Leading After a Racial Crisis

Weaving a Campus Tapestry of Diversity and Inclusion

A C E ® American Council on Education®

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Cover photo courtesy of University of Missouri.

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Letter from the University of Missouri

Three years ago, we invited the American Council on Education (ACE) to the University of Missouri to study key programmatic changes and strategies to build capacity for inclusion, diversity, and equity (IDE). This past year, researchers returned to see the progress since the first ACE report, and their findings offer important insights for the future.

This year's ACE report notes that we have built up a robust IDE infrastructure at Mizzou and increased capacity for diversity and inclusion to thrive, but the pace and impact of change is not evenly spread throughout our university. There are divergent views about our progress: some express praise while others express frustration.

Bridging these perspectives is part of our process of change that we expect to progress through continual education, communication, and action across all levels of leadership, the campus community, and the greater Mizzou family.

To that end, as has been documented by ACE, we have introduced new programs that incorporate inclusiveness in everything we do at Mizzou. But to be national leaders in diversity and inclusion, we must create true transformation within our culture and watch that culture spread beyond campus. Each new structure we implement to improve our IDE capacity at Mizzou can also serve as a helpful tool for the entire higher education community.

Here are some of our new programs at Mizzou and throughout the UM System:

- The Inclusive Excellence Framework, a University of Missouri System-wide program that guides our holistic policies, practices, and structures. Along with being embraced by our community, this framework has been incorporated by the city of Columbia and Boone County. The state of Missouri is also reviewing how its offices might incorporate it.
- A focus on building relationships. Leaders across Mizzou and the UM System constantly seek out new opportunities to communicate with our different stakeholders and build a better environment for all. By focusing on communication practices that set expectations for our community and strengthen relationships, we are able to better identify concerns and issues and address them more effectively and intentionally.
- The Inclusion and Belonging Series, a campus program that helps people deepen their personal, professional and community connections. Since 2017, the University of Missouri System and its four universities have invested in growing diversity efforts and programs such as this one that allow faculty, staff, and students to learn and engage.
- The $60 million Promise and Opportunity Scholarship programs with KC Scholars that enable underrepresented minority students to pursue their education at our campuses in Columbia and Kansas City.

Our progress will continue. We are grateful that our partnership with ACE has helped us understand where we can enhance and expand our efforts.

Our commitment to an inclusive culture remains at the forefront of our mission and decision-making. This second report shows we have an incredibly engaged community that has shared in every step of this journey. Together, we will press on to an even better future.

Sincerely,

Mun Y. Choi
President
University of Missouri System

Interim Chancellor
University of Missouri

Letter from the American Council on Education

Among all challenges facing higher education, racism and its effects on people and systems remains one of the toughest and most complex to meaningfully address. Institutional histories and other contexts play a crucial role in how racism manifests on any campus. In the case of the University of Missouri, the history of racism is both old and new, marked by decades-long racial discrimination in the region and by what we recognize as a boiling point for the university reached in 2015.

Managing a racial crisis in the moment is perhaps one of the toughest leadership challenges that university administrators can face, but recovering from that crisis can be just as challenging, if not more so. We are exceedingly grateful for the opportunity to be working with the University of Missouri and with the authors of this report to catalog through rigorous research just what it means for a campus to recover. We thank University of Missouri leadership past and present, including Mun Choi, Alexander Cartwright, and Kevin McDonald, for enabling this case study work.

As readers will see in these pages, recovery is neither linear nor predictable in its many facets and forms. Campus leaders would be mistaken to think that time alone will heal the wounds that are inflicted by racial crises. Real healing only occurs through hard, intentional work on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)—work that is continuous and without an expected end date.

The most appropriate action that leaders can take—from the president on down—is to embrace a commitment to enhancing their capacity to lead on DEI and respond effectively when racial incidents occur. While it may not feel this way in the moment, every incident, whether large or small, provides an opportunity to move a community forward. Taking advantage of such opportunities requires leaders to take the long view, both backwards and forwards—to understand both their campus's history and the present moment.

