen/enduring-joy/>.

Prior to a significant address my dad had been asked to deliver, he asked Elder Maxwell to read the talk beforehand. After reviewing the draft, Elder Maxwell offered some words of encouragement and then a kindly warning . . . : “Jeff,” he said, “there is one place in the talk where you have been insufficiently careful of the pain in peoples’ lives. There are scars that go unnoticed, but you must see them. You must tread with caution on the hallowed ground of another’s suffering.” . . .

. . . One of the reasons I have come to see my academic work as a historian as sacred is that it enables, and even forces, me to understand the historic pains that those around me carry. As William Faulkner wrote of the pain of history, “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.” We live with the consequences of history, and many of those consequences come in the form of open sores. We dismiss them at our peril, and we must handle them the way God taught us in the Restoration: with robust communication, with a prioritized concern for empathy, and with a dogged determination to be present with each other.

. . . There is much, much to celebrate and value from the past. But like a sorrowing soul that carries the wounds of youth, wounds that sometimes make even the most basic of relationships nearly impossible now, so our world is full of communities that carry such pain. If we are to work to heal this world—which is what I understand to be the disciple’s task—we need to be serious about understanding and addressing its wounds. God himself, the God of the Restoration, set our example for such a thing.⁷

It is our hope that our efforts and recommendations reflect a vision fixed on bringing healing to those who have suffered the pain of racial discrimination, inequity, or lack of belonging at BYU.

We have also heard an outpouring of love and concern from many in the BYU community who are eager to be part of working together to improve racial equity and belonging. We note that since the call to action from President Nelson and President Worthen, the BYU community is already moving forward to help heal racial divisions and enhance equity on campus in many respects. A number of colleges have organized diversity and inclusion committees and have undertaken the effort to articulate guiding principles and allocate resources to improve the experience of BIPOC students and faculty. We have been pleased to note that several colleges and organizations on campus have led out in prioritizing difficult discussions around race, equity, and belonging within their fields of expertise. We note also that the university has taken important steps to increase the diversity of those invited to speak at devotionals and forums. As a committee, we appreciate the openness of those charged with making the campus more welcoming. As just one example, BYU’s auxiliaries and programs group, which includes Dining Services, the BYU Store, and Studio 1030, met with committee member Stephani Perkins; they are eager to tailor the programs and services they offer to meet the unique needs of BIPOC students and to provide a more welcoming atmosphere of belonging on campus. In addition, students have been creative in organizing clubs and interest groups dedicated to improving campus equity.

Although there is much to admire and appreciate in the efforts that are underway, our efforts to listen to BYU BIPOC communities have affirmed that the BYU community has not been immune to the detrimental effects of racism. In ways that have been both individual and systemic, intentional and unintentional, we have seen evidence that the painful sting of racism has diminished the experience and the sense of safety and belonging of BIPOC communities at BYU. To date, there has been inadequate accountability and coordination in the university’s efforts to address these needs.

The BYU community must work expeditiously and without delay to lead out in identifying and rooting out racism at Brigham Young University. And as a community we must do better to treat all with the dignity and respect befitting each beloved child of God. Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned a “beloved community”

7. David Holland, “Latter-day Saints and the Problem of Pain,” BYU Maxwell Institute, October 29, 2016, <https://mi.byu.edu/maxwell2016/>.

where all are treated with love and respect and where “the love of God [operates] in the human heart” to “preserve and create community.”⁸ A beloved community is, in essence, a Zion community. The ancient prophet Nephi described such a community in the era after Christ ministered to those in the Americas: “There was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people” (4 Nephi 1:15). We urge bold steps forward and a sustained commitment to this effort as individuals and as an institution as we strive to become a more beloved Zion community of learners and scholars, worthy of our sponsoring institution and the high ideals and unity of disciples of Jesus Christ.

Overview of Findings

As a committee, we have identified potential changes in policies, operations, culture, and organizations that may not only improve the experience of BIPOC members of the campus community, but also better prepare all students to identify and root out racism wherever it is found as they go forth from BYU to serve. In particular, we see a need for an urgent effort to enhance the sense of safety and belonging of BIPOC students at BYU.

Our review has highlighted that a university education falls short when it fails to adequately prepare students to navigate cultural and racial complexities. Similarly, our BYU community falls short when BIPOC students feel isolated and unwelcome.

In our work as a committee, we had the privilege of meeting with BIPOC students and alumni from various multiracial groups. We were deeply saddened to hear the students articulate their experiences with poignant clarity; we were sorry to have to ask them to revisit those difficult experiences for us; we felt to mourn with those whose hearts have been broken by their fellow students and others, whether by ignorance or hostility. BYU’s BIPOC students shared that their daily lives at BYU are too often marred by marginalizing comments, otherizing questions, and exhausting racial slights. These have come from roommates, classmates, church congregations, and faculty members.

We were particularly concerned to hear BIPOC students—many of them returned missionaries—describe the difficult experience of arriving at BYU with the hope that attending BYU would assist them “in their quest for perfection and eternal life”⁹ in a community of Saints, only to find that this was not their reality. They described the challenges of leaving behind family and cultural communities that did not understand or agree with their affiliation with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and they shared the hope of forging bonds of shared testimony at BYU. Instead, many students reported feeling a sense of surprise, loneliness, and isolation when they realized that they see few other BIPOC students on campus and in their classes. They also reported that they find themselves serving as representatives of their respective races and educating students and faculty on issues relating to race and race relations. These experiences have left many disillusioned, brokenhearted, and struggling. Many described that these challenges to their sense of belonging and their ability to feel connected result in profound faith challenges.

The students described many different individual experiences, but we noted a number of recurring themes across these meetings that we feel an urgency to communicate. (For a full discussion of our findings, see p. 12.) The most pressing concern is that BIPOC students often feel isolated and unsafe at BYU due to racism. By way of illustration, one student from the Hispanos Unidos club said it is “very hard to find other Latino students at BYU.” A student from the Tribe of Many Feathers club recounted that she wanted to transfer out of BYU after her first year because of the lack of other Native American students. A member of

8. Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), 102–105.

9. Brigham Young University, The Mission Statement of Brigham Young University, November 4, 1981, <http://aims.byu.edu/byu-mission-statement>.

the Black Student Union reported, “My experience as a Black student at BYU is not equal to other students on campus because I don’t feel safe.” A student from the Tribe of Many Feathers stated that during one Halloween there were White students who dressed up as “savages” in Helaman Halls. Another student from Hispanos Unidos said that a faculty member chastised her and a friend for speaking Spanish before class. A member of the Black Student Union recounted an incident where a classmate used the n-word multiple times in response to a professor’s question, leaving the room in shock. He described the acute pain and heartache that the event caused to himself and to other Black students who later heard about it.

Exacerbating the isolation, BIPOC students report that they do not know where to turn within the university community for services and assistance, if such are available, to help them navigate these challenges unique to racial isolation. For some, they may seek the assistance of BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), but the resources there are necessarily limited in reach and effectiveness for responding to such issues. CAPS primarily assists students more generally with mental health. There is not a prophylactic program at BYU to build belonging and community, respond to the unique concerns of BIPOC students, or help BIPOC students navigate difficulties before such difficulties become a mental health crisis or require counseling.

Louise Wheeler’s extensive work with BIPOC students as an assistant clinical professor and psychologist for CAPS has reaffirmed that these students consistently feel isolated and unsafe, undermining their sense of belonging and interfering in their educational efforts. In a letter to our committee, Wheeler outlined a few observations, including these:

1. *We have data that shows that students of color, especially Black students, utilize our services less but come in with higher levels of distress than their White peers when they finally do come in. This suggests that they wait longer to seek help. Some of the feedback I have personally heard from students regarding our services [at CAPS] includes not being sure if they can trust us because of lack of diversity on our staff but also lack of trust in the university institution in general (e.g., worry about being invalidated, about having to justify their experience, about having to explain themselves, etc.).*
2. *Students feel isolated and do not know where to go for support. I hear this from students of color multiple times a week. . . . They don’t know what offices on campus are the appropriate space to talk about their experience or even to file complaints when experiencing racism on campus.*
3. *[BIPOC students feel] a lot of stress regarding the rise of alt-right movements (e.g., DezNat) within the university student body. This includes worries about physical safety and worries about things that might be said or done in classrooms, at church, etc. I have heard so much more about [these concerns] this year than in the past. This has led many of the students I have worked with to tell friends and siblings to not attend BYU.*

Wheeler’s observations were supported by statements made by students in our meeting with the Black Student Union, including these:

I thought I was coming out of a difficult community to be associated with the Church community. After I came to BYU, I learned I’m still not in a community I belong to. Systemic problems tell me I’m not supposed to be here.

I feel like I have no power.

I felt like I had to prove myself and still do.

I got baptized in racism when I came to BYU.

People have normalized aggressive comments here.

I feel oppressed here.

I am fearful. But I should have the same right to feel safe [that the White students have].

The statements outlined above are but a sampling of a broader set of difficult feelings and challenging experiences of BIPOC students at BYU that are tied to racism they have experienced at BYU. How then can BYU build belonging, create community, and protect the well-being of BIPOC students? What follows are a number of initial ideas intended to help heal, protect, and connect BIPOC students and thereby bless the lives of all members of the BYU community.

List of Recommendations

According to the Aims of a BYU Education, the university “seeks to develop students of faith, intellect, and character who have the skills and the desire to continue learning and to serve others throughout their lives.”¹⁰ Consistent with these aims, BYU can do better to nurture BIPOC students and to prepare all students to go forth as servants and leaders navigating a complex world and contributing to a more just, equitable world for all of our heavenly parents’ children.

As first steps, we have developed the following recommendations, organized into three broad categories: 1) institutional and organizational reforms; 2) student belonging and equity reforms; and 3) faculty and staff reforms. We outline our proposals below; later in the report, we provide the animating rationales and suggested paths forward for each (see p. 17).

Institutional and Organizational Reforms

1. Create a central Office of Diversity and Belonging at the university charged with strategic planning and implementation of initiatives to assist students and employees with issues related to race, equity, and belonging.
2. Create a new position of vice president for diversity and belonging who reports directly to the president, is a member of the President’s Council, and who oversees the Office of Diversity and Belonging.
3. Implement clear lines of accountability to empower the Office of Diversity and Belonging to coordinate, focus, and leverage the efforts of Multicultural Student Services, International Student and Scholar Services, and the Office of Student Success and Inclusion. These offices might efficiently report to the Office of Diversity and Belonging which will allow for focused efforts to serve BIPOC students academically and to enhance their sense of well-being and belonging.
4. Develop and implement extensive diversity and inclusion training programs and resources for students, faculty, staff, and administrators. This training would be facilitated by the Office of Diversity and Belonging.
5. Commit to curricular changes to general education, religion, and elective courses that educate students on race, unity, and diversity.

¹⁰ Brigham Young University, The Aims of a BYU Education, March 1, 1995, <http://aims.byu.edu/aims-of-a-byu-education>.

6. Consider additions to the Aims of a BYU Education that reflect current statements from prophets and apostles about the need to demonstrate civility, racial and ethnic harmony, and mutual respect. Promote current language in BYU’s mission statement that calls for “loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor” and for a broad education that helps students “understand important ideas in their own cultural tradition as well as that of others.”¹¹
7. Promote and implement the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy (see Appendix C, p. 60) throughout the university.
8. Encourage colleges and departments to adopt statements on race, equity, and belonging that can be used in college and department operations and communications.
9. Establish a standing university committee dedicated to advancing racial understanding, enhancing equity, and promoting belonging for BIPOC communities at BYU. In order to more expeditiously accomplish this recommendation, a proposed charter is included in Appendix B (see p. 57).

Student Belonging and Equity Reforms

10. Establish a new position of vice president or associate vice president of enrollment management and student success that is empowered to create strategic initiatives for recruitment, admission, scholarship, financial aid, retention, and student success for all students and that is particularly charged with leading initiatives associated with attracting, admitting, retaining, and supporting the academic success of BIPOC students.
11. Form a Recruitment, Admissions, and Student Success Committee with a charge to assist the vice president or associate vice president of enrollment management and student success to optimize attracting, admitting, retaining, and supporting the academic success of BIPOC and other students. This committee should be composed of faculty members and university administrators committed to fostering an enriched environment.
12. Develop a strategic plan to increase graduation rates for BIPOC students. This plan should include collaboration between services and offices that are intended to assist BIPOC students to succeed academically.
13. Design and implement a race-conscious recruitment strategy to attract more BIPOC student applicants to BYU.
14. Perform an independent validation study on all current admissions policies, particularly the weighting systems, to evaluate whether they have a disparate impact on BIPOC applicants. Ensure that the admissions process is holistic in its application and reflects the values promoted in BYU’s Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy.
15. Invite the Office of the General Counsel to evaluate the legal parameters of a race-conscious admissions model for BYU, in the interest of pursuing an enriched environment for the student body.
16. Select prestigious scholarship recipients with greater emphasis on a holistic review of the entire applicant file, with criteria to include commitment to excellence, leadership potential, socioeconomic profile, adverse life circumstances, etc. We recommend a scrutiny of policies for determining scholarship criteria and their impact on BIPOC applicants.
17. Create Enriched Environment Scholarships honoring early BIPOC members of the Church, such as Jane Manning James, Elijah Abel, and others, to be made available to students who have demonstrated a commitment to the values contained in the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy.

11. BYU, Mission Statement.

18. Create socioeconomic disadvantage scholarships, in addition to existing need-based scholarships, for students who demonstrate that they come from socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances, who have faced adversities attendant to such circumstances, and who demonstrate the need for financial support in order to obtain a BYU education.
19. Create a process that allows students to report instances of racial discrimination on campus. Through this process, such claims could be investigated and redressed, as appropriate.
20. Establish a dedicated, visible space on campus for underrepresented students and those who serve this population; such a space will foster community and promote belonging.
21. Take steps to ensure that the BYU Honor Code and Dress and Grooming Standards are applied with cultural competence and sensitivity.

Faculty Reforms

22. Design a best practices model for college and department faculty search committees to identify qualified BIPOC candidates for BYU faculty positions. Such a model could be based on three intertwined aims: commitment to the mission of the university and its sponsoring institution (mission fit), excellence in academic discipline (including teaching and scholarship), and diversity (in its many forms: racial and intellectual).
23. Assist and incentivize colleges and departments in developing a strategic plan to identify and mentor BIPOC students who are interested in pursuing careers in academia. This will also serve as a potential pipeline for future hires at BYU.
24. Create an Emerging Scholars Program that allows the university to track, identify, and invite BIPOC PhD students to present their scholarship at BYU.
25. Design a strategic plan that will assist with mentoring, training, supporting, recognizing, connecting, and developing BIPOC faculty at BYU, while consciously planning to alleviate the “cultural taxation” burdens carried by BIPOC faculty at BYU.
26. Provide BIPOC faculty with opportunities to serve in senior university leadership positions.



Kyle E., chemical engineering major.

FINDINGS

In forming this Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging, Brigham Young University president Kevin J. Worthen charged us to seek strategies for historic, transformative change at BYU in order to more fully realize the unity, love, equity, and belonging that should characterize our campus culture and permeate our interactions as disciples of Jesus Christ. As a committee, we have endeavored to carry out that charge with an aspiration to build such a future at BYU.

As detailed in the executive summary (see p. 3), we have attempted to gather data from and to listen to the experiences of members of the BIPOC community and others. We have sought to understand the scope and parameters of the problems that exist at BYU and to identify the significant, sustained change that is needed. We have identified the following preliminary findings that animate the recommendations discussed later in the report (see p. 17).

