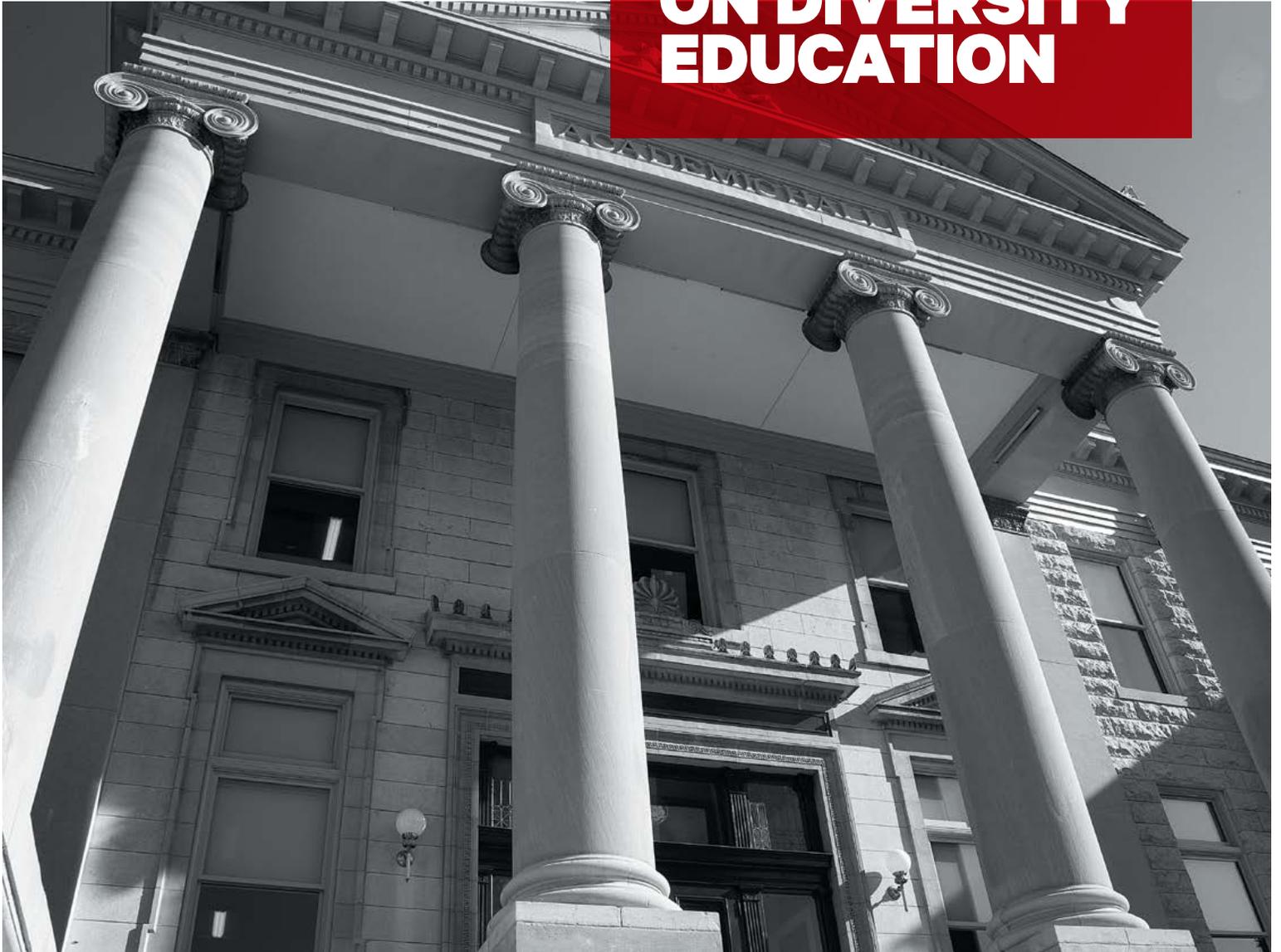




**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI**  
STATE UNIVERSITY · 1873

# **PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON DIVERSITY EDUCATION**



## **FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

SUBMITTED  
DECEMBER 20, 2015

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the last 18 months, several high-profile incidents involving law enforcement and the judicial response related to deaths of black men have sparked national protests. In the aftermath, students in Missouri and throughout the country have advocated for improved race relations on college campuses. These ongoing national debates provided the initial context for the work of the President's Task Force on Diversity Education at Southeast Missouri State University. While the Task Force has largely focused on race relations, the recommendations in this report support pursuit of a just and inclusive community that embraces all of its members, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, genetic information, disability, or protected veteran status.

Formulation of the Task Force began in November 2014, following the initial student protest. Five student-led peaceful demonstrations or protests have occurred on the Southeast campus, most of which were met with racist comments on anonymous social media sites. Student demonstrators met with administrators, the Department of Public Safety, Student Government Association and the Task Force. The recommendations in this document represent their voice as well as those heard in discussions with campus constituent groups.

In response to concerns expressed by members of the University community regarding support for culturally diverse students; the need for diverse representation among students, faculty, staff and engaged alumni; and quality training and professional development which would increase cultural competence among these groups, the Task Force offers the following as a vision for the University:

*Southeast Missouri State University will be a campus community where individuals from all backgrounds will feel welcomed, respected and included; and where the campus community engages in best practices to promote cultural competence and inclusion in all aspects of its work as demonstrated by the following:*

- 1. Leadership Commitment:** The University's administration and campus leaders should be committed to creating and sustaining a campus climate that is respectful, safe and welcoming for all students, faculty, staff and alumni.
- 2. Campus Diversity Statement:** The University should develop a campus diversity statement and establish cultural competency as an institutional priority embedded in the University's curriculum, orientation programs, hiring practices and campuswide events.
- 3. Strategic Plan:** The University should develop a *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion* that complements the University's Strategic Plan and annual planning processes.
- 4. Accountability and Oversight:** A University standing committee, the *University Equity and Inclusion Committee*, should be created to promote multicultural awareness, equity and inclusion and to monitor institutional progress toward the goals set forth in the *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion*.
- 5. Training and Professional Development:** Faculty and staff should be encouraged and expected to participate in new employee diversity training and ongoing professional development. Faculty should continue to review their pedagogy to ensure their teaching methods and practices are culturally responsive to the student population.
- 6. Curriculum Review:** The curriculum should be enhanced by incorporating general education diversity elements and attributes and expanding the availability of course offerings that discuss diversity.

- 7. Student Access, Engagement and Success:** The student experience should be evaluated to provide all students with knowledge of and access to a coherent framework of academic and co-curricular programs, leadership programs, mentorship and career development initiatives to support college student persistence and graduation.
- 8. Alumni Engagement:** The University community should continue to work collaboratively to develop an inclusive strategy to engage all alumni, including diverse groups within the alumni population.
- 9. Honoring History:** The University should commission a study of the historical participation of minority student populations enrolled and honor the history and traditions of these students and their achievements.

Measuring the campus climate was thought to be an important initial step in this process; however, the Task Force acknowledges there is sufficient evidence that Southeast has room for improvement. Though not comprehensive, benchmarking data from a variety of institutional surveys should be used to formulate the initial knowledge base of the campus climate. These recommendations place a priority on education and training, beginning with administrative and academic leaders in spring 2016, and developing a *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion*. These are necessary actions to create and sustain a campus climate that is respectful, safe and welcoming.