Leading on DEI is necessarily multifaceted. The "weaver-leader" model articulated in this report presents a leadership challenge to those who see community engagement as transactional in nature. The leadership qualities embodied by a weaver-leader instead embrace community as an enterprise of shared expectations built on mutual trust, transparency, and a healthy level of vulnerability. Unfortunately, such leadership is not typically developed or encouraged among higher education leaders, thus requiring intentional growth and development.

At ACE, we have made equity-minded leadership a cornerstone of our professional development work with campus leaders on the ground. Via ACE Engage®, our professional learning platform for higher education executives, and through activities such as Regional Summits, we are actively working to translate rigorous research into executive practice. In our view, equity-minded leadership is a twenty-first century imperative. We look forward to our continued collaboration and our work with colleges and universities around the country that seek to address race and racism in a way that strengthens our campuses and the communities within which our institutions reside.

Sincerely,

Ted Mitchell
President
American Council on Education

Lorelle L. Espinosa
Vice President for Research
American Council on Education

Executive Summary

In 2015, a series of protests related to race and leadership embroiled the University of Missouri–Columbia campus and catalyzed a crisis years in the making. Over the past five years, the university has steadily increased its capacity for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work. This report on campus racial crisis and recovery is a follow-up to *Speaking Truth and Acting with Integrity: Confronting Challenges of Campus Racial Climate*, published in 2018. Through these two reports, resulting from our multi-year case study of Missouri's journey, we shed light on how leaders can help their campuses build DEI capacity, particularly when considering institutional histories with race and racism. We document the activities that have helped Missouri to progress, including its Inclusive Excellence Framework and funding process, leadership training, resource investment in DEI work, and engagement with the local community.

For all its good work, however, Missouri[1] remains at a point of challenge. Community members at once praise the direction, are fatigued by it, and continue to expect greater progress. Several factors account for this juncture where the campus is accomplishing much good work and building its DEI capacity, yet is not perceived by some to be making adequate progress. This fragmentation of perspectives, tensions, and emotions is not uncommon for campuses working to recover from racial crises or striving to move from what we call low capacity to moderate and high capacity for DEI work.

Trauma remains salient, and a new set of emotions need processing

Campuses that experience a racial crisis will have trauma that needs to be continuously addressed. The trauma recovery framework outlined in our first report is equally important now, two years later, especially as new emotions of frustration, anxiety, and exhaustion emerge.

In addition to such new emotions, the Missouri campus is also experiencing fragmentation and division not unlike the division we see across our nation, especially on issues of DEI.

Racial crisis leads to fragmentation of perspectives and tensions after the initial shared trauma subsides

The views of campus community members have become fragmented, with many different perspectives on the progress and approach to addressing the racial crisis. It is important for the leadership to understand these diverse perspectives and to work internally on building stronger connections and communication between and among groups. Fragmentation of perspectives is based on an assortment of characteristics, including perceptions of race, access to information, time on campus, and differing beginning expectations and campus context features ranging from disconnected chains of action and uneven work on racial climate. Some of the fragmentation of perspectives is natural based on the decentralized nature of many campuses, an issue leaders need to keep in mind as they try to move a community forward.

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1   Throughout this report, "Missouri" refers to the University of Missouri–Columbia campus.

A set of tensions has emerged as well that make the work of DEI challenging if left unaddressed. They include what we describe as:

- Patience versus impatience,
- Critical versus celebratory,
- Work in progress versus why are we not there yet,
- Add-on versus deeply integrated,
- Inspiration versus anger,
- Speaking out versus fear of repercussion,
- Moving on versus respectfully remembering,
- Excellence versus DEI,
- Status quo versus negotiating change, and
- Mandating involvement versus faculty autonomy.

Tensions left unaddressed create barriers to moving forward. Leaders who are closely focused on their own vision for DEI work can become removed from and miss seeing how fragmented campus contexts are and the tensions, emotions, and perspectives that prevent common ground.

The need for a weaver-leader

The fragmented perspectives, tensions, and unresolved emotions set the stage for a particular type of leadership work that is necessary to move forward, which we place within a weaver-leader framework. This framework connects several foundational leadership activities, including over-communicating, setting expectations, and building relationships, all in the service of creating shared expectations or a common ground on which to move forward. This work is particularly salient for creating a shared vision.