1. Many BIPOC students feel unsafe and isolated at BYU.
 - a. BIPOC students express pain and sadness because they came to BYU with hopes of having an intellectually invigorating and faith-promoting experience but instead found their testimonies weakened, their emotional well-being negatively impacted, and their ability to focus on academic success diminished because of racial tensions and significantly negative and hurtful experiences.
 - b. BIPOC students describe harmful and isolating interactions with fellow students on the issue of race, stemming both from ignorance and animus.
 - c. BIPOC students describe detrimental interactions with faculty whom they perceive to have ignored or even facilitated racially insensitive class discussions or who seemed unprepared or unwilling to address hurtful comments in class.
 - d. BIPOC students have experienced discriminatory or racially stereotypical treatment in university-sponsored classroom instruction, campus events, and campus housing.
 - e. BIPOC students describe a sense of isolation and insecurity because they often see few, if any, other BIPOC students in the colleges and courses in which they enroll and in areas of campus they frequent.
 - f. BIPOC students have experienced discriminatory application of Dress and Grooming Standards on campus, especially hairstyles for Black students. There appears to be some confusion and inadequate training about how certain aspects of the Dress and Grooming Standards apply to BIPOC populations.
 - g. BIPOC students are discouraged by the lack of diverse and representative mentors on the faculty; many report that they would not be interested in returning to BYU as faculty because of their isolation as students.
 - h. Among BIPOC student-athletes, there can be a sense of separation between upper and lower campus cultures and resources, and such separation from the rest of the student body can be exacerbated for those who are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
 - i. BIPOC students report that a lack of a dedicated gathering space hinders their ability to connect and build community.
2. Current systems at the university are inadequate to coordinate services for students seeking assistance with challenges related to race, diversity, and inclusion; the university lacks coordination and accountability in prioritizing such efforts.

- a. BIPOC students who experience racial discrimination suffer emotional and academic harm that is not adequately addressed by university safety systems.
 - b. BIPOC students who experience racial discrimination report difficulty in knowing where and how to report their experiences or seek assistance.
 - i. BIPOC students report that, where possible, they sought out BIPOC faculty, staff, and administrators who could assist them with coping with and overcoming the trauma experienced due to racial discrimination.
 - ii. There is no centralized and recognizable process for reporting, assessing, and resolving grievances regarding racial discrimination experienced by students.
 - c. BYU Multicultural Student Services, which serves some of the needs of BIPOC students, is located in the interior first floor of the Wilkinson Student Center. Students report that this location feels remote and isolated, perpetuating a sense of “otherness” and a lack of priority for their issues.
3. BYU has failed to recruit, admit, and retain an adequately diverse student body.
- a. BYU’s current race-neutral recruitment and admissions policy hampers efforts to recruit a diverse applicant pool and negatively impacts the number of BIPOC students applying to (and therefore admitted to) BYU.
 - b. There are wide racial disparities in new student applications and admissions to BYU from 2018 to 2020; the number of White applicants and admits during this time frame is distinctly larger than that of their BIPOC counterparts.
 - c. Few, if any, prestigious scholarships are awarded to incoming BIPOC students.
 - d. BYU has given inadequate emphasis and limited implementation to the board of trustees–approved Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy in recruitment, admission, and retention of BIPOC students.
 - e. The dual reporting lines for enrollment services (to both the academic vice president and the student life vice president) create a structural impediment to a cohesive effort for recruitment, admission, and retention of BIPOC students.
4. BIPOC students graduate from BYU at a lower rate than other students, and academic success programs for BIPOC students appear to be diffuse and potentially underutilized by BIPOC students.
- a. BYU is disproportionately failing to retain BIPOC students. The overall six-year graduation rate for nearly all BIPOC students identifying as a single race at BYU is significantly lower than multiracial and White students (Native American: 41%; Black: 58%; Hispanic/Latino: 66%; Pacific Islander: 68%; Asian: 77%; two or more races: 78%; White: 79%).
 - b. Although there are several programs intended to assist BIPOC students with academic success at BYU, the graduation rates indicate that BIPOC students may not be aware of, or fully benefit from, these existing services.
5. BYU’s general education curriculum lacks formal training in cross-cultural competency. Similarly, the religious education curriculum lacks formal discussions on issues of race, unity, and diversity in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The university also lacks general cross-cultural training programs apart from curriculum.
- a. BYU lacks an organized and sustained effort to collaborate across campus units to develop and provide general education, religion, and other elective courses that educate students to become fluent on issues of race, unity, and diversity. Many faculty, students, and alumni believe there is

- a need for curricular reform to address issues relating to systemic racism and eliminating racism. Many units on campus are committed to this charge.
- b. BIPOC students from various religious backgrounds have been adversely impacted by incorrect or misleading characterizations of Church doctrine about race, both in religion classes and other classes.
 - c. Although there are offices at BYU that may address issues related to cross-cultural competency (including the BYU Equal Opportunity Office, the Honor Code Office, and the Office of Inclusion and Student Success), BYU has no strategic plan or coordination to offer effective and consistent cross-cultural competency training to all operations within the BYU community.
 - d. A lack of cultural competency training on campus perpetuates a culture in which BIPOC students feel unsafe and hinders an overall sense of unity at BYU.
 - e. Several colleges on campus have made initial commitments to support rooting out racism, including commitments to evaluate and make changes to BYU's general education curriculum that will enhance cross-cultural competency.
 - f. Because of gaps in university-sponsored educational efforts, BIPOC students, faculty, and staff are often called upon to do extra, frequently unpaid, and invisible labor in the university community to supplement cross-cultural competency education.
6. BYU has failed to recruit, hire, and retain an adequately diverse faculty.
- a. BIPOC faculty members at BYU on the continuing faculty status track comprise 6.4 percent of the overall faculty. This percentage is very low compared to the national average of 24 percent as of 2018.
 - b. BYU does not follow best practices for identifying and creating a pool of prospective BIPOC PhD students, for assisting interested department faculty search committees in attracting BIPOC faculty to BYU, or for supporting programs to attract emerging BIPOC scholars to BYU.
 - c. BIPOC faculty and staff experience excessive "cultural taxation" because they are required to carry a disproportionate burden of the work of mentoring and caring for BIPOC students while also bearing the brunt of efforts to enhance diversity at the university in committees and educational opportunities, including educating a predominantly White administration and leadership on issues of diversity.
 - d. BIPOC faculty report experiencing racism and discrimination in student evaluations that potentially endanger BIPOC faculty retention.
 - e. Few BIPOC faculty are provided administrative advancement and opportunities to serve in academic or other senior leadership positions at BYU.
 - f. BIPOC faculty are isolated with a diffuse presence on campus, and there is currently no organized community for BIPOC faculty and staff to develop social and mentoring networks at BYU.
7. There appears to be no cohesive "ownership" or accountability for promoting an enriched environment or the values of racial equity and belonging at BYU.
- a. The Church Board of Education and the BYU Board of Trustees has approved the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy, which is not actively and expressly promoted in BYU's mission statement or in BYU's strategic objectives.

- b. In 2018 BYU formed an Office for Student Success and Inclusion, but it requires additional resources to advance the interests of BIPOC applicants and students at BYU.
 - c. Commitment to creating an enriched environment at BYU, though supported by the Office of the President, does not appear to permeate the highest levels of leadership, particularly as it relates to creating and valuing a racially diverse student body, administration, and staff.
 - d. Among the university's various vice presidents and directors, there is only one BIPOC administrator serving in a leadership position.
 - e. A number of colleges and faculty are doing important work to promote racial understanding and diversity at BYU, but other colleges may need further guidance and direction to do so. There is a lack of university-led guidance and accountability metrics for implementing related initiatives.
8. A number of students and alumni have expressed deep concern about the impact of current building names. (We discuss this issue in depth in the historical note on p. 51.)
- a. Many of these concerns are related to the name of the Abraham Smoot Building, noting Abraham Smoot's history as an owner of enslaved Black people.
 - b. Many BIPOC students, alumni, faculty, and community members have noted that the choice to honor someone in this way communicates a value they find hurtful, and they have urged BYU to review the choice.



Britney S., communications major.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a committee, we have identified potential changes in policies, operations, culture, and organizations that will not only improve the experience of BIPOC members of the campus community, but also better prepare all students to identify and root out racism wherever it is found as they go forth from BYU to serve. In particular, we see a need for an urgent effort to enhance the sense of safety and belonging of BIPOC students at BYU.

We believe all students will benefit as we welcome a broader diversity of students into the BYU community and as we create an environment where BIPOC students can thrive and where the gifts and contributions of all are embraced. Such an enriched environment will bless BYU students and will ultimately serve the interests of our sponsoring institution, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As Elder Alexander B. Morrison observed,

*Church members now live in nearly every country of the world. During the new century, Church communities around the world increasingly will reflect the diversity of the nation in which they are located. Taken as a whole, the Church worldwide will become more diverse in terms of the national, racial, cultural, and linguistic characteristics of its members.*¹²

Our review has highlighted that a university education falls short when it fails to adequately prepare students to navigate such cultural and racial complexities. Similarly, our BYU community falls short when BIPOC students feel isolated and unwelcome.

According to the Aims of a BYU Education, the university “seeks to develop students of faith, intellect, and character who have the skills and the desire to continue learning and to serve others throughout their lives.”¹³ Consistent with these aims, BYU can do better to nurture BIPOC students and to prepare all students to go forth as servants and leaders navigating a complex world and contributing to a more just, equitable world for all of our heavenly parents’ children.

As first steps, we have developed the following recommendations, organized into three broad categories: 1) institutional and organizational reforms; 2) student belonging and equity reforms; and 3) faculty and staff reforms.

Institutional and Organizational Reforms

Fostering racial understanding, equity, and belonging at BYU.

Through our work as a committee, we have observed notable efforts to increase equity and belonging for BYU’s BIPOC community. For instance, the BYU David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies has hosted numerous events and lectures focused on race and ethnicity that have provided well-structured opportunities for learning and dialogue. Additionally, the Kennedy Center has organized its lecture series in winter semester 2021 around the theme “Race: Myths and Realities.” In another example, the Faculty Center has taken proactive steps to understand the challenges that faculty of color encounter at BYU; the center has also helped to foster community among faculty of color by hosting informal meetings for BIPOC faculty across campus. Other positive actions include the efforts of various colleges across the university to establish diversity and inclusion committees that have had success in creating mechanisms to improve the experiences of students and faculty of color.

12. Alexander B. Morrison, “No More Strangers,” *Ensign*, September 2000.

13. BYU, Aims.

We view the collection of these and other actions as a positive reflection of BYU's sincere efforts to improve the campus climate for BIPOC individuals. However, what has become clear in witnessing these disparate efforts is a lack of coordination, support, and training at the university level that would magnify such initiatives while also creating new opportunities for building racial and ethnic equity and belonging. This set of recommendations regarding institutional and organizational reforms is intended to coordinate and leverage campus efforts for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION 1. Create a central Office of Diversity and Belonging at the university charged with strategic planning and implementation of initiatives to assist students and employees with issues related to race, equity, and belonging.

Many universities around the country manage the coordination, support, and training of equity and belonging issues through a central office of diversity and inclusion.¹⁴ We strongly believe that BYU should do the same. The scope of responsibilities assigned to these offices varies across universities, and BYU would surely benefit by developing its own model in accordance with BYU's priorities and needs. Notably, many of the recommendations outlined in this report would be most effectively managed by such a central office. In our discussion below, we explore various responsibilities this office might fulfill across campus and the key appointments that may be necessary for the office to function, including a new vice president for diversity and belonging (see Recommendation 2, p. 20).

Such an office may also require the appointment of a diversity and inclusion training officer. This position would lead diversity and inclusion education efforts across campus through the creation of curricula and strategies to build awareness and capabilities among all students, faculty, administration, and staff members to successfully engage with diversity. We would also suggest providing the office with a communications officer responsible for marketing, social media, storytelling, and general news and updates, along with coordinating communication and marketing efforts for diversity and belonging initiatives across campus.

Our discussion uses a placeholder name for this central office, the Office of Diversity and Belonging. If the recommendation is adopted, naming the office would be an important point of discussion.

POTENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND BELONGING

University and Unit-Specific Plans. Universities with a central office for diversity and inclusion typically have diversity and inclusion strategic plans at the university level.¹⁵ We see the development and implementation of a campus-wide plan as highly beneficial to BYU. An overarching, campus-wide plan will guide the broad strategic vision for developing and implementing initiatives that are most effective when centrally located, including the cultivation of an equitable campus climate as well as training on diversity and inclusion. The development of a campus-wide plan would be a collaborative endeavor led by the Office of Diversity and Belonging; the Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging; and the President's Council.

14. Although this list is not exhaustive, here are several universities that have these offices: Auburn University, Boston University, Cornell University, Duke University, Johns Hopkins University, Northwestern University, Pennsylvania State University, Texas A&M University, University of Alabama, University of Maryland, University of Minnesota, University of Texas at Austin, University of Vermont, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Virginia Tech University, and Yale University.

15. See these examples of university diversity and inclusion strategic plans:

- Pennsylvania State University: <https://psu.app.box.com/s/ty8kve52efkapz2leo4u9xxq7gfn7k5q>
- University of Michigan: <https://diversity.umich.edu/strategic-plan/progress-report/>
- University of Washington: https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/48/2018/07/24025214/17_DiversityBlueprint-010917.pdf
- University of Wyoming: http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/_files/odei-strategicplan2018-r5.pdf
- Utah Valley University: https://www.uvu.edu/inclusion/docs/inclusion_plan.pdf

Further support could be provided from experts across the university, along with input solicited from students, faculty, and staff.

Along with the development of the university strategic plan, all units across campus would receive support from the Office of Diversity and Belonging to create their own diversity and inclusion plans (see Recommendation 7, p. 23). Although there are likely to be universal themes across units, there will also be unit-specific actions and goals to address the challenges inherent in cultivating diversity within the respective fields. It may also be helpful to create a set of training materials, frameworks, and general resources that allow campus units to create effective strategic plans.¹⁶

In our view, accountability and transparency from a coordinating Office of Diversity and Belonging would aid in the success of both the university plan and unit-specific plans. Therefore, the university and unit plans should be published. Each year, the Office of Diversity and Belonging should review progress related to plans, strategic objectives, and action items within those objectives and publish that information to the university community. A parallel process should occur for each unit. This collective information can be published on a website managed by the Office of Diversity and Belonging.

Training. We found that a number of BYU colleges have diversity and inclusion committees. This is laudable. Many of these committees were created through grassroots efforts of deans, associate deans, and faculty who recognized a need and worked to meet it. Some of these committees are excelling, in particular the Committee for Diversity, Collaboration, and Inclusion in the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences.¹⁷ A key to this college's success is that a meaningful share of faculty possess expertise on race and ethnicity. This has allowed the college to understand the unique challenges that students and faculty of color encounter in academia broadly and at predominantly White universities in particular. By contrast, there are multiple colleges where the faculty are not experts on race and diversity. We commend those colleges for taking active steps to improve racial equity and belonging, but they would benefit from the expertise on race and inclusion that would be provided by an Office of Diversity and Belonging.

The Office of Diversity and Belonging will provide beneficial resources and expertise to the campus community, especially to those units that lack race and inclusion experts. For example, the office would provide support in faculty recruitment and retention and would offer uniform diversity training and dedicated support. Moreover, it would make sense to coordinate other programs that we have suggested through this office, including the search advocate program, a BIPOC student pre-PhD development program, and an annual meeting of emerging scholars.

Student Grievances. At present, there is no apparent process for students to report grievances or resolve interpersonal disputes related to racial harassment (see Recommendation 18, p. 38). The Office of Diversity and Belonging would fill this role and work to help students resolve the issues, coordinating as needed with the Honor Code, Title IX, or Equal Opportunity Offices or with the Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution.

Compliance Offices. An additional consideration is that some universities place their compliance offices under the auspices of a central office for diversity and inclusion. At BYU these offices would include the Equal Opportunity Office, the Title IX Office, and the University Accessibility Center. The housing of these compliance offices under a central office for diversity and inclusion may result from their obligations

16. The University of Chicago has created a toolkit to assist units in creating diversity and inclusion plans: https://d3qioqp5mx5f5.cloudfront.net/diversityandinclusion/docs/UCHI-DI-PlanningToolkit_2019-Concepting-Full-Final-Links.pdf?mtime=1595453666.

17. The Committee for Diversity, Collaboration, and Inclusion in the BYU College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences provides information about its programs at <https://fhss.byu.edu/committee-for-diversity-collaboration-and-inclusion-main>.

under federal civil rights laws. There are advantages and disadvantages to moving these compliance offices under the Office of Diversity and Belonging. Some advantages include consistent messaging, uniform training, and appropriate coordination of approaches. A potential disadvantage would be that the mission of the Office of Diversity and Belonging could be overshadowed by the obligations of compliance and the office could lose focus on other elements that are important for cultivating equity and belonging for BIPOC groups.