In conversations with faculty, the Task Force learned that student advocacy for improved race relations and a wide array of global events is influencing the teaching and learning experience. To further encourage and coordinate these efforts, the Task Force recommends that division, college and department level diversity action plans be developed to support an institution-wide *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion*. An effective leadership training program will provide direction for the development of these plans.

The Task Force acknowledges that without responsible student leadership and mentorship of students, this report would not exist. Listening to the concerns and enthusiastic ideas expressed by students has and will continue to be vital to advancing the mission of the University.

**“Southeast Missouri State University values access to high quality, affordable education with a broadly representative student body, faculty, and staff that respect and celebrate a diverse learning community in a global society.”**

— 2014 Strategic Plan, Statement of Values

## BACKGROUND

On August 10, 2014, days before the beginning of the fall 2014 semester at Southeast Missouri State University, protests occurred in Ferguson, Missouri as a result of the death of Michael Brown. At the time of this ongoing unrest, Southeast contacted its more than 300 students from the Ferguson-Florissant vicinity and invited the students to return to school early.

On November 24, 2014, the St. Louis Grand Jury released its decision not to indict Officer Darren Wilson for the shooting death of Michael Brown, reigniting protests and further unrest in Ferguson and communities nationwide. College campuses were, and continue to be, the site of demonstrations and protests. The following day, approximately 75 Southeast students protested in front of Kent Library in support of Black Lives Matter, a movement calling for “a comprehensive plan that will address persistent and ongoing forms of racial discrimination and disparities that exist in nearly every sphere of life, including criminal justice, employment, housing, education, health, land/property, voting, poverty, and immigration.”<sup>i</sup> Southeast administrators visited with the students and made themselves available to meet at a later date.

The following Monday, students contacted the administration. A series of meetings followed in December 2014 and January 2015, laying the groundwork for the President’s Task Force on Diversity Education. Meetings involved various members of the administration and the Department of Public Safety. Within two weeks of the first student protest, several of the students met with the Student Government Executive Board and publicly addressed the Student Government Association. Following their testimony, the Association spent 90 minutes discussing race relations. In the following semester, three African-American students involved in the protests served on the Student Government Association.

Then-President Kenneth W. Dobbins announced formation of the President’s Task Force on Diversity Education at the 2015 Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Dinner, where he also denounced the continuous exhibition of racism and hatred posted on social media sites in response to student activism.

The Task Force was established to meet for a limited time (March through December 2015) to consider the underlying issues (Attachment 1) that led to the protest events in Ferguson, Missouri, and the aftermath of protests nationwide and to make recommendations to improve diversity education at Southeast. Attachment 2 lists members, Attachment 3 documents the timeline of events, and Attachment 4 defines terminology associated with the Task Force. The Task Force was asked to identify initiatives to advance the awareness and understanding of issues related to race, ethnicity and national origin in a university setting. Furthermore, the Task Force was formed to foster positive professional and social interactions among the University’s diverse population of students, faculty, and staff and to provide the president with recommendations for further consideration and action.

This report represents the findings and recommendations of this Task Force. The Task Force acknowledges the need to address diversity in all of its manifestations; however, the time constraint was instrumental in focusing the group on African-American students. This report is a result of these focused findings, yet if implemented, will move Southeast in the direction of becoming a more diverse, more welcoming, more respectful, and more culturally responsive institution.

## Acknowledgement of Past and Ongoing Efforts

The recommendations in this report build on a long legacy of diversity and inclusion efforts at Southeast. Though not a comprehensive timeline, this demonstrates a historical commitment to the use of training, professional development and unit-level planning, as well as a commitment of financial resources to meet established diversity goals related to race and ethnicity.

Additional efforts from 2012 to present demonstrate a commitment to realizing Southeast’s vision of becoming a campus community where individuals from all backgrounds will feel welcomed, respected and included.

<b>1981</b>	Board of Regents adopted policy goals and objectives for an affirmative action plan. <sup>ii</sup>
<b>1989</b>	President established the Task Force on Ethnic Diversity. <sup>iii</sup>
<b>1989</b>	Provost sent memo to all deans, directors and department chairpersons inviting their contribution to the “Task Force on Ethnic Diversity-Plan of Action.”
<b>1990</b>	North Central Association (NCA) review cites “Evidence of racial unrest as reflected in the ‘Quality of Institutional Student Life,’ the report of the Task Force on Ethnic Diversity, and as reported to the Evaluation Team needs to be addressed.” <sup>iv</sup>
<b>1995</b>	SW207, Understanding Social and Cultural Diversity, was created as a University Studies course fulfilling the social systems requirement.
<b>1997</b>	Diversity report states, “While the Caucasian population continues to grow in a rather significant fashion, albeit still not at the desired rate, the number of enrolled African-American and international students reflects a steady decline. As to African-American students, such a decline is inconsistent with the University’s mission statement and fails to replicate the African-American presence in the University’s service region.” The report included individual reports on campus diversity from each college and division.
<b>1997</b>	University established the Michael Davis Lecture series to recognize the contributions of African-Americans in the media. The event honors the late Michael Davis, a journalism student at Southeast.
<b>1997</b>	University established the President’s Commission on Minority Affairs.
<b>1997</b>	Training and Development compiled an extensive set of diversity programming resources.
<b>1997</b>	University established the Office of Minority Student Programs. Now known as Educational Access Programs, the department is part of the Academic Support Centers. Other departments in this area include Learning Assistance Programs, McNair Scholars, Plan for College, and Student Support Services.
<b>1997-1999</b>	Training and Development implemented the first campuswide diversity program, <i>Embracing the University Portrait</i> . The first year of the program was devoted to raising awareness of diversity issues. During the second year, the focus shifted to the improvement of campus community using the six principles outlined in the Carnegie Foundation book, <i>Campus Life: In Search of Community</i> . Small group discussions called “Conversations on Community” were coordinated by Training and Development. Results of the conversations were compiled into a report, “Embracing the University Portrait: Developing Community.” Focal points of the report included developing a campus community that is open, just and disciplined.

<b>1998-1999</b>	Several diversity-related workshops were offered by the Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning and Student Support Services. As an example, Dr. Ronald Takaki, University of California-Berkeley, presented “How to Create a Multicultural Curriculum for the Next Century.”
<b>2000</b>	Southeast reports significant efforts to improve campus climate in NCA Self-Study: establishment of Office of Minority Student Programs, faculty and staff training, continuation of Minority Mentor program, the President’s Commission on Minority Affairs, election of two minority students as president of Student Government, collaboration with the Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce to sponsor initiatives designed to improve the community climate for minority students. <sup>v</sup>
<b>2004</b>	Board of Regents approve the new Redhawks nickname and discontinue the use of Native American nicknames. The Board accepted the recommendations of a committee, acknowledging that the designation of Native American people as nicknames and mascots can be viewed as insensitive and offensive. <sup>vi</sup>
<b>2008</b>	Established first of 15 partnerships with community-based college access programs to provide a seamless transition from high school to college for low income and first generation students.
<b>2012</b>	Established the Office of Military and Veterans Services.
<b>2014</b>	Implemented Safe Zone training with regular training dates offered. President included Safe Zone training in a regularly scheduled Administrative Council meeting and encouraged further campus participation.
<b>2014</b>	Board of Regents updated the nondiscrimination policy to include prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information and protected veteran status (Attachment 9).
<b>2014</b>	Board of Regents adopts a new strategic plan that includes an “Access and Diversity” value statement and an objective to “create a healthy, safe, and <i>inclusive</i> learning environment for students by providing a complete array of support services including academic and career advising, recreation, counseling, and health and wellness education to enable students to get the full benefit of their academic and personal development.” <sup>vii</sup>
<b>2014</b>	Established the LGBT Resource Center.
<b>2014</b>	Provost leads effort to improve faculty awareness of educating students with disabilities.
<b>2015</b>	Secured consulting services to conduct a review of International Student Services in January 2016.

