

2021 Presidents Commission on Racial Justice Year One Update

Overview

In June 2020, the President's Commission on Racial Justice: Transforming Campus Culture was appointed to advance the PCOM 2025 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan. The Commission, which includes the leaders of five Work Groups, aims to:

- Gather information and data
- Engage in thoughtful conversations to identify priorities and initiatives
- Develop recommendations to advance Work Group priorities
- Develop action steps and timeline

Each Work Group represents faculty, staff, and students from the Philadelphia, Georgia, and South Georgia campuses. An external consultant, Path Forward, who brings expertise in organizational and cultural change, works closely with the Commission to support their efforts to advance racial equity and inclusion for all members of the PCOM community. To this end, all members of the executive leadership team are participating in a series of trainings facilitated by the consultant on topics focused on: unconscious bias, race in the workplace, allyship, inclusive leadership, and generational diversity.

We are proud of our work to date on the President's Commission on Racial Justice and encourage you to listen to the recordings from our Town Halls on myPCOM that can be accessed on the President's Commission on Racial Justice webpage. The Town Halls provide specificity on how we advanced each of the five Work Group priorities during the first year of our presidential appointment. This report highlights our Work Group priorities and our progress during our first year.

Please contact the Work Group Chair with feedback and/or questions regarding the progress of a specific Work Group.

Work Group Priorities and Progress:

- **Underrepresented Minorities in Medicine Student Recruitment Work Group**
(Chair, Adrienne Jones, Chief Admissions Officer)

Priorities:

- Expand pipeline programs at the secondary and undergraduate educational levels through affiliations with minority serving institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI's) and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).
- Offer more diversity scholarships.

Progress:

- The Work Group submitted a thorough review of affiliation and articulation agreements with a goal of creating new agreements to grow additional enrollment with a specific focus on underrepresented minorities in medicine (URIM) recruitment.

New agreements for 2021 signed and/or in progress with:

- Florida A&M University
 - Morgan State University
 - Launched the Physician Assistant Diversity Scholarship Award to recruit prospective URIM physician assistant's candidates in order to grow a diverse workforce.
 - Convened a Town Hall to present a comprehensive overview of progress made during year one.
- **Underrepresented Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention Work Group**
(Chair, Christina Mazzella, Chief Human Resource Officer)

Priorities:

- Create a URM outreach plan after researching best practices.
- Develop a protocol to ensure all search committees include diverse interviewers.

Progress:

- Contracted with Willis Towers Watson, an external consultant, that examined competitive and fair compensation for Black faculty; conducted a competitive analysis across institutions of higher education.
- Established partnerships with search firms, including Merritt Hawkins and CCI Human Resource Consulting, to ensure job announcements reflect inclusive language.
- Developed search committee training to ensure all committees include diverse interviewers.

- **Culturally Responsive/Racial Justice Curriculum Work Group
(Chair, Linda Atkinson, Associate Provost, Accreditation, Growth, and Development)**

Priority:

- Integrate a cultural competency course into the medical education curriculum that includes training and programmatic material mandated for all students and faculty.

Progress

- Developed a diversity, equity, and inclusion glossary.
- Created a diversity, equity, and inclusion statement for syllabi.
- Recommended recognition of DO students completing the Cultural Competency Program on the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).
- Created a Director of Health Equity Curricular Initiatives position.

- **Underrepresented Minorities in Medicine Student Retention Work Group**
(Chair, Patience Mason, Chief Student Affairs Officer)

Priority:

- Gather information related to student retention.

Progress

- Disseminated survey to gather data about the retention needs of all students.
- Convened a Town Hall and presented the survey data to faculty, staff, and students.
- Established next steps to include:
 - Develop and implement advisor training to provide specialized academic support and advisement.
 - Develop and implement empathy training for faculty and staff to provide support for students who are struggling, in crises, or experiencing challenges.

- **Bias Discrimination Reporting and Support Work Group**
(Chair, Isaiah Lopez, Director of Risk Management)

Priority:

- Create a system to allow PCOM students and employees to report incidents of racial bias and discrimination.

Progress:

- Established EthicsPoint as a report and support system which allows members of the PCOM community to anonymously report incidents of implicit bias, microaggressions, and explicit racism perpetrated by faculty, guest lecturers, staff, and students without fear of retaliation.
- Convened a Town Hall that reviewed and reported on policies and procedures followed by the Compliance Office after an incident is reported.
- Increased awareness and visibility of the EthicsPoint system by adding a link directly to the My.PCOM website header.
- Emailed communications to the PCOM community regarding the protocols for EthicsPoint and non-discrimination policies.
- Disseminated survey questions to gather data on the awareness of PCOM policies and protocols related to bias and discrimination reporting.
- Increased physical signage around the three PCOM campuses related to the EthicsPoint reporting system.