If our recommendation to create the Office of Diversity and Belonging is accepted, the next steps should include discussions about how to situate compliance offices in relation to the Office of Diversity and Belonging. We would be pleased to be part of that effort to explore compliance models at other universities and to consider the advantages and disadvantages of various structures.

Organization. Lastly, there are multiple models for how diversity and inclusion offices are organized. If the president and/or President's Council would like us to provide more information on alternate models, we stand ready to do so.

RECOMMENDATION 2. Create a new position of vice president for diversity and belonging who reports directly to the president, is a member of the President's Council, and who oversees the Office of Diversity and Belonging.

A new vice president of diversity and belonging would provide senior leadership for all university-level administrative processes related to diversity and inclusion. This position would oversee all functions of the Office of Diversity and Belonging, including diversity training and grievance management.

RECOMMENDATION 3. Implement clear lines of accountability to empower the Office of Diversity and Belonging to coordinate, focus, and leverage the efforts of Multicultural Student Services, International Student and Scholar Services, and the Office of Student Success and Inclusion. These offices might efficiently report to the Office of Diversity and Belonging which will allow for focused efforts to serve BIPOC students academically and to enhance their sense of well-being and belonging.

BYU has a number of offices that either directly or tangentially support BIPOC students, including Multicultural Student Services, International Student and Scholar Services, and the Office of Student Success and Inclusion. There appears to be a lack of coordination between these related services. Many institutions with similar offices house them within an office similar to the proposed Office of Diversity and Belonging (see Recommendation 1, p. 18). Such consolidation would allow for a more coordinated strategy to addressing the needs of BIPOC students who might use all three offices. This would reduce duplication in services offered and would leverage existing resources to help the offices function more efficiently and reach a broader set of students. Centralizing these offices would also facilitate communications about the availability of services and provide students ease of access to additional services; additionally, it would foster opportunities for collaboration that could lead to constructive insights to the challenges that BIPOC students encounter.

RECOMMENDATION 4. Develop and implement extensive diversity and inclusion training programs and resources for faculty, staff, and administrators. This training would be facilitated by the Office of Diversity and Belonging.

A theme that emerged from the significant input we received through race.byu.edu is that many faculty across the university are highly motivated to help improve equity and belonging for BIPOC individuals at BYU. They are eager to be part of solutions and to bring to bear their considerable energies and expertise to help foster

a more inclusive and diverse BYU. Coupled with this enthusiasm was an overarching sense of humility from many of these faculty members who stated that they did not know how to help but were ready to contribute to the effort.

We are encouraged by the strong support from these individuals, but we also recognize that institutional resources are needed to provide training on diversity and inclusion. Currently, there are no formal training mechanisms on race, racism, diversity, and inclusion at the university. Although there have been ad hoc training sessions on these topics, they have been relatively few. For instance, the Center for Teaching and Learning has scant information and no formal training on how to effectively teach racially and ethnically diverse populations. We view this as a serious shortcoming. While this expertise certainly exists at the university, and is readily available through outside experts as well, we see a need for training on inclusive pedagogy for faculty and for training on diversity and inclusion for staff and administrative employees as well.

In the discussion below, we suggest a number of possible programs to help enhance learning opportunities around diversity and inclusion at BYU. These programs have the potential to facilitate positive growth for faculty, staff, and administrators and to build a more inclusive environment.

FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING

Certificate Program for Diversity and Inclusion. One of the more extensive training models on diversity and inclusion is provided by the University of Pittsburgh,¹⁸ which offers a certificate program for diversity and inclusion consisting of six courses. BYU should invest in a similar program to provide training for faculty, staff, and administrators on various topics related to diversity and inclusion.

On-Demand Training. BYU might also facilitate on-demand training related to diversity and inclusion. Duke University has such a program that provides workshops on a variety of topics related to diversity and inclusion.¹⁹ On-demand training would provide a convenient and valuable resource for campus units to set and further goals related to racial equity and belonging.

Upper-Administrative Training. We recommend considering a focused training program for university administrators, given that their leadership has a significant impact on the direction of the university. An illustrative example is the training offered by the USC Race and Equity Center:²⁰ The USC Equity Institute provides an eight-week learning series for 20 university leaders. Participants are placed in four teams that design projects related to race and inclusion. They also engage with a USC Equity Institute instructor each week over a virtual learning platform for two hours on topics such as “Foundations of Racial Equity in Higher Education” and “Advancing Racial Equity in Mostly White Contexts.”

Having university leadership commit to such a model would send a clear signal of engagement and support to the broader BYU community about the university’s commitment to creating equity and belonging for BIPOC people. Moreover, the opportunity to collaborate as university leadership around this topic will likely spark beneficial insights and facilitate creative innovations related to BIPOC inclusion.

Pedagogical Training. Pedagogical training focused on diversity and inclusion appears to be strongly needed at the university. Many faculty have noted their desire to develop skills and fluency in managing classroom discussions and empowering diverse voices. To address this need, BYU might turn to a model developed by the University of Chicago, which includes a large suite of resources such as videos on topics ranging

18. See <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/education/diversity-and-inclusion-certificate-program>.

19. See <https://oie.duke.edu/we-can-help/training-workshops-and-educational-sessions>.

20. See <https://race.usc.edu/colleges/>.

from “Facilitating Inclusive Discussions” to “Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment”; worksheets on subjects like “Managing Difficult Conversations” and “Assessing Inclusivity”; and an “Inclusive Pedagogy Reading Group” that meets each quarter to discuss texts that focus on inclusion, teaching, and learning.²¹ As a committee, we recommend that similar resources be provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning in collaboration with the Office of Diversity and Belonging.

RECOMMENDATION 5. Commit to changes to general education, religion, and elective courses that educate students on race, unity, and diversity.

A common theme emerging from our listening forums was the harm to BIPOC students in some general education and religion classes. In these settings students expressed feeling unsafe because of racially insensitive statements, prejudicial attitudes, and discriminatory behaviors. Nevertheless, a number of units on campus recognize the need to promote racial understanding and to foster belonging at BYU. For instance, BYU Undergraduate Education issued a “Statement on Inclusion and Diversity”:

In the wake of the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others, and in light of the ensuing civil unrest, the Office of Undergraduate Education at Brigham Young University is determined to help fulfill the charge issued by BYU President Kevin J Worthen “to address injustice and to truly love one another.”

We are committed to providing our students with a general education that trains students to recognize their own prejudices, develop empathy, serve in their communities, and give voice to those who are treated unjustly. We recognize that we have an opportunity and obligation to do more to prepare our students to meet these challenges and to be forces for good in the world.

To accomplish these goals, we are firmly committed to building on and expanding our diversity requirement in our General Education program. We are developing plans to better prepare our students to understand systemic racism, confront their own biases, and work toward racial equity at the university. Our efforts are dedicated to helping all students succeed, and to prepare them to lead their communities to find solutions that will help us all unite for peace and justice.²²

As a committee, we met with the Curricular Reform Committee charged with developing proposals to reform university general education requirements. We were very encouraged by the thoughtful approach that the Curricular Reform Committee is taking to incorporate cross-cultural competency education as part of the university’s core requirements. We support changes to the general education requirements that promote opportunities to examine systemic racial and ethnic inequities in the United States.

We also met with the dean of Religious Education to raise the concerns of students and alumni who had reported particular difficulty in religion classes. The Division of Religious Education is eager to be responsive to these concerns and has implemented regular training programs to assist religious educators in navigating sensitive issues of diversity, with regard to race and ethnicity as well as with regard to students from diverse faith backgrounds. BIPOC students who met with us also requested the development of classes that would specifically address issues of race in the Church. We understand that such classes have been offered in the past with great success and have provided meaningful experiences for BIPOC students in building their faith

21. See <https://inclusivepedagogy.uchicago.edu>.

22. Brigham Young University, Undergraduate Education’s Statement on Inclusion and Diversity, accessed January 30, 2021, <https://ugrad.byu.edu/undergraduate-educations-statement-on-inclusion-and-diversity>.

and preparing them to confront difficult issues. We recommend that such efforts continue and be expanded to reach a broader audience.

RECOMMENDATION 6. Consider additions to the Aims of a BYU Education that reflect current statements from prophets and apostles about the need to demonstrate civility, racial and ethnic harmony, and mutual respect. Promote current language in BYU’s mission statement that calls for “loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor” and for a broad education that helps students “understand important ideas in their own cultural tradition as well as that of others.”

BYU’s mission statement states that “all relationships within the BYU community should reflect devout love of God and a loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor.” It also describes a broad education in which students learn to “understand important ideas in their own cultural tradition as well as that of others.”²³ President Russell M. Nelson affirmed these ideas in a 2020 general conference address and further invited members of the Church everywhere to “lead out in abandoning attitudes and actions of prejudice.”²⁴ Furthermore, the First Presidency of the Church recently made the following statement in support of promoting understanding and harmony:

Today, in unity with such capable and impressive leaders as the national officials of the NAACP, we are impressed to call on people of this nation and, indeed, the entire world to demonstrate greater civility, racial and ethnic harmony, and mutual respect. In meetings this morning, we have begun to explore ways—such as education and humanitarian service—in which our respective members and others can serve and move forward together, lifting our brothers and sisters who need our help, just as the Savior, Jesus Christ, would do. These are His words: “I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (Doctrine and Covenants 38:27).

*Together we invite all people, organizations, and governmental units to work with greater civility, eliminating prejudice of all kinds and focusing more on the many areas and interests that we all have in common. As we lead our people to work cooperatively, we will all achieve the respect, regard and blessings that God seeks for all of His children.*²⁵

We believe that emphasizing these statements and allowing them to permeate the work we do at BYU will do much to improve racial understanding, unity, and love for all members of the BYU community. We also believe that it may be beneficial to explore incorporating the principles represented in these statements into the Aims of a BYU Education.

RECOMMENDATION 7. Promote and implement the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy throughout the university.

In 2012 the university adopted the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy (see Appendix C, p. 60), which reads:

“The mission of Brigham Young University—founded, supported, and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life. That assistance should

23. BYU, Mission Statement.

24. Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” *Ensign*, November 2020.

25. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, “First Presidency and NAACP Leaders Call for Greater Civility, Racial Harmony,” *Newsroom*, May 17, 2018, <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/joint-statement-first-presidency-naacp-national-leadership>.

provide a period of intensive learning in a stimulating setting where a commitment to excellence is expected and the full realization of human potential is pursued.”

To this end, the university seeks qualified students of various talents and backgrounds, including geographic, educational, cultural, ethnic, and racial, who relate together in such a manner that they are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). It is the university’s judgment that providing educational opportunities for a mix of students who share values based on the gospel of Jesus Christ and who come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences is an important educational asset to BYU.²⁶

Based on our review of this policy’s use across campus, it appears that the policy’s purpose has been diluted and its principles underapplied. We recommend broadening and reinvigorating the reach of the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy to more fully inform the purposes and principles of university life.

The University Policies website states that the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy “applies to the university admissions process,” is owned by the student life vice president, and is implemented by the University Admissions Office.²⁷

It appears that the most prominent use of the policy by any university unit is in Multicultural Student Services,²⁸ but that otherwise the statement has fallen into some disuse. In BYU’s 2020–21 undergraduate catalog, the section titled “A Unique Environment” makes no reference to the statement.²⁹ The admissions page titled “What We Look For”³⁰ has no reference to the statement or its principles, nor does the 2021 “We Are BYU” admission guide.³¹ The absence of this statement in such publications, though no doubt unintentional, leaves the impression that a culturally diverse applicant and admitted-student pool is not a primary or important value at BYU.

If we are to achieve transformative change at BYU and reach the lofty aspirations of the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy, it should have a more prominent presence and not be limited to the admissions process. Therefore, we recommend that the university take appropriate steps to

- ◆ ensure that the policy has university-wide application;
- ◆ elevate the presence of the policy to the Mission and Aims page of the BYU website;
- ◆ encourage departments on campus to identify and use the statement on their webpages;
- ◆ require the prominent use of the statement in all recruitment and admissions webpages and literature; and
- ◆ bring the statement to the forefront of university policies and seek to apply it across all university operations that it may lead to a truly enriched environment.

Finally, another area of improvement must be a conscious consideration of the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy in creating and promoting opportunities for BIPOC faculty, administrators, and staff to participate in, and add value to, the university’s leadership. We are aware of only one BIPOC administrator among the university’s various vice presidents and directors (see Recommendation 26, p. 48). BYU can and must do better.

26. Brigham Young University, Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy, January 23, 2012, <http://policy.byu.edu/view/index.php?p=206>.

27. BYU, Fostering an Enriched Environment.

28. See <https://multicultural.byu.edu/what-we-do>.

29. See <https://catalog.byu.edu/about-byu/unique-environment>.

30. See <https://enrollment.byu.edu/admissions/what-we-look-for>.

31. See https://enrollment.byu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Admissions-Guide-2021_optimized-for-email.pdf.

RECOMMENDATION 8. Encourage colleges and departments to adopt statements on race, equity, and belonging that can be used in college and department operations and communications.

As discussed above, BIPOC students who reached out to our committee reported the negative experiences they have encountered with racist language and conduct on campus and in the classroom. Many students reported that some of the most hurtful experiences they have had occurred in religion courses, where sensitive gospel topics such as the priesthood and temple ban and skin color in the Book of Mormon can be misunderstood or insensitively presented. In classes across campus, students have felt they cannot always count on their instructors to effectively navigate these difficult issues in the classroom, and they have noted that some White students feel emboldened to make hurtful remarks on the issue of race. One student asked, “How can you help us [Black people]? With training for the professors.” Another said, “There needs to be a list of rules [and] conduct and a way to hold professors accountable for behavior.” To assist in the efforts to root out racist language and behaviors, we recommend the following.

The university should incentivize and encourage colleges and departments to adopt statements on diversity that could be used in operations and communications, including in course syllabi. The Office of Diversity and Belonging would support these efforts and share universal themes that can be included in such statements, while also enabling units to address challenges inherent to particular fields of study. We are encouraged that many colleges and departments have already taken such steps and have been innovative and proactive in response to President Nelson’s call to root out racism.³² One excellent example is the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences, which has provided a statement on diversity and inclusion that faculty have included in course syllabi. Another excellent example is the College of Fine Arts and Communications, which has created a “Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Statement,” has ongoing initiatives on diversity, has established a committee to address its work on diversity issues, and has invited others to join in its efforts.³³

We recommend that a repository of these and other statements be organized and promoted, and that the positive efforts of these campus units be recognized. We also recommend that continued discussion and collaboration across campus be promoted through the academic vice president’s office, the Office of Student Success and Inclusion, and the proposed Office of Diversity and Belonging.

RECOMMENDATION 9. Establish a standing university committee dedicated to advancing racial understanding, enhancing equity, and promoting belonging for BIPOC communities at BYU. In order to more expeditiously accomplish this recommendation, a proposed charter is included in Appendix B (see p. 57).

Our committee’s mission statement recognizes President Worthen’s charge to seek historic, transformative change at BYU. Such change cannot be accomplished in the few months since the committee’s formation and will require an enduring commitment from a broad array of stakeholders across the university. To ensure a continuity of institutional commitment to the issues of diversity and belonging, we have proposed a charter

32. See these examples of statements adopted by BYU organizations:

- Psychology Department: <https://psychology.byu.edu/diversity-statement> and <https://psychology.byu.edu/action-statement-on-racism-and-diversity>
- Undergraduate Education: <https://ugrad.byu.edu/undergraduate-educations-statement-on-inclusion-and-diversity>
- College of Life Sciences, Public Health Department: <https://ph.byu.edu/diversity-and-inclusion>
- College of Humanities: https://humanities.byu.edu/wp-content/uploads/DEI_College_Statement-2020-07-31.pdf

33. See

- <https://cfac.byu.edu/diversity-inclusion-and-accessibility-statement/>
- <https://cfac.byu.edu/diversity-inclusion-and-accessibility-ongoing-initiatives/>
- <https://cfac.byu.edu/diversity-inclusion-and-accessibility-committee/>

to the President’s Council with the recommendation that the Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging be established as a standing committee of the university (see Appendix B, p. 57). We urge the President’s Council to move forward expeditiously to implement this recommendation. We note that the work of enhancing diversity and belonging at the university is the work of every member of the university community and that while these efforts should certainly center on the voices and experiences of BIPOC people, the committee should be composed of a variety of individuals committed to improving life for underrepresented individuals at BYU, thereby improving a sense of belonging for all.