**“I believe that today’s students, more than ever before, need to be able to function effectively in a society that includes people from groups with distinct characteristics. Diversity, in all its manifestations, enriches students’ educational experience, enhances their personal lives, and prepares them for successful careers in the domestic and global economy.”**

— President Carlos Vargas

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Leadership Commitment

**The University's administration and campus leaders should be committed to creating and sustaining a campus climate that is respectful, safe and welcoming for all students, faculty, staff and alumni.**

To reach our full potential as a university with a broadly representative student body, faculty and staff that respect and celebrate a diverse learning community in a global society,<sup>viii</sup> University leaders must demonstrate a measurable commitment to this value statement.

Inclusive excellence, critical to the health and functioning of colleges and universities, begins at the highest level of administrative authority, is expressed prominently in institutional missions and strategic plans, and is supported through meaningful allocations of fiscal, human, and physical resources.<sup>ix</sup>

The Task Force recommends hiring a national campus climate consultant to engage the University in a long-term strategy to achieve this goal. The Task Force recommends a consistent training program for the University's leadership team to empower campus leaders to set the tone for the rest of the campus.

As an example, DiversityWorks, Inc. provides a multi-year approach involving training university leaders, assessing campus climate, and re-engaging the campus in further training activities as appropriate. A 12-month educational program is suggested. The training consists of six workshops completed by up to 80 employees. Topics include:

- a. An overview of diversity work, issues and concerns in education
- b. Understanding how biases, assumptions and stereotypes impact educational climate and achievement
- c. Creating inclusive educational communities for culturally diverse and minority students – seeing the school/college as a social system
- d. The Hidden Curriculum: Causes and Effects of Intercultural Conflict in the Classroom
- e. The Chilly Climate in the Classroom: Creating Inclusive Classrooms for Culturally Diverse and Minority Students
- f. The Chilly Climate Outside the Classroom: Creating Inclusive Student Support Systems for Culturally Diverse and Minority Students

Prior evaluations of this program indicate that participants acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the barriers that minority students face; increase their awareness of their roles in creating inclusive classrooms and campuses; and plan to implement changes.<sup>x</sup>

## 2. Campus Diversity Statement

**The University should develop a campus diversity statement and establish cultural competency as an institutional priority embedded in the University’s curriculum, orientation programs, hiring practices and campuswide events.**

Although the University’s Strategic Plan includes several diversity-specific priorities, goals and objectives, adopting a commitment to diversity and inclusion that is visible to students, faculty, staff and the community is an essential first step to guide implementation of these recommendations.

A Campus Diversity Statement will provide the foundation for building cultural competency exercises into orientation programs, hiring practices and campuswide events (e.g., convocations, Speakers Series, recognition programs, commencements) and will serve as a guide for divisions, colleges and departments developing action plans. Consequently, the Task Force recommends that a Campus Diversity Statement be adopted in spring 2016.

Current Value Statement: Southeast Missouri State University values access to high quality, affordable education with a broadly representative student body, faculty, and staff that respect and celebrate a diverse learning community in a global society.

**“Perhaps it’s time for a different approach. Rather than urging tolerance, it’s time we communicate the real benefits that diversity brings—to society, to creativity, to efficiency, and to the ‘bottom line’ ... the most creative and innovative ideas seldom emerge from individuals or homogenous groups, but rather are born from people with differing skills, experiences, and perspectives coming together. Research on the topic is definitive: When properly managed, diverse teams combining multiple perspectives, skill sets, and functional backgrounds tend to outperform those lacking in diversity.”**

– Fortune Magazine commentary by Ned Smith, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, November 14, 2015

### 3. Strategic Plan

**The University should develop a *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion* that complements the University's Strategic Plan and annual planning processes.**

The University should develop a plan for the recruitment, development and retention of a diverse student body, faculty and staff which accept, respect and reflect an inclusive educational community. The plan should create a campus/work climate which values and respects all individuals and does not condone discrimination in any form.

The Task Force recommends development of a *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion*:

- a. That requires divisions, colleges and departments to establish diversity goals and initiatives annually to recruit, develop and retain a faculty and staff that reflect the diversity of the Southeast student body. Retention efforts should include the development of mentoring programs or affinity or employee resource groups.<sup>xi</sup>
- b. That encourages the professional development of historically underrepresented students and exposes them to career opportunities within higher education.
- c. That supports campus and community events to promote engagement, cultural awareness and a more inclusive educational environment.
- d. To ensure employees are evaluated on their performance relative to the value statements reflected in the University's Strategic Plan. As an example, the University could adopt the widely used industry practice of defining the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) required to perform a job.
- e. That is sustainable and obtainable with objectives, goals, benchmarks and an assessment process to evaluate the engagement, retention and professional development opportunities for target populations.
- f. That establishes diversity recruitment and retention as a function in the responsibilities and job descriptions of hiring managers.
- g. That engages with community partners, institutions, or organizations to increase college access and opportunities to recruit minorities, women and other diverse targeted populations for faculty or staff positions (e.g., Hispanic serving institutions, historically black colleges and universities, local civic or community-based organizations in the University's service region).

#### 4. Accountability and Oversight

**A University standing committee, the *University Equity and Inclusion Committee*, should be created to promote multicultural awareness, equity and inclusion and to monitor institutional progress toward the goals set forth in the *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion*.**

The Task Force recommends that the existing *University Equity Issues Committee* be replaced by a similar committee with a revised charge and membership. A suggested charge for the *University Equity and Inclusion Committee* is as follows:

- a. Planning: Monitor and implement initiatives for inclusion; further develop, coordinate and implement the recommendations and initiatives set by the President's Task Force on Diversity Education.
- b. Policy and Procedures: Assist in the implementation, monitoring, and review of equity policies and procedures.
- c. Accountability: Create an annual report on diversity and inclusion that documents progress made on goals set forth in the *Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion*.
- d. Recruitment and Retention: Recommend initiatives for the recruitment of underrepresented groups to faculty and staff positions, as well as efforts to retain employees.

The Task Force recommends that the committee report to the president and be chaired by the coordinator of institutional equity and diversity.