Campus leaders play an important role as weavers encouraging the participation of many individuals in the rebuilding process. Weavers' work is one of identifying different fragments, connecting them and helping to network and connect ideas, beliefs, activities, and feelings. Weavers are important to sense making, building relationships, and creating coherent communications to create the tapestry as a whole. Weaving is not easy, as it means being able to stand apart from the many activities and perspectives in order to connect them with a vision for the whole tapestry.

OVERCOMMUNICATING. Weaver-leaders take up the mantle to communicate the progress being made, address the approach taken, and draw on more personalized forms of communication. In this current phase it is very important for the university to invest significant time and resources in enhancing formal and informal channels of communication in ways that are public, proactive, personal, caring, and transparent. The reason for the importance of "humanized" over-communication is that it builds relationships and trust that are so critical in healing and recovery.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS. One of the most important ways to address the fragmented worldviews and emerging tensions is to set expectations. Setting expectations is a valuable practice for leaders to implement large-scale change during the aftermath of a racial crisis. Expectations influence the pattern or design that the weaver is envisioning to create a full tapestry. While patterns might alter as progress is made, they are still useful in setting the overall course and direction. Without expectations to follow, weavers might lose sight of how all the campus efforts and work on DEI are contributing to the tapestry.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING. Relationship building is a significant aspect of the recovery process, and several years after the crisis, relationship building requires multiple levels of engagement between leaders, key stakeholder groups, and members of the community. When communities are fractured and feel uninformed about decisions that are being made on their campus, it is even more imperative that senior-level administrators are on the ground connecting with the community. In this way, community members can know who their leaders are, feel comfortable approaching them to offer feedback, share their perceptions and experiences, and offer their insights on how the campus can make progress. In this report, we detail ways leaders can work to make broad connections with the community more meaningful and effective.

SHARED EXPECTATIONS. The weaver-leader must also move toward shared expectations. The weaver metaphor remains apt in understanding how this is achieved. When individuals see a tapestry, they see a complete picture, a coherent work of art. While the various threads appear to have come together smoothly, tapestries are made up of discontinuous threads of various materials, not all of which are fully seen. In a similar way, campus weaver-leaders work to bring together all the emotions, perspectives, needs, and possible solutions to produce a complex, democratic, and inclusive vision to guide the campus community forward. Successful campus weavers add texture from all segments of the campus community to weave an authentic and truthful story that represents both positive and negative experiences, while finding the strength and beauty in the unique pattern that emerges—shared expectations emerge.

NaTashua Davis, interim vice chancellor of the Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, welcomes new members of the campus community at the annual Multicultural Staff and Faculty Reception at the Center for Missouri Studies. About 40 professionals attended the event featuring music, information about the university, and networking time.
Photo: Ryan Gavin.

Background, Research Methods, and Case Description

Background of Study

Our collaboration with the University of Missouri began in 2016, following the campus protests in 2015. In 2017, we engaged in a case study that resulted in our first report, *Speaking Truth and Acting with Integrity: Confronting Challenges of Campus Racial Climate*. We returned to the University of Missouri in spring 2019 to conduct a follow-up case study to examine its progress close to four years after the racial crisis. We knew that healing and forward movement would take time and planned for a multi-phase case study (first in 2017 and then returning in 2019).

Research Methods

This report draws on three main sources of data: first, our qualitative research of the University of Missouri case study; second, our review of key bodies of literature; and third, our years of experience as consultants and researchers on issues of diversity and inclusion, which informed overall recommendations and aspects of the capacity building framework.

We began this project by reviewing literature related to campus racial climate, crisis response, institutional diversity and inclusion, and system and campus leadership. We also examined MU campus reports about progress being made since our last visit in 2017. Based on this review and the expertise and experience of research team members, we developed interview protocols designed to better understand leadership challenges, changes, and improvements in the two years since our last visit.