Student Belonging and Equity Reforms

Building a student-centric university where each individual belongs and is a valued member of the whole.

As a committee, we are deeply concerned about the obstacles hindering the thriving and belonging of BIPOC students at BYU, as well as the lack of adequate systems at the university to foster a diverse environment and to support the well-being of BIPOC students (see Findings 1–5, pp. 12–14). While there are many on campus who are fully committed to building a welcoming environment and who approach these issues with sensitivity and humility, a lack of cross-cultural competency among the student body and faculty has contributed to the alienation and isolation of many BIPOC students. We believe this lack of competency and compassion ought not to be at BYU. We also believe that it can be corrected as faculty embrace and students are taught correct principles.

In his April 21, 2017, BYU leadership conference address, President Dallin H. Oaks quoted—“with complete approval of his emphasis”³⁴—from President Kevin J. Worthen’s first University Conference address as president, in August 2014, when President Worthen said:

This morning I would like to review with you some of the key principles in our mission statement with the ultimate aim of helping us better understand the great cause in which we are engaged and the ways in which each of us can better carry out our roles in this cause. . . .

At the end of the day, students are the product we produce, to put it in business terms. How they turn out—what they do and, more important, who they are—is the ultimate metric by which our work will be measured. . . .

In short, we are and will remain a student-centric university, one that focuses on the development of our students above all else. With every major decision we make, we need to ask ourselves how this endeavor can enhance the educational experience of our students. . . .

. . . So it is important for us to understand what our role is in the quest for perfection and eternal life in the lives of these students.³⁵

Two important perspectives can be gleaned from President Worthen’s statement:

1. The ultimate metric by which we measure our work is what our students are becoming.
2. Every major decision we make should enhance the educational experience of our students.

To President Worthen’s first point, we hope that our students become leaders prepared to serve their families, their congregations, their communities, and their nations, and we hope the education we offer

34. Dallin H. Oaks, “Challenges to the Mission of Brigham Young University,” BYU Leadership Conference, April 21, 2017, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/dallin-h-oaks/challenges-mission-brigham-young-university/>.

35. Kevin J. Worthen, “The Why of the Y,” BYU University Conference, August 26, 2014, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kevin-j-worthen/y-2/>.

assists them “in their quest for perfection and eternal life.”³⁶ To his second point, the students we admit and the employees we hire are among the most consequential decisions of the university. In our view as a committee, the goal to foster an enriched and racially diverse environment has not received adequate emphasis in these admissions and hiring decisions to date. Without such an emphasis, we as a university are not adequately serving our racially and culturally diverse Church population, and many prospective students of color are not receiving (and contributing to) a BYU educational experience. And the few BIPOC students who do come to BYU often feel isolated or unwelcome because there are so few of them. In addition, too many BYU students have lacked exposure to diversity and have then failed to develop the cross-cultural sensitivities and competencies that are essential to being effective leaders in the families, congregations, and communities of the world.

The literature demonstrates that educational institutions accrue substantial benefits for the student learning experience and expected societal outcomes by selecting and retaining a diverse student body. The data show that such benefits obtain not only for BIPOC students, but also for the student body as a whole. Research suggests that student population diversity

- ◆ enhances cross-racial understanding;³⁷
- ◆ decreases racial stereotypes;³⁸
- ◆ promotes student learning outcomes;³⁹
- ◆ prepares students to better interact with others in the workforce and society;⁴⁰
- ◆ prepares future leaders for society;⁴¹
- ◆ promotes the robust exchange of ideas;⁴²
- ◆ sustains a country’s political and cultural heritage;⁴³
- ◆ promotes access to educational opportunities for all racial and ethnic groups in society;⁴⁴
- ◆ advances the effective participation of all racial and ethnic groups in society;⁴⁵ and
- ◆ fosters unity.⁴⁶

We heard from students who are leaders and members of the Black Student Union, the Tribe of Many Feathers, and Hispanos Unidos who report profoundly painful experiences rooted in racially prejudicial (or ignorant) attitudes among community members at BYU. BIPOC students have identified the lack of diversity in the BYU student body, and the resulting lack of sensitivity and skill of too many students, as being a primary cause of their challenges and isolation.⁴⁷

36. BYU, Mission Statement.

37. *Fisher v. University of Texas (Fisher I)*, 133 S. Ct. 2411, 2419 (2013).

38. *Fisher*, 133 S. Ct. at 2325.

39. *Fisher*, 133 S. Ct. at 2325.

40. *Fisher*, 133 S. Ct. at 2325.

41. *Fisher v. University of Texas (Fisher II)*, 136 S. Ct. 2198, 2211 (2016).

42. *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306, 329 (2003), quoting *Regents of Univ. of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265, 313 (1978).

43. *Grutter*, 539 U.S. quoting *Plyer v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202, 221 (1982).

44. *Grutter*, 539 U.S. at 332.

45. *Grutter*, 539 U.S. at 332.

46. *Grutter*, 539 U.S. at 332.

47. As a committee, we learned that there is a wide discrepancy of views at BYU about the merit or role of such programs as SOAR in the recruitment and admissions process for BIPOC students. While many BIPOC students report positive experiences with SOAR, introducing students from underserved communities to the possibility of BYU, some currently argue that SOAR is a “back door” to admissions to the university, putting multicultural students at an unfair (and potentially illegal) advantage under current policies. Others argue that the SOAR program and similar programs ought to be expanded in their reach to prepare students of diverse backgrounds for successful application to BYU.

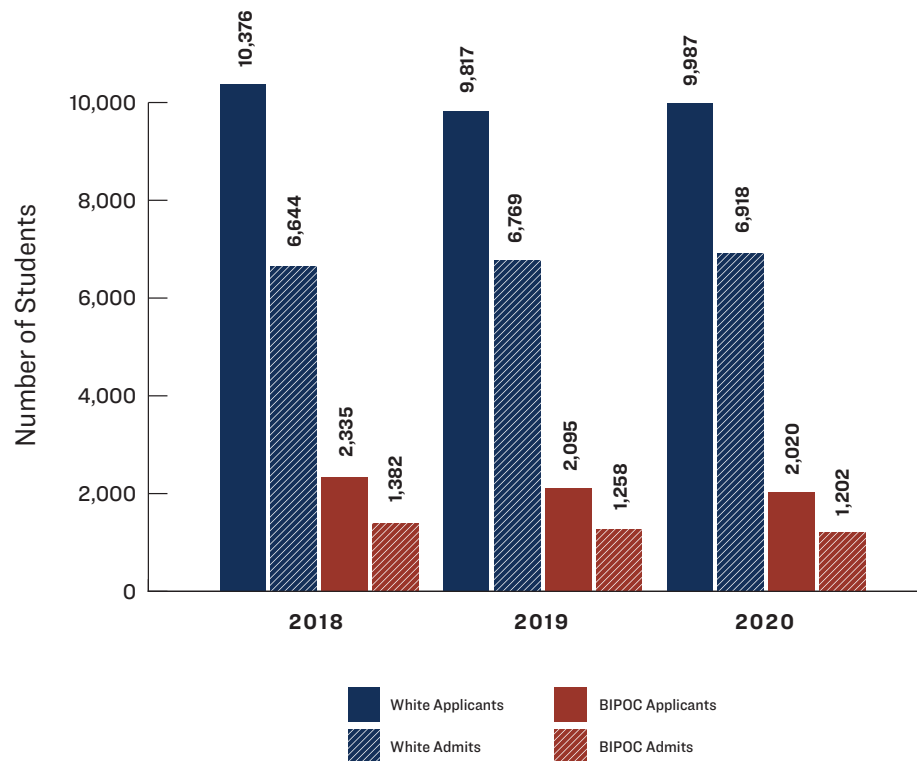
We believe that many of these concerns can be ameliorated by the recruitment, admission, and retention of a more diverse student body. In *Grutter*, the U.S. Supreme Court noted the value of having a “critical mass” of underrepresented minority students to allow them “to participate in the classroom and not feel isolated;” in such situations, the court observed, “racial stereotypes lose their force because nonminority students learn there is no ‘minority viewpoint’ but rather a variety of viewpoints among minority students.”⁴⁸

A more diverse student body and the resulting enriched environment would benefit all BYU students. Current race-neutral policies and strategies in recruitment are not realizing adequate diversity and have contributed to a lack of belonging for BIPOC students at BYU and a limitation of the reach of the blessings of a BYU education for racial minorities. At a minimum, it is our strongly held view that race-conscious recruitment strategies, using readily available data on high school seniors, would help to develop a more appropriately diverse pool of applicants.

A review of BIPOC freshman admissions to BYU illustrates the problem. Figures 1 and 2 highlight the racial disparities in new freshman applications and admissions to BYU from 2018 to 2020.

Figure 1 displays the number of White applicants and admits compared to all BIPOC applicants and admits. We are particularly concerned that that the gap between White and BIPOC admits has grown in recent years. For instance, the number of White admits in 2018 was 6,644, growing to 6,918 in 2020—an increase of 274 students. By comparison, BIPOC admits totaled 1,382 in 2018 but decreased to 1,202 in 2020—a decline of 180 students.

Figure 1. BYU Applicants and Admits by Race, 2018–20



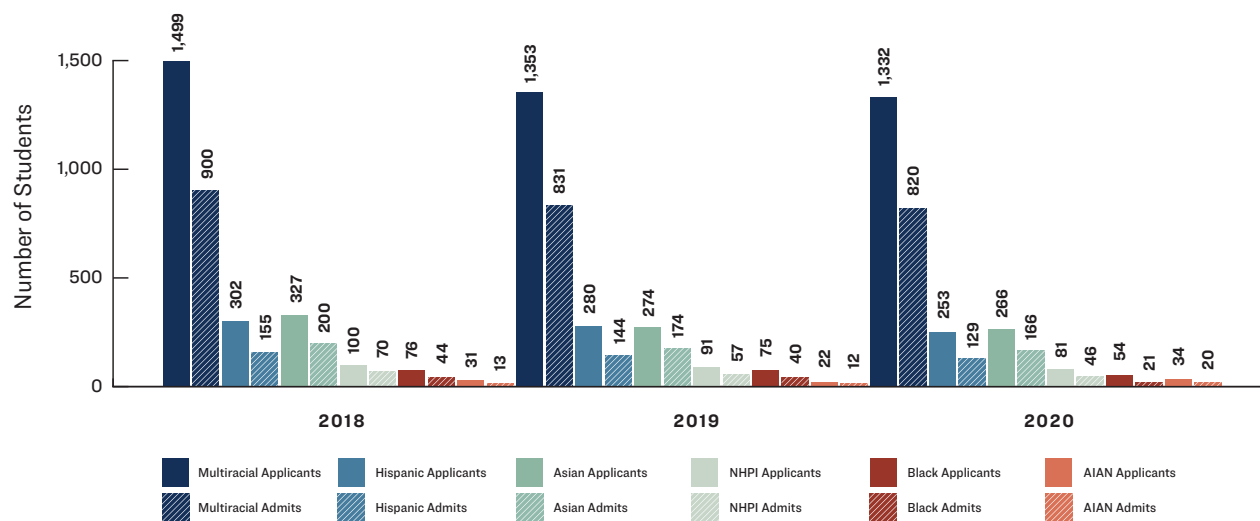
Source: BYU Enrollment Services.

48. *Grutter*, 539 U.S. at 18, 319–20.

Figure 2 illustrates the number of BIPOC applicants and admits disaggregated by racial and ethnic group and year. This figure shows that multiracial individuals account for the largest share of BIPOC applicants and admits. BYU will likely continue to witness growth in the number of multiracial applicants and admits because the number of multiracial children is on the rise. In 1980, 5 percent of all children younger than one were multiracial; by 2015, that share had grown to 14 percent.⁴⁹ This demographic pattern of growth of the multiracial population suggests a need for BYU to develop robust support systems to ensure this cross-section of the BIPOC community will be served now and in the future.

Although the total number of single race-identified BIPOC applicants and admits are small across each year, several BIPOC groups are profoundly underrepresented. In particular, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, Black, and American Indian and Alaska Native applicants and admits are in the double digits, some in the low double digits. This finding adds context and data for the general sense of racial isolation that some BIPOC students have voiced. With an incoming BIPOC population this small, it is not surprising that these populations feel isolated. Without purposeful and strong efforts to mitigate that sense of isolation, our concern is that such isolation will continue.

Figure 2. BYU BIPOC Applicants and Admits, 2018–20



Source: BYU Enrollment Services.

The data demonstrate that racial minorities are highly underrepresented in our student body and that the trend is worsening rather than improving. If we seek to promote the belonging and healing of BIPOC students at BYU, and if we seek the benefits flowing to all BYU students from a more diverse student body, BYU can and must do better to build a more diverse student body. Current policies, procedures, and institutional attitudes have not yielded optimum or even advisable results for building that diversity.

Consequently, the university must allocate adequate resources to achieve an enriched environment benefitting all students. As an initial matter, we recommend the university clearly identify what resources are now allocated to the recruitment, admission, retention, and success of BIPOC students. Where deficient, the university should commit to the allocation or reallocation of sufficient resources to assist in the recruitment, admission, retention, and success of a stronger BIPOC student presence on campus. Additionally,

49. See <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/06/the-rise-of-multiracial-and-multiethnic-babies-in-the-u-s/>.

the recruitment, hiring, and retention of BIPOC faculty will also contribute to this enriched environment and will assist the university to more effectively educate all students in cross-cultural competency (see Recommendations 22–26, pp. 43–49).

In this section, we discuss more fully 12 recommendations designed to enhance the recruitment, admission, retention, and thriving of BIPOC students; this, in turn, will build a more representative, diverse student body and will promote cross-cultural competency among BYU students.

RECOMMENDATION 10. Establish a new position of vice president or associate vice president of enrollment management and student success that is empowered to create strategic initiatives for recruitment, admission, scholarship, financial aid, retention, and student success for all students and that is particularly charged with leading initiatives associated with attracting, admitting, retaining, and supporting the academic success of BIPOC students.

The critical importance of purposeful recruitment, admission, and student success strategies should be reflected in an independent voice at the highest councils of the university. Recognizing the importance of recruiting, admitting, and retaining a diverse applicant pool and enrolled student body, many institutions have a senior management appointment (at the equivalent of BYU’s vice president or associate vice president level) charged with leading these efforts.⁵⁰ This appointment most commonly reports to the equivalent of BYU’s academic vice president,⁵¹ though at some universities this position reports directly to the president of the university.⁵² We recognize that the prospective student applicant pools at many national universities with enrollment comparable to BYU are much larger than BYU’s pool; however, this should not prevent the university from bold restructuring in ways that advance the recruitment, admission, retention, and student success of *all* students. We recommend that BYU create a high-level position for enrollment management and student success. Such a position could be considered an academic appointment from existing Continuing Faculty Status (CFS) faculty, or it could be an administrative position.

We are also recommending a data-driven, independent evaluation of the impact of BYU’s holistic admissions standards to determine the potential effects of the process on BIPOC applications (see Recommendation 14, p. 34). Whatever the results of that study, we believe that the current administrative structure for admissions at BYU may be having a negative impact on BIPOC student enrollment; therefore, we recommend that the university take steps to restructure reporting lines, staffing, and admissions processes to enhance its efforts to recruit, admit, and retain BIPOC students.