Suggested membership includes:

- Faculty (one per college and Kent Library) (2-year term)
- One undergraduate student nominated by Student Government (1-year term)
- Two undergraduate students nominated by the dean of students (1-year term)
- One graduate student nominated by the School of Graduate Studies (1-year term)
- One Professional Staff Council representative (1-year term)
- One Clerical-Technical-Service Staff Council representative (1-year term)
- One staff member from Enrollment Management and Student Success (2-year term)
- One staff member from Finance and Administration (2-year term)
- One staff member from University Advancement (2-year term)
- Non-rotating members to be appointed by the president

## 5. Training and Professional Development

**Faculty and staff should be encouraged and expected to participate in new employee diversity training and ongoing professional development. Faculty should continue to review their pedagogy to ensure their teaching methods and practices are culturally responsive to the student population.**

The Task Force met with several campus constituent groups, many of which suggested offering diversity education to new employees and developing an ongoing professional development program. Employees acknowledged that the composition of the student body is changing and that more training is needed (See Attachment 6). As Attachment 7 shows, 21 percent of today's student population is non-white, as compared to 12 percent a decade ago. (These numbers exclude Unknown/Not Reported.) Attachments 8 and 9 demonstrate the trend toward a more diverse student body will continue.

The Task Force recommends:

- a. That the University evaluate and provide the needed resources to deliver an effective, sustainable diversity training and professional development program. Specifically, employees expressed interest in participating in face-to-face training in small groups, as opposed to online training.
- b. That each college/department work together to incorporate a commitment to diversity. This commitment should include recognition of efforts made by faculty to make their teaching more culturally responsive as a formal part of the tenure, promotion, and merit policies of the University.
- c. That the Faculty Handbook be revised to include diversity and culturally responsive teaching efforts in the list of criteria that counts as effective teaching.
- d. That the Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning implement a regular series of workshops (at least one per semester) dedicated to issues of diversity and cultural inclusion in the classroom, including the online classroom.
- e. That Clerical-Technical-Service Staff receive training opportunities so that credit may be applied toward CAP/CAP-OM certification for completing diversity training.
- f. That dedicated funds, both University and donor designated, be set aside to increase the diversity of students participating in internships, leadership training, and faculty research activities.

**“You don’t know what you don’t know. If you don’t know what you’re doing right or wrong, you can’t adjust.”**

— Statement on the importance of diversity and inclusion training by Kevin Windham, Southeast corporate communication major

## 6. Curriculum Review

**The curriculum should be enhanced by incorporating general education diversity elements and attributes and expanding the availability of course offerings that discuss diversity.**

The Task Force identified several opportunities for scholarship and curriculum development on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, ability, socioeconomic status and other related areas.

Graduates of Southeast should be prepared to function effectively in a diverse society. Diversity, in all its manifestations, enriches students' educational experience, enhances their personal lives, and prepares them for successful careers in the domestic and global economy. All students should have access to a wide array of course offerings and course content that will adequately prepare them for work and life in this global economy.

The Task Force recommends:

- a. That the University Studies Council, in the course of its review of the University Studies program, add a diversity component to the general education requirements at Southeast. The Task Force does not make specific recommendations as to whether this component be a specific course, a course chosen by departments or colleges, or incorporated broadly throughout the curriculum.
- b. That academic departments continue to update curricula to incorporate diverse content as appropriate. As an example, the Department of Psychology added a diversity requirement to the psychology major core in academic year 2016.
- c. That additional funds be allocated to Funding For Results to establish a competitive process by which faculty and staff may seek funding to implement culturally responsive teaching methods that will enhance the teaching and learning process.
- d. That Academic Affairs request that academic colleges and schools submit recommendations for expansion of diversity and inclusion course offerings. As part of this review, faculty expressed ideas for diversifying the curriculum, if funding were available. Examples in the areas of business administration, religious studies, history, and theatre and dance were shared.
- e. That Academic Affairs assess the value of adding concentrations or minors related to ethnic and gender studies. A review of peer institutions found that academic minors in these areas are common. Such programs can provide students with a deep understanding of the historical, social, economic, cultural, and political experiences of minority groups in the United States. Possible offerings include, but are not limited to, African-American studies, disability studies, international studies, Latin American studies, Native American studies, urban studies, and women and gender studies.
- f. That a pool of dedicated funds be established to support increased participation in internships, undergraduate teaching assistant activities, and faculty research activities by members of underrepresented populations with a goal of increasing the number of persons from underrepresented populations interested in and ready to pursue advanced degrees and join the professoriate.

## 7. Student Access, Engagement and Success

**The student experience should be evaluated to provide all students with knowledge of and access to a coherent framework of academic and co-curricular programs, leadership programs, mentorship and career development initiatives to support college student persistence and graduation.**

While Southeast has established a reputation for developing successful college access and completion opportunities, more awareness and support for these programs is needed. The University offers an array of student outreach, recruitment, orientation, integration, mentorship and leadership development programs. The faculty and staff responsible for these programs should be provided training to assure the programs are equitable and inclusive. Further developing opportunities for underrepresented students to engage in supportive services and co-curricular programs will strengthen student connections within the University community and foster academic success.

The Task Force recommends:

- a. That recruitment and outreach strategies be reviewed and supported financially to ensure they continue to support the recruitment of diverse students and expand the college access pipeline for more first generation and low-income students. Suggested areas for review include the Multicultural Showcase program, financial aid awareness and outreach in the service region, and pre-college programming.
- b. That new student orientation and engagement programs be reviewed to assess the level of participation of diverse students and parents and plans be developed to increase the participation of diverse students in co-curricular programs.
- c. That programming designed to provide mentoring and career development be assessed and expanded, as appropriate, to meet the needs of underrepresented student populations.
- d. That, as appropriate, academic departments support the establishment of professional organization and association student chapters that support the career development of historically underrepresented students. Attachment 10 provides a list of professional organizations and associations with African-American student chapters.
- e. That the University support student interest in instituting an annual Sankofa Ceremony to mark the transition of African-American students between key life points and further tie them to the larger Southeast community (Attachment 11).
- f. That the University work to ensure a diverse representation of students is included in student leadership roles and on University committees with student representation.

## 8. Alumni Engagement

**The University community should continue to work collaboratively to develop an inclusive strategy to engage all alumni, including diverse groups within the alumni population.**

Reach out to a diverse group of alumni to provide a base for mentors, role models and future donors.

The Task Force recommends:

- a. That the University continues to host events for alumni in communities of color, international communities, urban areas outside of St. Louis and rural areas. Resources need to be made available to fulfill this effort.
- b. That the University supports faculty in efforts to reach out to alumni in cities where they may have academic meetings, conferences and workshops.
- c. That a diverse array of alumni be invited to present different topics to students.
- d. That meetings continue with the Southeast Missouri University Foundation and Alumni Association staff in order to evaluate such efforts and modify when necessary.
- e. That the University works to ensure a diverse representation of alumni is included on all University advisory committees and boards.

## 9. Honoring History

**The University should commission a study of the historical participation of minority student populations enrolled and honor the history and traditions of these students and their achievements.**

The Task Force recommends:

- a. That the University update and display the exhibition of historical African-American achievements and institutional contributions, previously on display in the University Center.
- b. That the University continue to enhance the *Diversity at Southeast* website by sharing the important historical institutional events that led to the enrollment and development of today's current diverse student population.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Timeline of Events

#### 2014

November 25	Students lead peaceful protest following the grand jury decision announcement that Darren Wilson would not be indicted in the fatal shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Members of University administration visit with students during the protest.
December 1	Southeast students hold second protest in support of Ferguson protest.
December 1	Southeast student involved in local and St. Louis area protests contacts dean of students to request meeting with administration.
December 5	Students involved in protests meet with administrators for the first time.
December 8	Students, administrators and Department of Public Safety officers meet.
December 8	Approximately 10 students involved in protests meet with Student Government Association (SGA), University president and other administrators to talk about diversity on campus and next steps.