Next, we worked with the UM System Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to identify key stakeholders (students, staff, faculty, and community members) who could provide valuable information on how campus leaders are working to address racial climate. We explored issues ranging from communication to new policies and practices as they relate to diversity and inclusion work on campus. For the purposes of this project, we defined leadership broadly to include those in formal positions of leadership and also students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Once the research team identified and contacted stakeholders, we collected data through in-person individual and focus group interviews. We conducted additional individual phone interviews for participants who were not available during the team's visit to campus. The team interviewed 64 individuals. In addition to taking detailed notes during the data collection process, we transcribed each interview recording. The research team then individually reviewed the transcripts to identify emergent themes. After each member developed a list of themes, the research team deliberated to reach consensus among the themes.

We endorse a methodological stance in this work to value the knowledge that we each brought to the project. As a diverse team, we valued our lived experiences in the academy as important sources of knowledge. This allowed us to discuss, and own, our biases and experiences and to understand how they shaped our interpretations of the data. In addition to the data we collected at the University of Missouri, we were informed by our

own research and practice, within and outside of higher education, on issues of leadership, race, equity, and diversity. These experiences, in combination with the University of Missouri data, informed all aspects of this project.

Finally, we recognize that studying one institutional context is insufficient and does not represent all of higher education. However, if ever there existed a case example that captures the complexity and intensity of a campus racial crisis, it would be the unfolding events at MU. Very few campuses in recent history have had the collective activism and impact to shape the national discourse on campus racial climate, as has MU. Moreover, while racial incidents have been occurring at a variety of institution types, they occur most often and with the greatest damaging effect at traditionally White institutions like MU.

If ever there existed a case example that captures the complexity and intensity of a campus racial crisis, it would be the unfolding events at MU.

Throughout the monograph, we provide examples from the University of Missouri as often as possible to make concrete the ideas and findings. The university was a valuable case to understand how leaders navigate a campus out of a racial crisis. We outline effective leadership; however, there are instances where Mizzou had not yet taken actions advised by the weaver-leader framework for overcoming a racial crisis. Therefore, there are sections of the report where we do not reference or provide examples from the case; instead, we suggest more general recommendations for readers and when appropriate draw from research and practice.

Case Description

In the fall of 2015, the University of Missouri experienced a major racial crisis following a series of racist incidents that took place on campus and in the surrounding local and regional community. Like many universities, the leadership of the University of Missouri was ill-prepared to adequately address these incidents in a thoughtful and timely manner. The board, president, and administrative team had built too little capacity around racial fluency and crisis management, and offered limited coordination and communication on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. As a result, both graduate and undergraduate students across the university began organizing protests and demonstrations to hold leaders accountable for neglecting student concerns. Concerned Student 1950, named after the year the first Black student was admitted to MU, was the student group that sparked the most national attention through a series of rallies and demonstrations.

On October 21, Concerned Student 1950 submitted a list of demands to the University of Missouri System and MU administration. After meeting with then President Tim Wolfe in person, the students still felt that the demands and concerns were not taken seriously. Throughout the student demonstration, student protesters set up a campsite on the lawn facing the MU administration building. As acts of hate continued to occur, including the appearance of a swastika drawn in human feces in a residence hall, student leader Jonathan Butler began a hunger strike on November 2, 2015. When no actions were taken by the administration by November 7, the MU football team announced a strike, boycotting all games and practices until Tim Wolfe resigned from office. Two days later, Tim Wolfe resigned from his position as system president. Following his resignation, more leaders left campus, resulting in significant turnover.

Since November 2015 the UM System has taken significant action, including hiring new campus leadership, allocating funds for an Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, hiring an executive for this office, and conducting climate studies and audits to understand the capacity for issues of diversity and inclusion. The UM System Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion implemented an Inclusive Excellence Framework for the first time, in an effort to increase inclusive practices and programming across system and campus offices.

Overview: The Weaver-Leader

Ongoing Challenges After a Racial Crisis

Our first report, published in November 2018, focused on how leaders navigate a racial crisis, particularly at campuses with low capacity in diversity, equity, and inclusion. The findings addressed acknowledging and managing emotions that emerge as part of a racial crisis, along with the need for leaders to adopt a trauma framework to address emotions to help the campus to heal. We introduced a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) capacity framework that suggests if campuses begin with a stronger capacity, it will be easier to manage an inevitable racial incident, and to determine whether and to what degree the incident is a crisis.