50. See these examples of universities with senior enrollment management officers:

- University of Texas at Austin: <https://provost.utexas.edu/the-office/enrollment-management-student-success/>
- University of Southern California: <https://www.provost.usc.edu/announcing-new-vice-president-for-enrollment-management/>
- University of Iowa: <https://www.provost.uiowa.edu/search-associate-vice-president-enrollment-management>
- Washington State University: <https://provost.wsu.edu/vpem/>
- University of Mississippi: <https://chancellor.olemiss.edu/vice-chancellor-for-enrollment-management/>
- George Washington University: <https://gwtoday.gwu.edu/new-vice-provost-enrollment-and-student-success-announced>

51. See these examples of senior enrollment management officers who report to the equivalent of an academic vice president:

- University of Iowa: https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/sites/opsmanual.uiowa.edu/files/wysiwyg_uploads/ao2prov.pdf
- University of Louisville: <https://louisville.edu/about/doc/orgchart>
- Northwestern University: <https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/about/orgchart-10-20.pdf>
- Mississippi State University: <https://www.hrm.msstate.edu/orgchart/University%20Org%20Chart.pdf>
- University of Utah: <https://admin.utah.edu/svpaa-org/>

52. See these examples of senior enrollment management officers who report to the institution president:

- Auburn University: <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/orgchart.pdf>
- Rice University: <https://theorg.com/org/rice-university/org-chart>
- Santa Clara University: <https://www.scu.edu/aboutscu/leadership/>
- Whitman College: <https://www.whitman.edu/documents/Offices/President/President1/Organizational%20Charts/Org%20Chart%20Administration%20Nov%202019%280%29.pdf>

Enrollment services currently has two reporting lines: one to the academic vice president and another to student life vice president. The dual reporting lines suggest that there is a division of stewardship and responsibilities that may impact how BIPOC students are recruited, admitted, and retained; at the least, these dual reporting lines may cause confusion about who is responsible for ensuring that BIPOC student needs are considered in these processes. For example, decisions on recruitment, admissions, financial aid, student success, registration, and multicultural and international student affairs are divided between these two vice presidents. It is unclear to us how these duties are divided. We are concerned that the resulting ambiguities or overlaps may in fact mean that some critical functions for BIPOC recruitment, admission, and retention are not receiving proper attention. We recommend that these functions be assigned through a clear reporting line and consolidated under a single official.

RECOMMENDATION 11. Form a Recruitment, Admissions, and Student Success Committee with a charge to assist the vice president or associate vice president of enrollment management and student success to optimize attracting, admitting, retaining, and supporting the academic success of BIPOC and other students. This committee should be composed of faculty members and university administrators committed to fostering an enriched environment.

BYU has over 80 committees, councils, or boards to address important issues affecting the university, yet there is no standing committee to consider recruitment, admissions, and student success policies and strategies. In addition, there is no formally organized standing committee that reaches decisions on undergraduate admissions applications; rather, an initial evaluation and scoring of applications is performed by “readers” (volunteers or BYU employees from various departments) and admissions decisions are then made by the admissions office based on principles established by the President’s Council (see Recommendation 14, p. 34, for further discussion on this process). Several universities, including some of the most prestigious programs in the nation, have faculty admissions committees.⁵³

We recommend that the university formally create a standing committee on recruitment, admissions, and student success to develop and evaluate related policies and strategies as well as to serve as an official admissions committee to review applications and select students for admission to Brigham Young University. CFS and CFS-track faculty members, administrators, and staff who have demonstrated interest in students and a commitment to or expertise in diversity should be appointed to serve on this committee. Consistent with the goals of an enriched environment and a holistic approach to admissions, this committee could tap into the breadth and depth of educational and life experiences of its members to assist with the important work of recruitment and admissions.

RECOMMENDATION 12. Develop a strategic plan to increase graduation rates for BIPOC students. This plan should include collaboration between services and offices that are intended to assist BIPOC students to succeed academically.

While there are many important considerations related to the recruitment and admission of BIPOC students, we are urgently concerned with efforts to retain BIPOC students currently at BYU to help them thrive and succeed. The six-year graduation rate for BYU students overall was 78 percent for those who began their studies in fall 2013. The corresponding graduation rates for BYU students by race are shown in Table 1.

53. These schools have formal admissions committees with faculty membership: Harvard, MIT, Yale, Stanford, Dartmouth, Rice, USC, Amherst, Williams College, Pomona, UCLA, Wellesley College, UNC Chapel Hill, Claremont McKenna.

Table 1. Six-Year Graduation Rates by Race and Ethnicity

Race and Ethnicity	Graduation Rate
White	79%
Two or More Races	78%
Asian	77%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	68%
Hispanic/Latino	66%
Black	58%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	41%

Note: Data is for students who began their studies in fall 2013.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=brigham+young+university&s=all&id=230038#retgrad>.

We note with concern the disparity in graduation rates for BIPOC students at BYU, especially Native Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders. We recommend the development of a strategic plan to identify the obstacles hindering BIPOC student graduation rates, to remove those obstacles, and to provide appropriate support that effectively reaches BIPOC students. Such a strategic plan should include a university survey of BIPOC students to ascertain how or if these students are aware of existing services and how effective they believe these services are in assisting with their academic success. Additionally, this survey should be designed to help identify reasons for the graduation rate disparities.

There are a number of critical university programs that are intended to help students succeed academically at BYU.⁵⁴ They include:

- ◆ First Year Mentoring Program (Office of the First Year Experience, academic vice president)
- ◆ Early Alert (Enrollment Services, academic vice president and student life vice president)
- ◆ Multicultural Student Services (student life vice president)
- ◆ International Student and Scholar Services (student life vice president)
- ◆ Student Development Courses (student life vice president)
- ◆ Y-Serve Tutoring (student life vice president)
- ◆ Academic Advisement Services (academic vice president and individual departments)
- ◆ Academic Support Office (student life vice president)

Each of these student success programs is housed in a different part of the university, as noted in the parentheticals. Although there are many services provided to all BYU students, we believe that it would be prudent to redouble efforts to make BIPOC students aware of these services and to assist BIPOC students in accessing these services in a timely way when the need arises.

⁵⁴. See <https://aso.byu.edu/academic-and-campus-resources>.

The disparity in graduation rates demonstrates that BYU can do better to ensure that this array of services reaches BIPOC students. As a committee, we believe that BIPOC students would be best served by organizing Multicultural Student Services, International Student and Scholar Services, and the Office of Student Success and Inclusion (each serving the university's culturally diverse populations) under a new Office of Diversity and Belonging (see Recommendation 3, p. 20). This new office would coordinate services for BIPOC students and would be in the best position to advocate for BIPOC students and their academic needs. The office would also promote academic services to BIPOC students and collaborate with the various other offices that offer these services.

RECOMMENDATION 13. Design and implement a race-conscious recruitment strategy to attract more BIPOC student applicants to BYU.

BYU's student body is inadequately diverse. This lack of diversity not only deprives the university as a whole of the diversity of gifts, experiences, and viewpoints brought by students from various cultures and backgrounds, it also results in isolation for BIPOC and other minority population students. We have identified this lack of diversity at BYU to be among the primary barriers for BIPOC students to feel they belong at BYU. We have taken some initial steps to evaluate the cultural practices at BYU that have contributed to the lack of diversity in recruitment, admissions, and retention, but we recommend further detailed study and probing review of the processes, policies, and organizational attitudes underlying present outcomes.

A student population that is not only diverse but also thriving is built in three primary stages: recruitment, admissions, and retention. We recognize that the consideration of race and ethnicity in college recruitment and admissions is an area of law and policy that is challenging and potentially divisive. As we have sought to understand the parameters and rationale for BYU's related policies, we found these to be opaque.

As an initial step, our committee recommends that the university develop and implement targeted programs for enhancing the diversity of BYU's applicant pool; this will require creative strategies and a commitment of resources. We are unaware of any legal prohibition against programs or strategies to recruit underrepresented BIPOC groups for admission, so long as they do not confer a benefit that is not generally available to all prospective applicants or represent a burden to that group.⁵⁵ In fact, a number of well-respected universities have race-conscious recruitment programs,⁵⁶ and these universities have demonstrated success in increasing the diversity of their applicant pools and their admitted student populations. We also believe that in addition to focused recruitment activities for BIPOC students, the university should focus recruitment efforts on socioeconomically disadvantaged prospective applicants.

Although BYU ranks 80th in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2021 Best National University Rankings, it ranks 328 out of 360 national universities for student diversity (not including international students) with a student diversity index of 0.27. For comparison, the student populations and diversity ranks and indices of peer schools with similarly sized student bodies are included in Table 2.

55. See *Weser v. Glen*, 190 F. Supp. 2d 384, 399 (E.D. N.Y. 2002); *Honadle v. University of Vermont and State Agricultural College*, 56 F. Supp. 2d 419, 427-28 (D. Vt. 1999).

56. See these examples of race-conscious recruitment efforts:

- Harvard: <https://college.harvard.edu/admissions/explore-harvard/connect-students/undergraduate-minority-recruitment-program>
- Carnegie Mellon University: <https://www.cmu.edu/diversity/academics-and-recruitment/index.html>
- University of California at Los Angeles: <https://grad.ucla.edu/deans/library/ucopdiversityguidelinesprop209.pdf>

Table 2. University Student Diversity

University	Enrollment	Diversity Rank	Diversity Index
University of California, Los Angeles	31,543	12	.73
New York University	26,981	19	.72
University of California, Davis	30,982	21	.72
Rutgers University–New Brunswick	36,158	31	.70
University of California, Berkeley	32,266	46	.69
University of California, Irvine	30,382	47	.69
University of Washington	32,046	50	.69
University of California, San Diego	30,794	63	.67
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	34,120	72	.66
University of Maryland, College Park	30,511	78	.65
University of Arizona	35,801	109	.61
University of Florida	35,405	110	.61
Florida State University	33,270	152	.56
University Michigan–Ann Arbor	31,266	170	.53
University of Georgia	29,848	211	.47
University of Utah	24,485	213	.47
Virginia Tech	29,300	217	.46
University Minnesota, Twin Cities	35,165	223	.45
Purdue University–West Lafayette	33,646	244	.42
Indiana University Bloomington	33,084	241	.42
North Carolina State University	25,973	242	.42
University of Wisconsin–Madison	33,456	290	.35
Brigham Young University	31,292	328	.27

Source: *U.S. News & World Report*, 2021 Best National Universities, <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities>. (Last visited October 16, 2020.)

Of all *U.S. News & World Report* schools ranked at or near the top 100 national universities, BYU ranks last in the diversity of its student body. We have assessed that one driving factor behind the lack of diversity at BYU is race-blind recruitment and we urge that this policy be reformed to cultivate a more diverse pool of applicants.

RECOMMENDATION 14. Perform an independent validation study on all current admissions policies, particularly the weighting systems, to evaluate whether they have a disparate impact on BIPOC applicants. Ensure that the admissions process is holistic in its application and reflects the values promoted in BYU’s Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy.

Based on information provided to our committee by Enrollment Services, the President’s Council is charged with “modeling” and seating the incoming freshman class by establishing and setting weighted criteria upon

which admissions decisions are made. Admissions decisions are made by a combination of “reader” review scores and six to eight “weighted categories.”⁵⁷ We are unaware of the actual weight assigned to each of the categories.

We are concerned that an over-mechanized or impersonal admissions process may be impeding BIPOC admissions as well as admissions of socioeconomically disadvantaged applicants. In our view, a truly holistic review of each applicant takes into consideration the unique life circumstances and experiences of the individual and the impact these individuals might have on the BYU community. These important factors require that reader assessments be given at least equal, if not more, weight in the admissions selection process than they may currently be given.

Merit is a rich mix of factors reflected in life experience and educational preparedness. Because of the decrease in BIPOC applicants and admits to BYU, we recommend that the university commission an external study to validate admissions policies and to ascertain if any part of the admissions process has an adverse or disparate impact on the admission of BIPOC and socioeconomically disadvantaged applicants. We respectfully urge that such a study analyze the following:

- ♦ Scoring trends for each application question and how each question impacts the admission of BIPOC and socioeconomically disadvantaged applicants.
- ♦ Scoring trends and how each weighted category and subcategory impacts the admission of BIPOC and socioeconomically disadvantaged applicants.

If the analysis indicates any disproportionate impact on BIPOC or socioeconomically disadvantaged students, application questions or weighted categories should be adjusted to eliminate the impact.

We also recommend that the university consider the incorporation of an adversity score related to socioeconomic disadvantage (housing instability, single-parent household, substance abuse in the family, mental or physical health issues in the family, foster care, working to support the family, incarceration of one or more parents/guardians, etc.). A reconsideration of the weighting of socioeconomic disadvantage categories in the admissions process may help to eliminate disparate impacts hindering the admission of BIPOC applicants.

RECOMMENDATION 15. Invite the Office of the General Counsel to evaluate the legal parameters of a race-conscious admissions model for BYU, in the interest of pursuing an enriched environment for the student body.

As a committee, we met with representatives from BYU Enrollment Services, who described their recently updated holistic approach to application scoring and their race-blind approach to recruitment and admissions. It appears that many in key roles for recruitment and admissions believe that the university’s official position is that recruitment and admissions must be race-blind/race-neutral. We have not yet met with the Office of the General Counsel to determine why (or if) the university has taken a legal view about whether

⁵⁷ As reported to our committee, these categories are, generally, academic preparation index, first-generation college applicant, missionary service, high school offset, and priority deadline. Based on a review of the university application, it appears to us that each of these categories is composed of sub-categories that affect the overall score of the category. We are unaware, however, of the specifics of each of those subcategories.

Readers score applications in five “mission alignment” categories using a Likert scale (1 = No to minimal evidence, 2 = Developing, 3 = Competent, and 4 = Exemplary). Once readers have completed their review of applications, their scores are adjusted by reliability software to address reader leniency, severity, and consistency. Readers are volunteers or BYU employees who work in Enrollment Services or other campus offices and colleges.

Reader scores and other weighted categories are then combined and differing class outcomes based on weighting variations are presented to the President’s Council. The President’s Council then selects the model they wish to apply, thus determining the general outcomes of the class. Adjustments are made by Enrollment Services for outlier applications (e.g., students initially denied with 4.0 GPAs, students whose academic preparation scores are more than 2 standard deviations below the average, students initially denied where the reader score is very high, students initially admitted with very low reader scores, etc.). These adjustments are disclosed to the President’s Council.

race-conscious recruitment or admissions might be feasible for BYU. As we discussed in Recommendation 13 (p. 33), we believe that race-conscious recruitment is a plausible pathway for achieving the greater diversity BYU needs; we also believe that race-conscious admissions should be explored.

We recognize that the issue of race-conscious admissions raises complex considerations of law and policy. We believe, however, that BYU should begin to evaluate the parameters of an approach to lawfully use race as one factor in the admissions process to achieve an enriched educational environment. Such an approach may be needed if other consistent and conscious efforts fail to attract and seat a more diverse student body.

RECOMMENDATION 16. Select prestigious scholarship recipients with greater emphasis on a holistic review of the entire applicant file, with criteria to include commitment to excellence, leadership potential, socioeconomic profile, adverse life circumstances, etc. We recommend a scrutiny of policies for determining scholarship criteria and their impact on BIPOC applicants.

As a committee, we investigated the racial equity of scholarships and financial aid as one factor in the lower recruitment, admission, and retention rates of BIPOC students. Based on our review, as noted in Table 3, few BIPOC students were awarded the Presidential Scholarship between 2016 and 2020. The vast majority of these awards were made to White students.

Table 3. Presidential Scholarships by Race and Ethnicity, 2016–20

Race and Ethnicity	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	O*	A	O	A	O	A	O	A	O	A
White	44	39	47	43	42	41	48	43	44	43
Hispanic/Latino	<10	<10	0	0	<10	<10	<10	0	<10	<10
Black	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	<10	<10	<10	0	<10	<10	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Two or More Races	<10	<10	0	0	<10	<10	0	0	<10	<10

*O = Offered, A = Accepted

Source: BYU Enrollment Services.

Though the university has a webpage titled “Eligibility for Scholarships,” the site only describes how to maintain scholarships and does not provide adequate information for the application process.⁵⁸ The website offers no description of other scholarships that are offered or information on the criteria used to make awards. The lack of such information may discourage BIPOC applicants from applying for scholarship consideration because they may view their chances of obtaining a scholarship as out of reach or unavailable. We

⁵⁸. See <https://enrollment.byu.edu/financialaid/eligibility-for-scholarships>.

recommend a more robust online presence for making scholarship and financial aid information more widely accessible and user-friendly.⁵⁹

Based on the data in Tables 4 and 5, the number of full- and half-tuition scholarship offers to racially diverse incoming freshmen is more substantial. We note with concern, however, the very small numbers of scholarships offered to Black and Native American applicants.

Table 4. Full-Tuition, One-Year Scholarships by Race and Ethnicity, 2016–20

Race and Ethnicity	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	O*	A	O	A	O	A	O	A	O	A
White	1426	1390	638	558	860	823	718	710	775	770
Hispanic/Latino	62	59	42	37	29	28	31	30	28	28
Black	0	0	<10	<10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	58	57	21	21	22	22	25	25	33	33
American Indian or Alaska Native	<10	<10	<10	<10	0	0	0	0	<10	<10
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	0	0	<10	<10
Two or More Races	41	39	24	21	23	22	33	33	28	28

*O = Offered, A = Accepted

Source: BYU Enrollment Services.