#### 2015

January 21	Then-President Ken Dobbins announces plans to form the President's Task Force on Diversity Education at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Dinner and denounces racist comments made through social media.
February 25	Student Government Association hosts an open forum asking students the kind of format they would respond to in regard to diversity education.
March 11	The President's Task Force on Diversity Education, a 34-member panel of faculty, staff, and students, holds its first meeting.
April 1	Several members of the President's Task Force on Diversity Education are elected to Senate and leadership positions within the Student Government Association.
April 8	A group of initial protestors has lunch with the Task Force co-chairs and later attends a meeting of the Task Force as guests.
April 24	Eleven students involved in the protest are recognized at the Student Life and Leadership Awards Banquet with the Vice President's Distinguished Student Award for their effort to create positive and lasting change for the betterment of their campus community.

June 19	Six preliminary recommendations for diversity education submitted to Southeast Board of Regents. The Board approves a one-time budget of \$50,000 to support campuswide diversity initiatives.
July 14	Task Force Co-Chair Morris Jenkins participated in a UI100 classroom panel discussion with Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh Jr. and Cape Girardeau Police Chief Wes Blair to discuss careers in the legal profession and law enforcement.
October 14	President Carlos Vargas hosts a focus group with 25 African-American students, including some members of the President's Task Force on Diversity Education.
October 28	Task Force members meet with Faculty Senate to discuss preliminary recommendations and insights.
November 12	Black Student Union holds a silent protest outside the University Center to support the Concerned Student 1950 protests at the University of Missouri.
November 12	A website dedicated to Diversity at Southeast, <a href="http://semo.edu/diversity">semo.edu/diversity</a> , is launched.
November 16	Task Force members meet with Student Government Association to discuss preliminary recommendations and answer questions of student senators.
November 17	Task Force members meet with Clerical-Technical-Service Staff Council to discuss preliminary recommendations and insights.
November 18	Task Force members meet with Professional Staff Council to discuss preliminary recommendations and insights.
November 18	The Council of Deans participates in a Task Force meeting.
November 20	Task Force members meet with University Advancement and Alumni Services to explore options to strengthen relationships with African-American alumni as well as international alumni living abroad.
November 30	Task Force members meet with Chairpersons Forum to discuss preliminary recommendations and insights.
November 30	President Vargas hosts a follow-up meeting with students who participated in the October 14 focus group. Students' input on draft final recommendations is solicited.
December 16	Final Task Force meeting is held.
December 22	Co-chairs of the President's Task Force on Diversity Education meet with the Administrative Council to release the final report and recommendations.

## ATTACHMENT 2

### Task Force Membership

Alexander, Toni	Chairperson, Global Cultures & Languages
Alnutt, Mark	Former Director of Athletics (spring)
Ball, Jeremy	Chairperson, Criminal Justice and Sociology (fall)
Ball, Trent	Associate Dean of Students, Director of Retention
Barke, Brady	Interim Director of Athletics, Senior Associate to the President
Below, Debbie	Vice President for Enrollment Mgmt. and Student Success/Dean of Students
Brownlee, Byron	Student
Carlin, Emily	Instructor, Kent Library
Cason, Amber	Student (spring)
Cook, Jim	Director, Human Resources
Cox, Andrea	Student
Dunn, Alexander	Student (spring)
Gannon, Cindy	Senior Associate Director of Athletics/Senior Woman Administrator
Hill, Hamner	Chairperson, Political Science, Philosophy and Religion
Jacobsen, Peter	Student
Jeffrey, Nia	Student
Jenkins, Morris	Dean, College of Health and Human Services
Kashyap, Kumar	Assistant LMS Administrator
Keshtkar, Fazel	Assistant Professor, Computer Science
Kilburn, Michelle	Associate Professor, Criminal Justice and Sociology (spring)
Kyles, Tameka	Outreach Coordinator, Educational Access Programs
Mack, Shaibriel	Student
Mayberry, Kenny	Assistant Director, Captain of Police Operations, DPS (spring)
Mershon, Christy	Assistant Director, Extended and Continuing Education
Miller, Ikeshia	Student (spring)
Parker, Tiffany	Instructor, Social Work
Peacock, Denia	Student (fall)
Price, Joshua	Student (spring)
Robinson, Kimisha	Student
Rucker, Sonia	Coordinator of Institutional Equity and Diversity
Rushing, Tony	Student
Skinner, Bruce	Assistant Vice President for Student Success and Auxiliary Services
Smith, Shonta	Associate Professor; Elementary, Early and Special Education
Syed, Saleeha	Student
Valadez, Michael	Student
Williams, Chester	Student (fall)
Windham, Kevin	Student
Young, Jill	Instructor, Accounting
Zalite, Valdis	Director, Student Support Services
Co-Chairs:	Debbie Below and Morris Jenkins
Reports to:	President Carlos Vargas (fall 2015), President Ken Dobbins (spring 2015)

The following students also contributed to the work of the Task Force: Sharniece Dunn, Tia Elliott, Tiffany Jones, Nile McClain, Anjelica Payne, Jayson Thompson, Candace Thedford and Marsha Walls.

## ATTACHMENT 3

### “Underlying Issues” Discussion Topics

This Task Force was charged with discussing the underlying issues that led to the protests in Ferguson, Missouri, and that are continuing to occur across the country. There are committees with similar objectives forming on many college campuses with the purpose of encouraging dialogue and planning efforts to promote progress toward a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students, faculty and staff.

The Task Force dedicated a portion of each meeting in spring 2015 to an educational topic as a means of developing a better understanding of the wide variety of historical, cultural and societal influences on this movement.

#### **Race as a Social Construct**

*Tiffany Parker, Instructor of Social Work*

Race categories in the United States have been constructed through legal, social, and political processes. We now know that humans are more genetically alike than any other species on the planet and the small number of genetic differences tells us more about the geographical location of our ancestors than it does about distinct racial categories.

#### **Afrocentric Theory**

*Morris Jenkins, Dean of College of Health and Human Services and Kimisha Robinson, Student*

A discussion of Afrocentric Theory afforded the group an opportunity to consider how history and socialization agents influence our perspectives on the law and justice. No one perspective is right or wrong, but an understanding of these theories can assist with race relations. In addition, these theories and perspectives can be the catalyst for positive changes in the law.

#### **Inequality: How Bad Is It and Does It Matter?**

*Hamner Hill, Chair of Political Science, Philosophy and Religion*

This presentation offered a look at the extent of income and wealth inequality in America and the impacts of that inequality on American society.

#### **Culturally Responsive Teaching: How to Bridge the Cultural Disconnect**

*Shonta M. Smith, Associate Professor of Elementary, Early and Special Education*

Task Force members engaged in cooperative learning activities where they reflected, discussed and analyzed the impact of culture conflict. The facilitator shared that if time allowed, this exercise could be used to develop action plans to build a campuswide climate of education that is multicultural.

#### **Poor is the New Black**

*Kevin Windham, Student*

This presentation exposed the Task Force to an awareness of the role socioeconomic background and exposure to unsafe living environments (e.g., lead paint, unsafe housing) can have on an individual’s adult life (e.g., access to education, physical health, cognitive development).