This second report comes five years following Missouri's racial crisis and with 18 months between our first and second visit to the campus. As time passes after a crisis, the sense of heightened and full attention to DEI issues subsides. Shared trauma dissipates as new people arrive on campus; faculty, staff, and students leave the campus; and others psychologically move on. The shared experience of the racial crisis provides an initial opportunity to create a sense of priority for DEI issues. However, as time passes, a much different environment emerges that can be challenging for leaders to navigate and requires a shift in leadership approach. Leaders must continue placing attention on healing the campus, along with addressing initial emotions that linger as well as new emotional states that emerge.

The shared experience of the racial crisis provides an initial opportunity to create a sense of priority for DEI issues. However, as time passes, a much different environment emerges that can be challenging for leaders to navigate and requires a shift in leadership approach.

In addition to paying continued attention to emotions and the need to speak from the heart, listen, and act with campus stakeholders (outlined in our first report), leaders shepherding recovery from a racial crisis face new challenges that largely center on communication, relationship building, setting expectations, and priority setting. Campus leaders need to focus intently on communication because of differing perspectives that emerge during the ongoing process of addressing racial climate. Leaders' communication should emphasize the long journey to racial climate change, set expectations for this long journey, and recognize that faculty and staff perceive the campus quite differently based on access to information, how long they have been on campus, their racial identities, and the unit in which they are located, among other key differences. Especially when campuses have low or moderate capacity, there is little foundation to support a shared understanding and vision for DEI work that can help to ground perspective, priorities, and activities. Instead, leaders will need to "over-communicate" internally in order to overcome the fractured realities that emerge in the aftermath of a racial crisis. In the pages that follow, we review techniques for setting expectations, enacting forms of communication that help with improving relationships and trust, and establishing shared values and priorities.

Weaving a Tapestry

In this report, we offer the metaphor of *weaving a tapestry* to convey the current complexity, tensions, opportunities, and successes at the University of Missouri. A tapestry is developed by weaving together different threads, with varying textures, colors, densities, and materials. Important elements of a tapestry are shaped by the skills of the weaver who brings vision and creativity to the art of tapestry. Thus, each tapestry is individually constructed and integrates the weaver's unique interpretation of the artist's rendering into the design.

Similarly, every campus community creates its own distinct and unique cultural tapestry that emerges from its values, experiences, vision, and investment in DEI. In the aftermath of a crisis, the rebuilding process reflects a new history and chapter that must be merged with the ongoing history and legacy of a campus. The factors that influence the process of rebuilding may vary considerably. In the first report, we discussed a number of important contexts (e.g., national, state, campus, and media) that can affect the tapestry of the campus. In our broad definition of leadership, we know that there will be many weavers on a campus who will influence the rebuilding process. It will be instrumental for success for these weavers to communicate a shared vision during each phase of the process.

Developing a comprehensive vision and mission for DEI work will determine what the campus culture will evolve into. In fact, the actual definition of the *tapestry* describes it as "used in reference to an intricate or complex combination of things or sequence of events" and references "cultures, races, and customs." DEI work is complex and requires a vast understanding of the wide range of issues that impact diversity and inclusion work on campus. The evolving nature of DEI requires leaders to regularly assess and recommit to the vision and goals of the campus. These reviews will ensure that the campus regularly evaluates what is working and what is in need of revision. Weavers help the campus community to understand the circular nature of DEI work and the importance of regularly receiving feedback while incorporating it into the improvement of the university to move toward a shared vision for DEI work.

The Weaver-Leader

Campus leaders play an important role as weavers validating and encouraging the participation of many individuals in the rebuilding process. Weavers' work involves identifying different fragments, connecting them, and helping to network and connect ideas, beliefs, activities, and feelings. Weavers are important to sense-making, building relationships, and creating coherent communications to create the tapestry as a whole. Weaving is not easy, as it means being able to stand apart from the many activities and perspectives in order to connect them and have a vision for the whole tapestry. By definition, creating a tapestry is an inclusive process and requires the contribution of many elements to achieve a successful rendering. Weavers are able to see beyond the fractured views and envision a time when there is more common ground across the campus. Rebuilding our communities after a crisis can be time consuming and labor intensive. Nevertheless, staying the course and investing in the process at every stage will result in building leadership teams that can effectively address and respond to the inevitable crises that continue to challenge our campuses and the nation.