Table 5. Half-Tuition, One-Year Scholarships by Race and Ethnicity, 2016–20

Race and Ethnicity	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	O*	A	O	A	O	A	O	A	O	A
White	2485	2398	1758	1561	1751	1638	2096	2048	2185	2174
Hispanic/Latino	125	121	78	69	81	79	110	106	104	104
Black	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Asian	63	62	44	38	80	76	75	75	74	73
American Indian or Alaska Native	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Two or More Races	116	113	69	60	69	67	80	80	100	100

*O = Offered, A = Accepted

Source: BYU Enrollment Services.

⁵⁹ For effective models of providing scholarship information, see these examples:

- University of Notre Dame: <https://scholars.nd.edu/>
- University of Utah: <https://financialaid.utah.edu/types-of-aid/scholarships/freshman/>

We requested, but we have not yet received, information on how scholarship awards are determined. We assume, based on the information we received for admissions (race-neutral and weighted numeric factors such as the ACT, GPA, AP courses taken, high school evaluation, etc.), that scholarship decisions may be heavily influenced by numeric factors and not based on a holistic consideration of the applicant pool. We recommend a scrutiny of policies for determining scholarship criteria and their impact on BIPOC applicants and students as an important factor in the ongoing work of promoting equity at BYU.

RECOMMENDATION 17. Create Enriched Environment Scholarships honoring early BIPOC members of the Church, such as Jane Manning James, Elijah Abel, and others, to be made available to students who have demonstrated a commitment to the values contained in the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy.

BYU’s Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy includes an aspiration to provide “educational opportunities for a mix of students who share values based on the gospel of Jesus Christ and who come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences” and describes this aspiration as “an important educational asset to BYU.”⁶⁰ As part of a renewed emphasis on the goals and principles of this policy statement, we recommend the development of a merit-based Enriched Environment Scholarship program. With appropriate funding and criteria, these scholarships would be available to assist students who demonstrate that they have been or are committed to the principles set out in the Fostering an Enriched Environment Policy.

We are especially supportive of an idea that was advocated to us to establish scholarships honoring faithful Black members of the Church, such as Jane Manning James, among others. Such a category of scholarships would contribute to making BYU a more welcoming and accessible environment for BIPOC students, and would honor the lives and achievements of pioneering BIPOC Saints.

RECOMMENDATION 18. Create socioeconomic disadvantage scholarships, in addition to existing need-based scholarships, for students who demonstrate that they come from socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances, who have faced adversities attendant to such circumstances, and who demonstrate the need for financial support in order to obtain a BYU education.

In addition to the recommended Enriched Environment Scholarships and existing need-based scholarships, we recommend the creation of holistic merit-based scholarships awarded to prospective students who demonstrate they come from socioeconomically disadvantaged circumstances.⁶¹ We believe that these socioeconomic disadvantage scholarships would be likely to enhance upward social mobility⁶² and would help to address barriers that may hinder a more robust enrollment of qualified BIPOC students.

60. BYU, Fostering an Enriched Environment.

61. See these examples of socioeconomic disadvantage initiatives:

- UCLA: <https://www.financialaid.ucla.edu/Menu/MainNavBar/Prospective-Student/Grant-and-Loan-information#687701469-blue-gold-opportunity-plan>
- University of Utah: <https://admissions.utah.edu/forutah/>

62. A study released in 2017 revealed that BYU has low upward mobility: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2017/02/17/rock-bottom-social-mobility-score-surprises-byu-community/>; <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/brigham-young-university>.

RECOMMENDATION 19. Create a process that allows students to report instances of racial discrimination on campus. Through this process, such claims would be investigated and redressed, as appropriate.

In our committee's discussions with BIPOC students and student leaders, several of them described a need for a forum or process on campus to address instances of racial discrimination and interpersonal disputes arising from such experiences. At present, there is no apparent process for reporting or resolving such grievances.

The need for a resource to assist students in these situations was made clear in our discussion with the Black Student Union (BSU). They cited incidents in which administrative intervention would have helped to resolve racist treatment of Black students on campus; however, there was no place for these students to seek the needed support. The time spent by these Black students in navigating university administration to find support was clearly detrimental to them and their sense of belonging. Having no accessible resource for addressing such issues pulled these students from their schoolwork, social outlets, or other fruitful activities. Such a lack of administrative support has been a hardship not only for students experiencing these difficulties, but also for student leaders. In many instances, the BSU has effectively functioned as a de facto student services resource for Black students, having been enlisted on a case-by-case basis to help students respond to racist incidents. In addition, members and leaders of BSU are frequently called upon to assist in educating the students and faculty involved in these incidents. As a committee, we are deeply concerned about the burdens borne by the leaders of BSU in this regard and we urge the university to coordinate a process and identify resources to relieve these students of these administrative burdens.

If approved, the Office of Diversity and Belonging (see Recommendation 1, p. 18) would fill this role and ease these undue burdens on Black students and other students of color. Grievances could be reviewed at two levels: Students would bring their problem to the Office of Diversity and Belonging. If their grievance does not require Honor Code, Title IX, and/or Equal Opportunity Office intervention, the Office of Diversity and Belonging would work to resolve the issue with the student. If the grievance could not be resolved, the parties could seek mediation through the Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution. An official in the Office of Diversity and Belonging would then monitor the case and maintain contact with the offended party and the Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution until the case has been closed.

RECOMMENDATION 20. Establish a dedicated, visible space on campus for underrepresented students and those who serve this population; such a space will foster community and promote belonging.

One possible way to ameliorate BIPOC students' feelings of isolation and insecurity is to create a space on campus where they and other underrepresented students can connect with one another, congregate, study, access services, and socialize. Indeed, numerous BIPOC students from our focus groups advocated for a dedicated gathering space to facilitate connection and belonging. To be clear, this recommendation is not intended to isolate, segregate, or silo BIPOC students. Rather, ensuring available gathering space would serve to offer critical social connections for BIPOC and other underrepresented students free of the burdens of feeling isolated and otherized.

Dedicated spaces for underrepresented students to gather is relatively common across institutions of higher education in the United States,⁶³ and research demonstrates that these spaces can enhance connection

63. See these examples of gathering spaces:

- Brown University: <https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/support/students-of-color/>
- University of Virginia: <https://multicultural.virginia.edu/multicultural-student-center/>
- Yale: <https://afam.yalecollege.yale.edu/house>

and belonging for BIPOC and other underrepresented students.⁶⁴ Micere Keels, a University of Chicago professor and an expert in the study of spaces for underrepresented students at predominately White universities, states that access to these spaces “promotes minority student college persistence and their psychological, emotional, and cultural-wellbeing, thereby lessening the psychological costs of college.”⁶⁵ Thus, the development of a space such as this at BYU, where students could be directed to mentors and resources to assist them in navigating their particular challenges, would make a meaningful difference in the lives of BYU’s students.

A related and recurring theme that we heard concerned the location of Multicultural Student Services on the first floor of the Wilkinson Student Center. Students reported their sense that this somewhat isolated location represents a relegation of their concerns to a lower, invisible plane, while other student groups and services are easily visible and accessible on the main floors of the Wilkinson Center. One way to foster community and enhance visibility for BIPOC students would be to relocate the offices that serve these students to the main level of the Wilkinson Student Center. Increasing the visibility of these offices will likely aid more students in being aware of these resources and accessing them. These offices provide a number of beneficial community-building resources and their staffs are eager to expand their reach to a broader cross section of students. For example, Multicultural Student Services helps coordinate community cultural performances such as “Fiesta” and can help connect interested students to one of the many cultural clubs on campus like the Black Student Union or the Korean Student Association.

RECOMMENDATION 21. Take steps to ensure that the BYU Honor Code and Dress and Grooming Standards are applied with cultural competence and sensitivity.

We note that the Honor Code Office has made positive changes over the past few years. In particular, they have increased transparency of the Honor Code process, which was not well understood by the campus community. In response, they have updated their website, actively sought opportunities to communicate about their procedures, and opened communications with students, faculty, or staff who might have questions. Among their revised policies, the Honor Code Office seeks increased transparency for students who are reported for a policy violation; the office now communicates all of the information it has to the student involved, including the identity of the individual who made the report. The Honor Code Office has also aligned itself with industry best practices on how to implement a student conduct system while also expanding training to include implicit bias, QPR (suicide prevention), Title IX, and motivational interviewing. Despite these positive changes, our review found a few areas of potential concern with regard to the enforcement of standards and BIPOC students.

We are concerned that current data suggests some disparity in enforcement issues for BIPOC students. We recommend further study and careful attention to these issues as they intersect with race and ethnicity. We were distressed to learn that BIPOC students are charged with Honor Code policy violations at a rate disproportionate to their share of the population. We do not have data to explain the discrepancy, but we note it with a recommendation that the issue merits further study. It could be that BIPOC students are policed and reported at higher rates, it could be that they engage in higher rates of violations, or it could be a combination

64. See Teri A. Kirby, Joshua A. Tabak, Maria Ilac, and Sapna Cheryan, “The Symbolic Value of Ethnic Spaces,” *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 11, no. 7 (September 2000): 867–878, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550620913371>.

65. Micere Keels, *Guidance for Creating College Campuses that Are Experienced as Inclusive*, University of Chicago, 2020, <https://www.campus-counterspaces.com/inclusion-guidance>.

of the two scenarios. Either way, we view the disparity as problematic and we believe that the process and outcomes are worthy of additional scrutiny.⁶⁶

In our meetings with them, BIPOC students reported their sense that the Honor Code and Dress and Grooming Standards are applied differently to them to their detriment. In particular, there appears to be a lack of consistency and training regarding the application of the Dress and Grooming Standards to Black hairstyles. We recommend that the Dress and Grooming Standards set clear expectations, include visible representative examples with BIPOC students, and provide culturally appropriate training for all employees charged with on-site enforcement of Dress and Grooming Standards. For example, Black students should have clear guidance about whether a Testing Center employee will deem their ethnic hairstyle “extreme” before they face that situation.

In addition, a number of students reported that they have been overwhelmed and bewildered by the Honor Code enforcement process, which has felt unnecessarily adversarial to them. If indeed the Honor Code and Dress and Grooming Standards are being over-enforced against BIPOC students at BYU because they stand out in some way, that is an inequity that is especially harmful and isolating for BIPOC students and should be addressed.

Faculty Reforms

Providing support to help BIPOC faculty thrive at BYU.

An issue highlighted by many BIPOC students that we interviewed was their desire for more BIPOC faculty at BYU. The students stated that having more faculty who could directly relate to their experiences as people of color would help them feel a greater sense of belonging and would help them access perspectives on how to be a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as well as a scholar. This need for more faculty of color was made particularly stark in our meeting with the Black Student Union. Due to the small number of Black faculty members, the students felt discouraged from reaching out to those faculty members for fear of overburdening already-stretched individuals. With a Black-student-to-Black-faculty ratio of 50 to 1, the ability of students in this community to receive the positive mentorship they desire is negatively impacted. The disparity observed among Black students and Black faculty is emblematic of other BIPOC student-to-faculty ratios at the university. For instance, the Hispanic-student-to-Hispanic-faculty ratio is 59 to 1. Standing in sharp contrast to these ratios is the White-student-to-White-faculty ratio, which is 20 to 1.

These disparities in student-to-faculty ratios have potentially detrimental implications for the welfare of BIPOC students. BIPOC students are much more likely to be first-generation students and to come from families with lower household income and wealth. Of the BIPOC students who immediately enrolled at BYU in 2020, roughly 22 percent were first-generation students; conversely, among White students in the same cohort, approximately 6 percent were first-generation students. It has been well documented that first-generation students are much more likely to struggle with adapting to university life than those who are not first-generation students. First-generation students are less likely to possess an awareness of existing university resources, less likely to have family support, and less likely to graduate relative to their non-first-generation peers. Faculty mentors can be invaluable in helping first-generation students navigate and adapt to university life. Providing more faculty of color would increase mentoring opportunities for BIPOC students and would help to partially mitigate some of the challenges these vulnerable students encounter.

66. We recognize that the director of the Honor Code Office, Kevin Utt, has not been in the position long and has made positive changes in the office's procedures.

Separately, but also important, the lack of faculty of color (see Table 6) limits BYU students' exposure—both BIPOC and White students—to a greater diversity of cultural experiences that would help equip them to navigate a complex multicultural society upon graduation. Representation matters in who students see as experts and as occupying positions of authority. If students have not seen BIPOC faculty as leading teachers and scholars, their perceptions of BIPOC potential may be limited in artificial ways. The average number of BIPOC faculty members on CFS-track at BYU, currently 6 percent, falls far below the national average.⁶⁷

The challenges that students encounter after graduation are varied and complex, often requiring a well-rounded perspective. Students being taught and mentored by a racially and ethnically diverse professoriate will be better team members and leaders in their employment and better situated to participate in finding novel solutions to some of our most pressing social problems as they go forth to serve in the world.

Table 6. BYU CFS and CFS-Track Faculty by Race and Gender

Race and Gender	Frequency	Percent
White Female	291	19.84
White Male	1,086	74.03
<i>BIPOC Female</i>		
Native American	3	0.20
Asian	14	0.95
Black	2	0.14
Hispanic	14	0.95
Pacific Islander	4	0.27
<i>BIPOC Male</i>		
Native American	4	0.27
Asian	19	1.30
Black	4	0.27
Hispanic	20	1.36
Pacific Islander	5	0.34
Not Declared Female	1	0.07
Not Declared Male	4	0.27
Grand Total	1,467	100.00

Note: Counts are as of September 1, 2020.

Source: BYU Faculty Relations.

Our analysis of faculty recruitment and retention has revealed a number of important areas to consider and address to promote a more diverse community at BYU conducive to the success and belonging

67. In 2018, the national average percentage of BIPOC faculty serving as full professors was 19.6 percent; as associate professors, 24.6 percent; as assistant professors, 28.0 percent. See National Center for Education Statistics, Table 315.20, "Full-Time Faculty in Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity, Sex, and Academic Rank: Fall 2015, Fall 2017, and Fall 2018," https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_315.20.asp.

of BIPOC students as well as to the benefit of all students. Below we discuss the challenges that the university will encounter in recruiting and retaining BIPOC faculty as well as corresponding initial solutions to address those challenges. We will discuss, first, recommendations to improve BIPOC faculty recruitment and, second, recommendations to help with BIPOC faculty retention. As with other recommendations, these are initial suggestions that, if accepted, will certainly need to be developed more specifically as they are implemented.

Before we discuss these issues, we want to bring attention to a foundational perspective with which to view efforts to recruit and retain BIPOC faculty: recruited candidates of color are free to choose to not work at BYU and faculty of color already here are free to leave. Thus, the strategies suggested below are probabilistic in nature, in that there is much that can be done to increase the chances that recruited candidates of color will be eager to work at BYU and that BIPOC faculty who are here will want to stay. Toward these ends, the strategies that we suggest are aimed at creating a university culture where BIPOC individuals feel strongly needed, highly supported, and thoroughly appreciated. Our recommendations respond to Finding 6 (see p. 14).

As a matter of BYU policy, the university maintains a strong preference for hiring members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Accordingly, BYU's pool of potential faculty candidates who bring racial and ethnic diversity is significantly smaller than that available to other universities. However, there are a number of concrete steps that can be taken at the university, college, and department levels to increase this pool of BYU-eligible candidates.

RECOMMENDATION 22. Design a best-practices model for faculty search committees to identify qualified BIPOC candidates for BYU faculty positions. Such a model could be based on three intertwined aims: commitment to the mission of the university and its sponsoring institution (mission fit), excellence in academic discipline (including teaching and scholarship), and diversity (in its many forms: racial, intellectual, etc.).

Currently, the university does not provide a central document outlining best practices for faculty search committees. We recommend the creation of such a document, emphasizing the hiring objectives of commitment to mission, academic excellence, and diversity. Ensuring the third objective will require guidance on cultivating a robust pool of diverse candidates, having an awareness of unconscious assumptions in the evaluation of candidates, mitigating those assumptions, and promoting fair interview and review processes. Indeed, we cannot hire faculty members on the basis of race, but by removing barriers and biases that frustrate the contention of candidates of color, we will create a more sophisticated hiring process that will improve the quality of faculty hires, regardless of race.