#### **Free Speech or Hate Speech?**

*Tamara Zellars-Buck, Associate Professor of Mass Media*

College campuses desire to foster an environment where free expression is encouraged and the rights of all students are protected. This presentation defined terms such as “free speech,” “hate speech” and “fighting words,” defined public v. private expression, and engaged Task Force members in case studies evaluating the rights of individuals and responsibilities of institutions.

## ATTACHMENT 4

### Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this Task Force, the following served as working definitions for terminology commonly used to deliver diversity education in the workplace and classroom.

**Bias** is an act of bigotry, harassment or intimidation that occurs on campus or within an area that impacts the University community. A bias incident is an action directed at a member or group because of an actual or perceived aspect of diversity, such as age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

**Campus climate** defines the current attitudes, behaviors and standards of faculty, staff, administrators and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential.

**Cultural competence** involves understanding and appropriately responding to the unique combination of cultural and other background variables which exist within the campus community, including race, ethnicity, ability, age, beliefs, disability, experience, gender, gender identity, language, national origin, generational diversity, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status and socioeconomic status.

**Diversity** refers to the similarities and differences between individuals accounting for all aspects of one's personality and individual identity. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance, respect and understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences.

**Equity** is fairness or justice in the way people are treated. Equity in education is a measure of achievement, fairness, and opportunity within an educational environment, which is dependent upon two main factors: fairness and inclusion. Fairness ensures that factors specific to one's personal conditions should not interfere with the potential of academic success and inclusion refers to a comprehensive standard that applies to everyone within the campus community.

**Inclusion** is the ability of a community to leverage everyone's voices and talents by focusing on systemic organizational change through the encouragement of interactive dialogues, programmatic initiatives and healthy discourse which is reflective of the diversity of thought and opinion of the various populations within the community.

**Multiculturalism** is the view that cultures, races, and ethnicities, particularly those of minority groups, deserve special acknowledgement of their differences within a dominant political culture. Multiculturalism seeks the inclusion of the views and contributions of diverse members of the community while maintaining respect for their differences and withholding the demand for their assimilation into the dominant culture.

**Structural racism** is a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various—often reinforcing—ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.

**Unconscious biases** refer to differing human characteristics which influence the way people think, act, interact with others, and make choices. Often, unconscious biases and differences interfere with the ability to support, trust and respect others and to effectively communicate and function together.

# **ATTACHMENT 5**

## **Nondiscrimination Policy**

Southeast Missouri State University is committed to providing a safe, civil and positive learning and working environment for its faculty, staff, students, and visitors that is free from discrimination in any form. This policy applies to all members and guests of the University community and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, genetic information, disability, or protected veteran status in any of its programs or activities. Harassment based on any of these classifications is a form of discrimination that also violates University policy and will not be tolerated. In some circumstances, such discrimination may also violate federal and/or state law. Retaliation is also prohibited against anyone who asserts a claim of discrimination, participates in a discrimination investigation, or otherwise opposes unlawful discrimination.

This policy is consistent with the academic mission of the University and with the legal requirements of applicable state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. These laws include, but are not limited to: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Missouri Human Rights Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam-Era Veterans Readjustment Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and all amendments to the foregoing.

## **Equal Employment Opportunities**

The University's nondiscrimination policy and commitment to equal opportunity apply to applicants for employment, to all phases of the employment process, and to all terms and conditions of employment with Southeast.

## **Access to Educational Opportunities**

The University's prohibition against discrimination also applies to admission policies and practices, financial aid programs, and all other aspects of the University's educational programs and activities offered or sponsored by the University, in accordance with applicable law, including the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which requires the University not to discriminate based on sex (including sexual harassment and sexual violence) in its education programs and activities.

*(Updated December 2014)*

## ATTACHMENT 6

### The Southeast Missouri State University Community Historical Race/Ethnicity/National Origin of University Employees

**Chart 1. Historical Race/Ethnicity/National Origin of University Employees**

FACULTY	2005-06		2009-10		2014-15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	1.0	3	0.7	1	0.3
Asian	28	7.0	26	6.0	34	8.6
Black/African-American	13	3.3	11	2.5	13	3.3
Hispanic	4	1.0	4	0.9	7	1.8
Multiple Races	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	1.0
Nonresident Alien	0	0.0	11	2.5	0	0.0
White	351	87.8	378	87.3	338	85.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>		<b>433</b>		<b>397</b>	

EXECUTIVE/PROFESSIONAL	2005-06		2009-10		2014-15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	1.4	3	0.9	2	0.5
Asian	4	1.4	10	2.9	8	2.1
Black/African-American	27	9.3	36	10.6	34	8.9
Hispanic	0	0.0	4	1.2	3	0.8
Multiple Races	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.8
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
White	257	88	288	84.5	331	86.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>		<b>341</b>		<b>382</b>	

CLERICAL/TECHNICAL/SERVICE	2005-06		2009-10		2014-15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	0.5	5	1.3	5	1.4
Asian	1	0.3	1	0.3	2	0.5
Black/African-American	27	6.9	25	6.4	26	7.1
Hispanic	1	0.3	4	1.0	0.0	0.0
Multiple Races	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.8
White	359	92.1	355	91	329	90.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>		<b>390</b>		<b>365</b>	

ALL EMPLOYEES	2005-06		2009-10		2014-15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	10	0.9	11	0.9	8	0.7
Asian	33	3.0	37	3.2	44	3.8
Black/African-American	67	6.2	72	6.2	73	6.4
Hispanic	5	0.5	12	1.0	10	0.9
Multiple Races	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	0.9
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
Nonresident Alien	0	0.0	11	0.9	0	0.0
White	967	89.4	1,021	87.7	998	87.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,082</b>		<b>1,164</b>		<b>1,144</b>	

## ATTACHMENT 7

### The Southeast Missouri State University Community Historical Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

The University's Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan defines the desired size, diversity, quality and success of the student body. Through the SEM planning process, Southeast embraces the national goal to increase the proportion of Americans with high quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Relative to diversity of the student body, Southeast aspires to serve as a leader in the state of Missouri in the enrollment of a student body reflecting the diverse global world in which students will live and work.

Chart 2 reflects the growth in minority and international student enrollment since 2005. In 2005, non-white students represented 12.3 percent of the total student population. Today, the number of students who identify as non-white is 21.3 percent. (This number excludes Unknown/Not Reported.)