A number of universities provide such guidance to their search committees; the University of Wisconsin-Madison has an especially excellent example.⁶⁸

In addition to the creation and dissemination of a user-friendly guide of best practices for search committees, university-level training on the guide would prove helpful. Inevitably there will be variation across campus in the level of interest and need for support. The university could provide training videos on various topics for on-demand use by search committees. To ensure that search committees are aware of the best practices contained in the guide, they could be required to receive introductory training on the guide. This training could also provide search committees an opportunity to ask questions about faculty searches that are specific to their disciplines.

68. See https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf.

Search Advocates. Another approach to complement best practices for faculty search committees is to develop a “search advocate” program. Oregon State University created a search advocate program in 2008.⁶⁹ In that program, search advocates include OSU faculty, staff, and students who are trained as search and selection process advisors.

Search advocates participate in a two-part workshop series addressing implicit bias, diversity, the changing legal landscape in hiring, inclusive employment principles, practical strategies for each stage of the search process, and effective ways to be an advocate on a search committee. As a quality assurance measure, advocates who wish to remain eligible beyond the first year must engage in relevant continuing education that is recorded and approved through the search advocate program.

Each search advocate is a consultant/participant for search committees; the search advocate advances inclusive excellence by asking questions to help committee members test their thinking, identify and promote practices that advance diversity, and minimize the impacts of cognitive and structural biases. As external committee members, advocates are able to explore assumptions, norms, and practices that an internal member might not question.

As of October 2016, Oregon State had trained more than 800 people, or about 15 percent of the faculty and staff, to become search advocates. According to reviews of searches that took place in 2014–15, those departments that used search advocates hired candidates from underrepresented groups in 25 percent of cases, compared with 11 percent for those without advocates.

RECOMMENDATION 23. Assist and incentivize colleges and departments in developing a strategic plan to identify and mentor BIPOC students who are interested in pursuing careers in academia. This will also serve as a potential pipeline for future hires at BYU.

At the college level, a BIPOC student pre-PhD development program would help increase the pool of BIPOC CFS-track applicants. Currently, the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences has implemented such a program, which they call the Student Research Academy and which they describe on their website:

The FHSS Student Research Academy is a program whose initial mission is to support students of color who have an interest in being involved in academic research. The goal of this effort is to provide resources for students so they can make educated decisions about their future. The primary way we hope to achieve this goal is to pair students with faculty who are conducting research so students can build quality relationships with faculty in the context of a high quality research experience. We will also provide structure for Academy Students to meet together on a regular basis and form relationships with each other and faculty, and to gain access to resources that would support future education and careers in academia or research (e.g., GRE prep, resume building, graduate school prep, networking, etc.).⁷⁰

At present there has been an overwhelming demand for the program, with 50 applicants for 10 spots in fall of 2020. Subsequently, Dean Ben Ogles expanded funding for the program to assist more students.

69. See <https://searchadvocate.oregonstate.edu>.

70. BYU College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences, “Diversity, Collaboration, Inclusion Research Academy,” <https://fhss.byu.edu/diversity-collaboration-inclusion-research-academy>.

The Student Research Academy is based on models such as the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program (also known as the McNair Scholars Program) that have already shown success in promoting the attainment of PhD degrees for people of color.⁷¹

A challenge in instituting a BIPOC student pre-PhD development program in each college will be having a structural apparatus to support such an endeavor. Although some colleges have diversity committees, others do not. Thus, requiring each college to have a diversity and belonging committee would be necessary. A university-level office will need to provide training and support to colleges that might not have expertise on diversity related issues. And for colleges that might have less motivation to focus on diversity and inclusion, the requirement to support such a program will ensure that the college leadership develop a working competency on related issues, which could spark a genuine passion for racial equity.

As a part of the BIPOC student pre-PhD development program, ongoing communication with students of color who enter PhD programs should be established and fostered. The status and plans of each student should be cataloged in a central database and be made available for departments who engage in faculty searches.

RECOMMENDATION 24. Create an emerging scholars program that allows the university to track, identify, and invite BIPOC PhD students to present their scholarship at BYU.

One way to maintain relationships with BYU alumni of color who are in PhD programs is to host an annual conference where these PhD students can present their research. Because of the relatively small number of students who are likely to participate, the conference might be organized at the university level. Although there will be disciplinary divides, a university-wide conference will ensure that there is a meaningful turnout; it will also allow university leadership to attend and interact and develop relationships with these potential faculty candidates.

To make the conference accessible to individuals across disciplines, participants would be encouraged to frame their presentation for an educated but lay audience. This type of focus would also provide departments an opportunity to evaluate potential job candidates on teaching challenging material in an approachable way.

Another positive byproduct from a conference like this is that BIPOC graduate students could start to develop supportive networks amongst each other. In addition, these BIPOC graduate students could provide mentorship to BYU undergraduate BIPOC students, and perhaps the graduate student presenters could even be paired with students from various BIPOC student pre-PhD development programs across the university (see Recommendation 23, p. 44).

Additional Measures. As a committee we discussed three additional measures that may help recruit BIPOC faculty to BYU:

- ◆ Because the current pool of potential BIPOC candidates for BYU faculty positions is small relative to that of other institutions, it would be helpful if departments could be more nimble in hiring when unique opportunities present themselves. One way to facilitate this is for each college to receive an extra bridge FTE line that is to be applied for opportunity hires that help BYU further its aim of recruiting a diverse set of faculty. Alternatively, deans could be encouraged to save one of their current bridge FTE lines for just such a purpose.

71. John T. Ishiyama and Valerie M. Hopkins, "Assessing the Impact of a Graduate School Preparation Program on First-Generation, Low-Income College Students at a Public Liberal Arts University," *Journal of College Student Retention* 4, no. 4 (February 2003): 393-405, <https://doi.org/10.2190/CB17-UENX-No64-U1HQ>.

- ♦ As BIPOC faculty interview on campus and are hired, it is important for them to be aware of helpful resources both on campus and in the community. Hence, a tailored resource directory should be developed, consistently updated, and readily available.
- ♦ Since the pool of potential BIPOC faculty candidates that are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is relatively small at this point in time, we suggest that the university be willing to compete with other universities to employ qualified candidates. This might come in the form of highly competitive salaries and start-up funding (e.g., equipment, research assistant, etc.).

RECOMMENDATION 25. Design a strategic plan that will assist with mentoring, training, supporting, recognizing, connecting, and developing BIPOC faculty at BYU, while consciously planning to alleviate the “cultural taxation” burdens carried by BIPOC faculty at BYU.

A significant challenge for faculty of color is “cultural taxation,” a term coined by Amado Padilla.⁷² Padilla describes the unique burden that BIPOC faculty carry in academic service. This form of labor might be manifest in providing comfort and mentorship to BIPOC students, being asked to serve as a voice of diversity on a committee, or accepting speaking engagements to address issues of diversity. Cultural taxation is also exacerbated on campuses that are predominantly White because BIPOC faculty are in high demand to perform such functions.⁷³

These extra demands placed upon BIPOC faculty can make it more difficult for them to establish the strong research agenda necessary to receive CFS. It is important that department chairs, deans, and university leadership recognize these demands and provide these faculty members the unique support they need to thrive.

Deans and department chairs should consider these additional burdens as they make assignments and evaluate the work of BIPOC faculty. They may consider such measures as limiting the number of new course preparations BIPOC faculty are required to complete before CFS, providing sufficient teaching assistant resources to ease grading burdens, and allowing faculty to teach courses where they have a strong subject matter competency. We also suggest that department chairs and deans encourage BIPOC faculty to track the extra service that they provide so they can be properly compensated for their efforts during stewardship interviews and rank and status advancement reviews.

Foster Community. Developing a sense of meaningful community for BIPOC faculty is important for creating belonging. To address this issue, the Faculty Center has established an informal faculty of color committee. A number of universities across the country have similar committees. Some have similar missions as the BYU Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging while others are primarily focused on the development of social networks and mentorship.⁷⁴

72. Amado M. Padilla, “Ethnic Minority Scholars, Research, and Mentoring: Current and Future Issues,” *Educational Researcher* 23, no. 4 (May 1994): 24–27, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1176259>.

73. Marjorie C. Shavers, J. Yasmine Butler, and James L. Moore III, “Cultural Taxation and the Over-Commitment of Service at Predominantly White Institutions,” in *Black Faculty in the Academy: Narratives for Negotiating Identity and Achieving Career Success*, eds. Fred A. Bonner II, Aretha Faye Marbley, Frank Tuit, Petra A. Robinson, Rosa M. Banda, and Robin L. Hughes (New York: Routledge, 2014), 41–51.

74. See these examples of BIPOC faculty committees:

- University of Denver: <https://www.du.edu/diversity-inclusion/faculty/foca.html>
- Baylor University: <https://sites.baylor.edu/bufoca/>
- UC Merced: <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2020/02/uc-merced-staff-and-faculty-of-color-association.html>
- Binghamton University: <https://www.binghamton.edu/organizations/fsca/index.html>

The challenge with establishing this committee is that the Faculty Center does not want to overburden faculty of color with too many service commitments. To ameliorate this issue, the Faculty Center can serve as facilitators of this committee until leadership from BIPOC faculty can be established.

Initially, this committee will serve a few functions: social networking, informal mentorship, and communication with administration. In our meetings with BIPOC faculty, many voiced that they felt that the university was not listening to their concerns. This committee would provide a voice for these concerns, and the vice president of diversity and belonging could serve as a liaison between this committee and the university. Moreover, upper administration—the president and academic vice president—might consider meeting with these faculty once a year to field questions and address concerns.

Additional Measures. We recommend that the university create a strategic plan to support BIPOC faculty in the unique challenges they face in BYU’s academic environment. That plan should address the issues of cultural taxation and community, addressed above, as well as other issues such as those as outlined here:

- ◆ In order to recognize the extra service burdens for BIPOC faculty and the considerable efforts that will be required from many across the university community to bring about meaningful, transformative change, we urge the university to consider establishing University Diversity and Belonging Awards (one for CFS-track faculty and another for CFS faculty), with one-time salary stipends.
- ◆ Another way to support a culture of greater diversity and inclusion at BYU would be to establish a grant to support research on diversity and inclusion or research projects in which faculty members mentor BIPOC students. Each college would provide two new research grants per year to full-time faculty in CFS-track positions. The total amount of possible funding per project could be disbursed over one or two years, depending on project needs.
- ◆ We have noted with great concern that BYU has had some difficulty retaining BIPOC faculty. We recommend that BYU conduct exit interviews and follow up with departing BIPOC faculty to more fully understand the reasons they have chosen not to stay at BYU. The outcomes of these interviews can be used to revisit recruitment and retention efforts.⁷⁵
- ◆ Substantial academic research indicates that faculty of color are evaluated less positively than White faculty in end of semester teaching reviews.⁷⁶ We do not have specific data to assess how this evaluation bias may have impacted BIPOC faculty at BYU; however, we learned anecdotally through our initial interviews that numerous faculty of color have experienced discrimination and racism in their student evaluations. Department, college, and university rank and status processes and documents should acknowledge this disadvantage and take it into account in stewardship interviews and rank and status advancement reviews.

75. See, for example, John T. Ishiyama and Valerie M. Hopkins, “Assessing the Impact of a Graduate School Preparation Program on First-Generation, Low-Income College Students at a Public Liberal Arts University,” *Journal of College Student Retention* 4, no. 4 (February 2003): 393–405, <https://doi.org/10.2190/CB17-UENX-No64-U1HQ>; Amado M. Padilla, “Ethnic Minority Scholars, Research, and Mentoring: Current and Future Issues,” *Educational Researcher* 23, no. 4 (May 1994): 24–27, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1176259>; Marjorie C. Shavers, J. Yasmine Butler, and James L. Moore III, “Cultural Taxation and the Over-Commitment of Service at Predominantly White Institutions,” in *Black Faculty in the Academy: Narratives for Negotiating Identity and Achieving Career Success*, eds. Fred A. Bonner II, Aretha Faye Marbley, Frank Tuitt, Petra A. Robinson, Rosa M. Banda, and Robin L. Hughes (New York: Routledge, 2014), 41–51.

76. See Anish Bavishi, Juan M. Madera, and Michelle R. Hebl, “The Effect of Professor Ethnicity and Gender on Student Evaluations: Judged Before Met,” *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 3, no. 4 (December 2010): 245–256, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020763>; Landon D. Reid, “The Role of Perceived Race and Gender in the Evaluation of College Teaching on RateMyProfessors.com,” *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 3, no. 3 (September 2010): 137–152, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019865>; Bettye P. Smith and Billy Hawkins, “Examining Student Evaluations of Black College Faculty: Does Race Matter?” *The Journal of Negro Education* 80, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 149–162, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41341117>; American Sociological Association, *Statement on Student Evaluations of Teaching*, September 2019, https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/asa_statement_on_student_evaluations_of_teaching_feb132020.pdf.

- ◆ We recommend that the Faculty Center expand its offerings in the Faculty Development Series to help faculty of color negotiate and understand the unique demands that they might encounter at a predominantly White university, along with resources that they can draw upon to succeed as BIPOC scholars.
- ◆ One important resource that the university can provide to BIPOC faculty is membership in and access to the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD).⁷⁷ This organization provides access to intensive multi-week courses facilitated by national experts, a private discussion forum, monthly writing challenges, and the opportunity to connect with a writing accountability partner. Additionally, they have an extensive library of webinar courses on topics such as “Building a Publishing Pipeline,” “Teaching in Color: Effective Teaching Strategies for Faculty of Color,” and “Presumed Incompetent: Race, Gender, and Class in Academia.” Indeed, many of the resources provided by NCFDD give unique information for BIPOC faculty. This is important because BIPOC faculty are more likely to be first-generation students and first-generation academics. Although they have all received mentorship in their graduate programs, a supportive mentoring structure that provides guidance for adapting to their unique needs enhances the opportunity for BIPOC faculty to succeed.
- ◆ Another way to support the success of faculty of color is to ensure sufficient opportunities for internal mentorship. Each CFS-track faculty member is assigned at least one mentor within their department. Providing extra mentorship might be helpful for those who desire it. The secondary mentor could be an individual outside of their department but within their own college. Having a secondary mentor would likely provide faculty of color an extra opportunity to learn more about succeeding at BYU and in its culture.

RECOMMENDATION 26. Provide BIPOC faculty with opportunities to serve in senior university leadership positions.

Despite the extra service burdens that BIPOC faculty encounter in academia, it is important to provide them opportunities to grow in leadership and administrative responsibilities. The West Coast Conference (WCC), of which BYU is a member, has recently instituted the “Russell Rule,” which “requires each member institution to include a member of a traditionally underrepresented community in the pool of final candidates for every athletic director, senior administrator, head coach and full-time assistant coach position in the athletic department.”⁷⁸ We suggest that the spirit of this rule be applied to academic positions and that leaders should put forth a good-faith effort to consider qualified BIPOC faculty for open department-, college-, and university-level leadership positions.⁷⁹

Furthermore, despite the “cultural taxation” concern discussed in Recommendation 25 (p. 46), committee assignments can be an effective way to develop leadership experience and perspective. In these instances, accommodations might be extended to BIPOC faculty to help provide these valuable leadership experiences and to recognize the additional opportunity costs of such duties. For example, BIPOC faculty might receive a course release and have their departmental service requirements removed when providing

77. See <https://www.facultydiversity.org>. At present, more than 200 colleges and universities are members of the NCFDD, including the University of Utah, Stanford, Clemson, Vassar College, the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, Cornell, the University of Arizona, and Texas Tech University. Annual access to the NCFDD can be purchased for an \$495 per individual or \$20,000 per institution.

78. See <https://wccsports.com/news/2020/8/2/general-russell-rule-diversity-hiring-commitment.aspx>.

79. There are instances in which mandating the “Russell Rule” would be unfeasible at BYU. For example, there are departments that have no BIPOC representation and it would be impossible to have a BIPOC faculty member included in the pool of candidates for a leadership position.

substantial service to the university. This would function similarly to individuals who are involved in university rank and status committee work who receive a course release for their efforts. Thus, in theorizing a threshold for the amount of service work that would justify a course release for a BIPOC faculty member, comparing their service time commitment to those who serve on rank and status committees could provide an approximate guideline.