**Chart 2. Historical Race/Ethnicity/National Origin of Students (Total Headcount)**

ALL STUDENTS	Fall 2005		Fall 2009		Fall 2014		Fall 2015	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	57	0.6	47	0.4	55	0.5	43	0.4
Asian	54	0.5	69	0.6	118	1.0	119	1.0
Black/African-American	873	8.5	803	7.4	1,022	8.5	1,031	8.5
Hispanic	99	1.0	146	1.3	189	1.6	199	1.6
Multiple Races	0	0.0	11	0.1	13	0.1	32	0.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0	5	0.0	4	0.0	2	0.0
Nonresident Alien	176	1.7	336	3.1	1,061	8.8	1,131	9.4
Unknown/Not Reported*	0	0.0	659	6.1	694	5.7	988	8.2
White	9,033	87.8	8,783	80.9	8,931	73.9	8,442	69.8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10,292</b>		<b>10,859</b>		<b>12,087</b>		<b>11,987</b>	

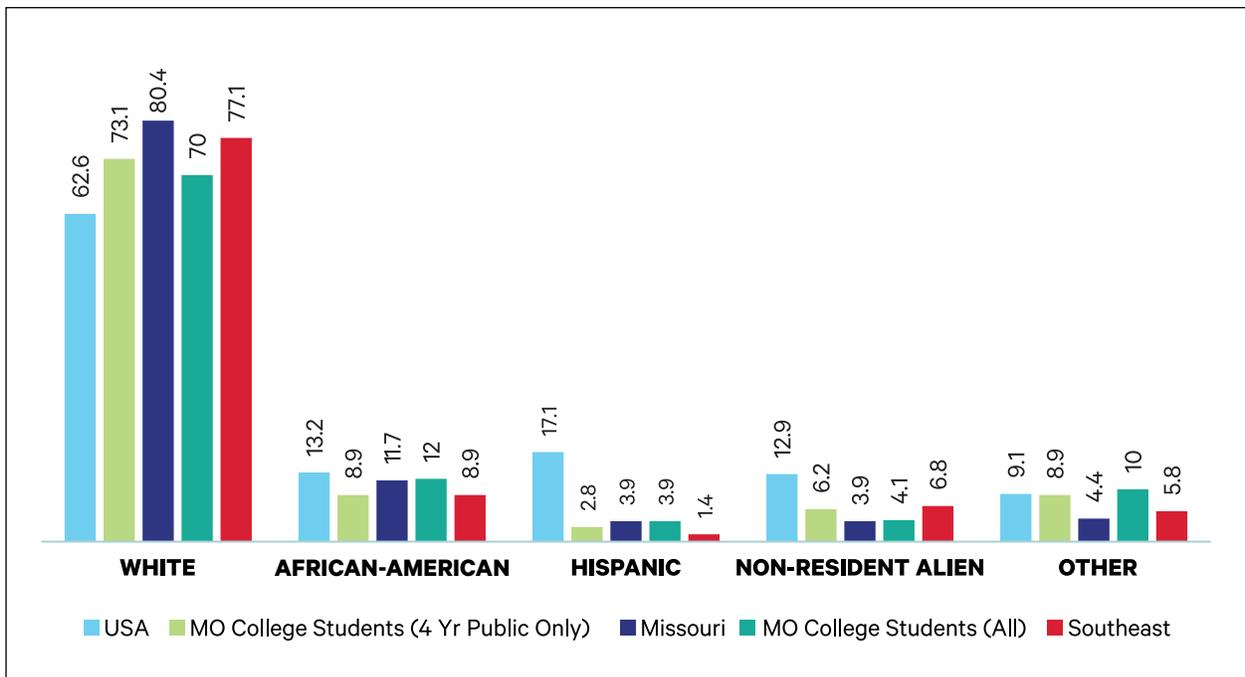
Note: Chart 2 reflect the IPEDS defined categories for race/ethnicity. Prior to 2006, students who did not report race/ethnicity were classified as "white" at Southeast.

# ATTACHMENT 8

## The Southeast Missouri State University Community Progress Toward Strategic Enrollment Goals

Chart 3 reflects the University’s progress toward the goal of enrolling a student body reflecting the diversity of its peers, state and nation. Specifically, Southeast strives to match the enrollment demographics of other Missouri four-year public institutions. In 2013, Southeast met this goal for African-American and international students. While Hispanic student enrollment at Southeast does not yet reflect the Missouri four-year public sector, efforts are underway to recruit this student population.

**Chart 3. Race/Ethnicity/National Origin of Fall 2013 Students (Total Headcount)**



Sources: Missouri Department of Higher Education Statistical Summary, Fall 2013; USA and Missouri data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau. USA and Missouri equal >100% as non-resident alien estimates may be duplicates with other race/ethnicity reported.

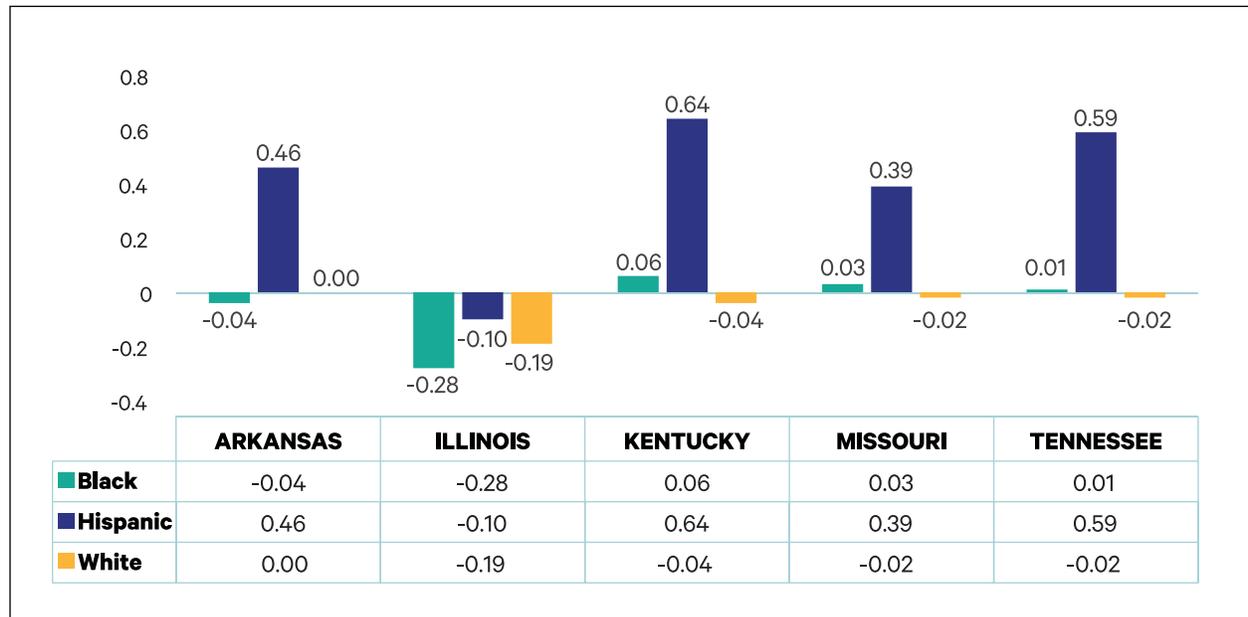
## ATTACHMENT 9

### Future High School Graduate Projections and the Impact on Societal Needs

Since 1979, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has produced high school graduate projections that are used by colleges and universities nationwide to project future enrollments. The most recent report released in December 2012 projects that the high school graduating class of 2011 would be the largest the nation ever produced, ending a 17-year run on continuous growth. Chart 4 reflects the anticipated change over the next 12 years in high school graduates by race and ethnicity for the five-state region reflecting the majority of Southeast’s enrollment.

The anticipated decrease in high school graduates has the potential to adversely affect college enrollments as the largest decline is expected among white students, where college attainment rates are highest. This shift in the race/ethnicity of high school graduates (more African-American and Hispanic students) comes at a time when colleges and universities are under pressure to produce more college graduates. By 2018, more than 60 percent of the economic opportunities will require a high quality certificate, associate or bachelor’s degree.