Najee D., technology and engineering studies major.

A NOTE ADDRESSING HISTORICAL ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH RACISM

Since the formation of our committee, we have benefited from the perspectives, experiences, feelings, and ideas of so many people of goodwill who desire to help realize the vision that President Worthen outlined in creating the committee. We feel impressed to address one particular topic of concern expressed by many students, faculty, and alumni who contacted us: BYU building names (see Finding 8, p. 15). We do so in the spirit of President Dallin H. Oaks's October 27, 2020, BYU devotional address "Racism and Other Challenges." In his address, President Oaks stated that concerns about historical issues associated with racism and the continuing pain caused by these issues should be viewed as cries for help. He taught, "Cries for help should be heard, and, in this [university] setting, there are three obvious helps: inspiration, education, and clear thinking." We, therefore, seek to "apply that combination" in this discussion.⁸⁰

A consistent thread that emerged from the communications we received about this issue, especially from our Black BYU community, is the sense of exclusion and pain that has come from having buildings on campus named for individuals who espoused racist beliefs and even enslaved Black people. One prominent proposal that garnered great support recommended that BYU remove all names from buildings.

There has also been a vigorous counter discussion, where some individuals have written to our committee arguing against renaming buildings. They have provided a number of arguments reflecting the complexity of such undertakings, including pointing to the great good many of these individuals did to serve their communities.

These diverging points of view reflect the nature of symbols. Symbols can have different interpretations depending on one's point of view, position, and personal history. For instance, the Emancipation Memorial shows President Abraham Lincoln standing over a kneeling slave whose shackles are broken. Some view this statue in a largely positive light, seeing President Lincoln as a liberator, while others view it negatively in that the slave is positioned to be a supplicant to President Lincoln.

The discussion of renaming buildings at BYU has tapped into a broader and lingering cultural conversation about the importance of symbols and their meanings. Indeed, the naming of buildings after individuals occurs because there is a feature or set of characteristics related to those individuals that are considered venerable by a community, so much so that the community wants to honor them, remember them, and carry on their legacy. Universities and communities across the country are grappling with the complicated legacies of historical figures. Many universities and communities have chosen to remove statues or change building names when the individuals honored have legacies tainted by racism and exploitation.

As a committee, we fully understand that the naming and renaming of buildings is not among the responsibilities of or within the prerogative of the university president or the President's Council. However, the prominence of this concern in our work has compelled us to develop some recommendations that may assist those who feel hurt and excluded to find some healing and peace regarding these issues. The Savior modeled compassionate healing as He mourned with those who mourned, healed the sick and afflicted, lifted the oppressed, and declared that He was sent to bind up the brokenhearted.⁸¹

BIPOC communities are culturally rich and successful, but as a people they have encountered racism—both individual and institutional—that has wounded them and their families. As we heard appeals born of tangible pain from Black students and alumni on this topic, many of them expressed frustration that their

80. Dallin H. Oaks, "Racism and Other Challenges," BYU Devotional, October 27, 2020, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/dallin-h-oaks/racism-other-challenges/>.

81. See 3 Nephi 17:9 and Luke 4:18.

thoughts, feelings, and concerns seem not to have been heard on the larger issue of whom the university honors. Certainly, there are many venerable BIPOC figures from history, including the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who would be worthy of honoring. And where there are complex legacies of honored individuals, there are ways to provide context to address those complexities.

Below, we outline an initial set of options for how BYU might engage with this topic thoughtfully and courageously to effectuate historic and transformative change:

- ♦ Create a memorial on campus to honor and celebrate early BIPOC members of the Church, such as Jane Manning James, Elijah Abel, and others.
- ♦ Create a scholarship program for BIPOC students honoring and named for early BIPOC members of the Church (see Recommendation 17, p. 38).
- ♦ Create an endowed professorship for BIPOC faculty, with the name of the professorship honoring an early BIPOC member of the Church.
- ♦ Develop a land-acknowledgement statement that recognizes that BYU is situated on the traditional homelands of the Ute, Paiute, and Shoshone peoples. Many universities have honored the indigenous people of their region by developing such a statement.⁸²
- ♦ Consider renaming all named buildings on campus to functional names (e.g., Life Sciences Building).
- ♦ If named buildings are not changed to functional names, consider including a contextualizing memorial in each building that is named after a person in order to provide a fuller and more complete background for the individual; such context should include an openness regarding their involvement with slavery or racism, where applicable. This background, by plaque or display, would acknowledge the complexities of history and help us come to terms with our shared history in truthful and nuanced ways. There are buildings that already feature historical facts about the individual for whom the building is named. These could be expanded, as needed, to present a more complete historical picture.
- ♦ Another option would be to follow the pattern of recently constructed buildings on campus such as the Life Sciences Building and the Engineering Building; when named buildings are renovated or replaced, change them to functional names. That said, we thoroughly recognize that the naming of buildings is beyond the purview of the president and President's Council.

We append this note with utmost respect for the complexity and sensitivity of the issues involved and in the hope of fostering a greater sense of belonging at BYU for BIPOC students and alumni, especially in light of the concerns they have so earnestly communicated to us regarding these issues. Although many of the proposals we received were beyond the mandate of our committee to address, we hope that we have offered initial steps that would demonstrate that BYU has heard the concerns of this community and is engaged in the Christlike work of healing.

82. See these examples of indigenous people acknowledgement statements:

- University of Utah: <https://law.utah.edu/news/university-of-utah-releases-tribal-acknowledgment-statement/>
- University of Alberta: <https://www.ualberta.ca/toolkit/communications/acknowledgment-of-traditional-territory.html>



Mahonri A., construction and facilities management major.

CONCLUSION

This interim report is but a first step in what we know will be a long-term endeavor to more fully realize the unity, love, equity, and belonging that should characterize our campus culture and permeate our interactions as disciples of Jesus Christ. That endeavor will require engagement from the whole university as we develop, together, appropriate responses and continue to identify and root out barriers to belonging at BYU.

We sought to deliver this report in a relatively short time frame to ensure that BYU's effort to seek historic, transformative change and healing will begin without delay. By necessity, many of our recommendations will require additional consideration and planning to implement. We are also profoundly conscious of our limitations as a committee and acknowledge that these recommendations, even if all are implemented, will not solve all the problems of belonging. Furthermore, we recognize that as the student body changes, the institution will need to adapt to changing needs.

As these efforts continue, we hope that more members of the university community will take ownership and responsibility for making the necessary changes within their sphere of influence. Indeed, we humbly implore the campus community to follow President Russell M. Nelson's appeal to develop a "passionate desire to build bridges of cooperation instead of walls of segregation."⁸³ Future efforts might focus on such issues as integrating student athletes more fully into the university community, assessing the very real and pressing needs of BIPOC staff and administrators, and enhancing BIPOC representation in marketing materials.

In his January 2021 BYU devotional address, President Kevin J Worthen reminded us that "God is the author of diversity and the source of unity," and he encouraged the campus community to seek unity in God as we embrace the diverse "gifts, talents, experiences, and perspectives of all of God's children." President Worthen entreated, "If we want to achieve our full potential as individuals and as a campus community, we need to emphasize both unity and diversity—both our commonality and our individuality. Without unity, diversity becomes divisive. Without diversity, unity becomes stagnant."⁸⁴

As a committee, we thank President Worthen for leading out in raising the sights of the university to more fully reflect the Christlike value of unity and for inviting us to be part of these historic changes. Our efforts as a committee have demonstrated that there is much work to do and many lessons to be learned. Among the encouraging initial findings is the breadth and depth of people of goodwill at BYU who seek to be part of positive change. With committed leadership and sustained efforts, we envision that 2021 will mark the start of a new era of healing and belonging at BYU.

83. Russell M. Nelson, "Building Bridges," *New Era* (August 2018), <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/new-era/2018/08/be-one/building-bridges?lang=eng>. From an address given June 1, 2018, at "Be One," the 40th anniversary celebration of the 1978 revelation on the priesthood.

84. Kevin J Worthen, "Persevere in Unity," *BYU Devotional*, January 12, 2021, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kevin-j-worthen/unity/>.



Rachel W., sociology major.

APPENDIX A: COMMITTEE ON RACE, EQUITY, AND BELONGING PURPOSE AND MISSION STATEMENT

The BYU Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging is united and deeply committed to realizing the recent call to action and reflecting the united declaration of leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the NAACP that educational institutions “review processes, [policies], and organizational attitudes regarding racism and root them out.”⁸⁵ In his charge to the committee, President Kevin J Worthen acknowledged the historic nature of the committee’s commission and the transformative potential of the work we are asked to undertake in accomplishing this declaration and call to action at BYU. Racism—whether implicit or overt, whether individual or institutional—is a highly destructive and complex feature of our society. Indeed, it is a sin, with consequences that detrimentally impact the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of BYU students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Rooting out racism, healing its wounds, and building bridges of understanding is the responsibility of every member of the BYU community. That effort begins with understanding and living the two greatest commandments given to us by the Master Healer, Jesus Christ: to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves (see Matthew 22:35–39). In this spirit of love, we will address racism, promote equity, and enhance belonging at BYU by

- ◆ listening to our beloved Black BYU community to understand how racism has frustrated and continues to frustrate their experiences at BYU;
- ◆ inviting the input of all of our beloved Black, indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) at BYU as well as those committed to ridding BYU of racism through the establishment of racial equity and belonging;
- ◆ conducting a thorough quantitative and qualitative review of how processes, policies, practices, procedures, operations, and attitudes impact our BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ◆ identifying the issues that negatively impact the prosperity of our BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ◆ drawing on the expertise of individual faculty and administrators within BYU to understand both the subtle and overt ways that racism may impact individual thought and interactions, organizational units, processes, policies, practices, procedures, and operations; and
- ◆ creating, prioritizing, and presenting a comprehensive set of recommendations that will assist BYU to advance racial understanding, enhance equity, and promote belonging and that will have a significant and enduring positive impact on the prosperity of our BIPOC communities at BYU.

In accomplishing its purpose and mission, the committee is committed to transparency and will maintain consistent communication with the BYU community concerning its progress. We also recognize that our charge extends beyond a single time frame or set of recommendations; therefore, we seek to launch an iterative process that will require consistent attention to create and maintain a racially equitable campus. The committee eagerly looks forward to assisting to root out racism at BYU so that every member of our BYU community “might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

July 2020

⁸⁵ Nelson, Johnson, Russell, and Brown, “Locking Arms.”

APPENDIX B: PROPOSED CHARTER FOR A STANDING COMMITTEE ON RACE, EQUITY, AND BELONGING

Purpose and Mission Statement

The BYU Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging is united and deeply committed to realizing the recent call to action and reflecting the united declaration of leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the NAACP that educational institutions “review processes, [policies], and organizational attitudes regarding racism and root them out.”⁸⁶ In his charge to the committee, President Kevin J Worthen acknowledged the historic nature of the committee’s commission and the transformative potential of the work we are asked to undertake in accomplishing this declaration and call to action at BYU. Racism—whether implicit or overt, whether individual or institutional—is a highly destructive and complex feature of our society. Indeed, it is a sin, with consequences that detrimentally impact the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of BYU students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Rooting out racism, healing its wounds, and building bridges of understanding is the responsibility of every member of the BYU community. That effort begins with understanding and living the two greatest commandments given to us by the Master Healer, Jesus Christ: to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves (see Matthew 22:35–39). In this spirit of love, we will address racism, promote equity, and enhance belonging at BYU by

- ♦ listening to our beloved Black BYU community to understand how racism has frustrated and continues to frustrate their experiences at BYU;
- ♦ inviting the input of all of our beloved Black, indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) at BYU as well as those committed to ridding BYU of racism through the establishment of racial equity and belonging;
- ♦ conducting a thorough quantitative and qualitative review of how processes, policies, practices, procedures, operations, and attitudes impact our BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ♦ identifying the issues that negatively impact the prosperity of our BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ♦ drawing on the expertise of individual faculty and administrators within BYU to understand both the subtle and overt ways that racism may impact individual thought and interactions, organizational units, processes, policies, practices, procedures, and operations; and
- ♦ creating, prioritizing, and presenting a comprehensive set of recommendations that will assist BYU to advance racial understanding, enhance equity, and promote belonging and that will have a significant and enduring positive impact on the prosperity of our BIPOC communities at BYU.

In accomplishing its purpose and mission, the committee is committed to transparency and will maintain consistent communication with the BYU community concerning its progress. We also recognize that our charge extends beyond a single time frame or set of recommendations; therefore, we seek to launch an iterative process that will require consistent attention to create and maintain a racially equitable campus. The committee eagerly looks forward to assisting to root out racism at BYU so that every member of our BYU community “might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

⁸⁶ Nelson, Johnson, Russell, and Brown, “Locking Arms.”

Membership

- ♦ The committee consists of no more than a total of nine members at any time. The academic vice president serves as the chair of the committee. The academic vice president, with a majority vote from the committee, may appoint a vice chair from the existing committee members. When the academic vice president and vice chair cannot attend a meeting, they designate a committee member to act as chair of the meeting.
- ♦ Other than the academic vice president, members of the committee may serve no longer than a three-year term. Additional one-year terms may be granted to standing members of the committee, with standing members serving no more than three one-year terms beyond their original appointment term. Additional one-year terms are voted on by the committee and must be approved by a two-thirds supermajority vote of the standing members of the committee. Initial appointments to the committee will be staggered to preserve institutional memory and to provide diverse perspectives on the committee. Three members will be appointed for three-year terms, three will be appointed for two-year terms, and two will be appointed for one-year terms.
- ♦ The composition of the committee may consist of any faculty, staff, or administrative employee at BYU. There must be no less than three faculty members serving on the committee, not including the academic vice president. The committee will have at least one member from University Communications.
- ♦ Those who accept a position on the committee must commit to fulfill the goals stated in the Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging's purpose and mission statement.
- ♦ New committee members may be nominated by the university president, the President's Council, or by standing committee members submitted through the academic vice president.
- ♦ The committee may invite ad hoc members as needed to address particular issues.
- ♦ The committee may form ad hoc subcommittees. Subcommittee members do not have voting privileges.

Meetings

The committee shall meet at least monthly. A record of committee meeting discussions, recommendations, and actions shall be made in minutes recorded for each meeting. A majority of the members of the committee constitutes a quorum and any recommendation or action of the committee will require a majority vote of the standing members of the committee.

Responsibilities

Consistent with its purpose and mission statement, the committee will

- ♦ provide leadership for BYU that will advance racial understanding, enhance equity, and promote belonging and prosperity for BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ♦ conduct meetings, forums, focus groups, personal interviews, surveys, and collaborative work to understand how racism has frustrated and continues to frustrate the experiences of BIPOC communities at BYU;

- ◆ access, gather, and evaluate university data and assess how university processes, policies, practices, procedures, operations, and attitudes impact BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ◆ create, prioritize, and report an initial set of comprehensive recommendations that will assist BYU to advance racial understanding, enhance equity, and promote belonging and that will have a significant and enduring positive impact on the prosperity of our BIPOC communities at BYU;
- ◆ continuously monitor and assess issues related to race, equity, and belonging in all BYU organizational units, processes, policies, practices, procedures, and operations;
- ◆ recommend the allocation of resources, programming, and training that will assist BYU to achieve its goal of advancing racial understanding, enhancing equity, and promoting belonging for its BIPOC communities;
- ◆ communicate regularly with stakeholders and present an annual report on the state of racial understanding, equity, and belonging at BYU.

The committee will regularly review and update this charter, as necessary.

APPENDIX C. FOSTERING AN ENRICHED ENVIRONMENT POLICY

“The mission of Brigham Young University—founded, supported, and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life. That assistance should provide a period of intensive learning in a stimulating setting where a commitment to excellence is expected and the full realization of human potential is pursued.”⁸⁷

To this end, the university seeks qualified students of various talents and backgrounds, including geographic, educational, cultural, ethnic, and racial, who relate together in such a manner that they are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). It is the university’s judgment that providing educational opportunities for a mix of students who share values based on the gospel of Jesus Christ and who come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences is an important educational asset to BYU.

Approved: January 23, 2012

87. BYU, Mission Statement.