**Chart 4. Anticipated Change in Public High School Graduates by 2027**



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, (2012) Knocking at the College Door

## ATTACHMENT 10

### Professional Organizations and Associations with African-Americans Student Chapters

#### Business

1. Black Data Processing Associates: Organized in 1975. More than 40 chapters. Open to African-Americans in data processing and related fields.
2. National Association of Black Accountants: Founded in 1969. Goal is to represent the more than 200,000 African-American professionals in accounting and finance.
3. National Association of African-Americans in Human Resources: A national organization of human resource professionals with 36 local chapters; includes consultants and students.
4. The National Association of Black Telecommunications Professionals, Inc.: The Video Access Alliance is dedicated to gaining the support of public policy makers, industry leaders and the public at large for the rapid deployment of additional advanced technology-based platforms.
5. National Black Business Trade Association: A self-help resource and networking group founded in 1993 that provides businesspeople with information, products, services and technologies.
6. National Black MBA Association: An 8,000-member professional organization made up of African-American graduates with MBAs and advanced degrees. Established in 1970, its mission is to increase the number and diversity of African-Americans in business.
7. National Sales Network: An association of African-American sales and sales management professionals. Organized in 1992 with more than 2,000 members in 16 chapters.

#### Design

8. Organization of Black Designers: Comprised of 10,000 design professionals in visual communications, as well as graphic, interior, fashion and industrial design.

#### Education

9. National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE): National Alliance of Black School Educators is the nation's premiere non-profit organization devoted to furthering the academic success for the nation's children—particularly children of African descent.
10. National Black Graduate Students Association (NBGSA): NBGSA is the premiere interdisciplinary graduate student organization. It strives to meet the needs of the wide variety of graduate and professional students.

#### Engineering and Science

11. American Association of Blacks in Energy: Founded in 1977; 36 chapters. Specialties include energy policy, technology and the environment.
12. The Council for Africans and Americans in Mathematical Sciences (CAARMS): William Massey of Bell Laboratories (then AT&T, now Lucent Technologies) had an idea for an organization devoted mainly to addressing critical issues involving African-American researchers and graduate students in the mathematical sciences.
13. Interim National Black Environmental & Economic Justice Coordinating Committee (INBEEJCC): The Environmental Justice Resource Center (EJRC) serves as a research, policy, and information clearinghouse on issues related to environmental justice, race and the environment, civil rights and human rights.

14. National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers: Organized in 1972 to build a community of minority scientists and engineers; 39 professional and university chapters.
15. National Society of Black Engineers: Started in 1975, it now has more than 35,700 members, more than 390 college, precollege and technical professional chapters nationwide and overseas. The group's mission is to increase the number of African-American engineers, as well as help them succeed professionally and give back to their communities.
16. National Society of Black Physicists: The largest organization of African-American physicists; 16 sections ranging from astronomy, astrophysics and nuclear physics to technology transfer, business development and entrepreneurship. Its mission is to promote the professional well-being of African-American physicists within the international scientific community.

### **Food Services**

17. BCA: Incorporated as the Black Culinarian Alliance in 1998 and now known by its acronym. A national educational and networking organization that serves African-American and other minority professionals working in hospitality and food services.

### **Government**

18. Blacks in Government: Members are civil servants at the federal, state, county and municipal levels. Founded in 1975; more than 50 chapters include the Departments of State and Homeland Security, the Coast Guard, and the National Institutes of Health.

### **Health and Human Services**

19. National Black Nurses Association: Organized in 1971; 80 chapters represent more than 150,000 African-American nurses in the United States, the Caribbean and Africa.
20. National Medical Association: The oldest (founded 1895) and largest national professional organization for African-American physicians. A leading force for parity in medicine, it provides educational programs and conducts outreach efforts.
21. Student National Medical Association: The largest organization focused on the needs and concerns of African-American medical students and residents.
22. National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice: Organized in 1974; state and local chapters across the United States. Members include law enforcement personnel, corrections officers, court employees, social services workers, academics and clergy.
23. National Bar Association: An advocate for social justice since 1925; promotes professional development for African-Americans in the legal profession. More than 20,000 member lawyers, judges, educators and law students.
24. National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives: Founded in 1976. Public service organization serves as the "conscience of law enforcement."
25. National Association of Black Social Workers: A professional organization comprised of over 100 membership chapters, and over 30 university and college student chapters throughout the continental United States, Canada and the Caribbean.

### **Media**

26. National Association of Black Journalists: A professional organization for African-Americans working in print, radio, television, news media and related areas; founded in 1975.

## Attachment 11

### Sankofa Ceremony

A Sankofa Ceremony is a Rites of Passage program held on university campuses for African-American students. A Rites of Passage program will allow African-American students to develop a stable and robust connection with mentors, friends, and the community. As the research of anthropologists, sociologists, and Afrocentric theorists indicate, rites of passage ceremonies serve as an affirmation for youth by providing an opportunity for the community to express love, pride, and respect for its youth; it also allows the community to exemplify, promote, and value its participating youth. Rites of passage mark an individual's change in social status within a society. Moreover, the activities associated with the practice of ritual not only serve to recognize tradition, but also the potential for social change.

With origins in West African philosophical tradition, Sankofa ceremonies would offer African-American students the opportunity to look back and learn from the past while fostering a community of scholars and leaders at Southeast. Sankofa has its roots in Diasporan practices which seek to link African-Americans to not only their past but also their futures. Sankofa graduation ceremonies, which are common at many institutions across the United States, serve as a final rite of passage marking the departure of successful African-American students from the campus community. Afrocentric education scholars, however, also suggest that Sankofa can offer more than a singular acknowledgement of departure for students, but rather a lifelong pathway of personal development. The practice of Sankofa ceremonies for new and graduating students would mark the transition of African-American students between key life points and further tie them to the larger Southeast community.

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## Endnotes

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- i blacklivesmatter.com.
- ii Southeast Missouri State University Final Report of the Task Force on Ethnic Diversity, 1990.
- iii Southeast Missouri State University Final Report on the Task Force on Ethnic Diversity, 1990.
- iv Southeast Missouri State University Institutional Self-Study Report, 2000.
- v Southeast Missouri State University Institutional Self-Study Report, 2000.
- vi Southeast to become “Redhawks” in Spring 2005. June 30, 2004. <http://news.semo.edu/southeast-to-become-redhawks-in-spring-2005>.
- vii Southeast Missouri State University Strategic Plan, 2014.
- viii Southeast Missouri State University Strategic Plan, 2014.
- ix American Association of State Colleges and Universities & National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges Task Force on Diversity, 2005; Clayton-Pederson, O’Neill, & McTighe Musil. 2008; Leon, 2014; Williams 2013; Williams, Berger & McClendon. 2005; Williams & Wade-Golden. 2013.
- x [diversityworksinc.net/education.htm](http://diversityworksinc.net/education.htm).
- xi Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) can be effective tools in building and establishing closer working and community contacts and can be effective avenues to foster new friendships and connections for recruiting new employees and for retaining current ones. ERGs are groups of employees who join together in the community or within the workplace based on shared characteristics or life experiences, e.g., traditionally underrepresented minorities and allies of those groups, veterans, or young professionals. Each ERG can serve as advocates for a specific demographic within the University community to improve the recruitment and retention efforts as well as the climate for the community as a whole.