Weavers are important to sense-making, building relationships, and creating coherent communications to create the tapestry as a whole. Weaving is not easy, as it means being able to stand apart from the many activities and perspectives in order to connect them and have a vision for the whole tapestry.

The Columns at the university are a testament to shared history and a symbol of collective strength.
Photo: University of Missouri.

The weaver-leader not only executes these key activities—communicating, relationship building, setting expectations—but also understands the complex nature of the campus context for DEI work at this stage. The evolving nature of DEI requires leaders to regularly assess the environment and continually reestablish the direction of the campus. Weavers help the campus community understand the circular nature of DEI work and the importance of regularly receiving feedback, as well as the importance of incorporating it into the work of the campus for moving toward a shared vision.

This is an ongoing journey with many phases. Right now, the campus context at the University of Missouri–Columbia is experiencing some fragmented worldviews and perspectives on the progress and approach to addressing the racial crisis. This is not surprising given the vast array of perspectives and experiences that individuals have of DEI work. There is an uneven understanding of the various activities happening to address the racial climate. Moving forward, it is important for the leadership to understand these diverse perspectives and to work internally to build stronger connections and communication between and among groups.

This report helps leaders to learn skills and dispositions to be a weaver-leader and to connect the trauma and weaver frameworks in ways that address and improve campus racial climates. We organize the report into two parts—the first captures the current campus landscape and the need for weaver-leaders, and the second details the weaver-leader framework, made up of communication, creating expectations, relationship building, and shared expectations.

Part 1: The Current Landscape of Capacity Building and Fragmentation

Part 1 provides an overview of the work that the University of Missouri has engaged in to build its capacity for DEI work. The range of work is impressive given that our assessment of its progress in 2018 was just three years after the 2015 crisis. The leadership has been working steadily to improve DEI capacity among staff and faculty through training, to create programs that support students, and to allocate resources across different divisions to plan their own local activities. We provide representative examples of some of the activities that are currently happening on campus; please see the Appendix for an overview of the full set of activities.

While the campus is building its capacity to do work related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, community members are mixed in their impressions about the work. Some think there is not a "feeling" of a changed climate or progress toward that goal. This is not uncommon, as the work to advance a DEI agenda is a long journey.

Next, we try to understand and place in context some of the mixed perspectives on campus. We outline the fragmented worldviews that have emerged that make seeing the overall tapestry of DEI work challenging and make attempts at a shared vision for the DEI work difficult. These are compounded by tensions that have emerged to polarize the community, along with emotions that have emerged on campus. Leaders so focused on their own vision for DEI work can get removed from and miss seeing how fragmented campus contexts are and the tensions, emotions, and perspectives that prevent common ground. When leaders understand these views, they are much better able to help the campus move forward.

Capacity Building and Resiliency

Throughout this case study we defined capacity as a measure of a campus's ability to effectively respond to a range of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues such as campus racial unrest. Capacity building includes the scope and magnitude of effectiveness over time and how leaders continue to evaluate and address the needs of the community. Capacity encompasses the abilities that leaders demonstrate in their competence, empathy, and effectiveness to work with diverse communities. In our first report, we identified five key tendencies that were important to building capacity before, during, and after a racial crisis:

1. Strategic planning, institutional mission, and guiding values
2. Leadership expertise
3. Building trust and respect across stakeholder groups
4. Institutional investment in continual learning for faculty, staff, and students
5. Evaluation and assessment practices

The MU community has begun the challenging work of building its capacity. We learned of important and meaningful ways that MU is strengthening efforts in all five areas. As would be expected in the wake of a crisis, progress is stronger in some areas than others. It is shaped largely by the scope of projects that the campus had focused on subsequent to the crisis. Not surprisingly, these efforts have been devoted to the development of new programs, as they are typically in response to identified needs and concerns of students, faculty, and staff.

As new programs are developed, it is important that leaders communicate their relevance and purpose for the campus. Some programs may be short lived and only designed to help the campus in the immediate aftermath of a crisis, whereas others may be longstanding and become an important part of the tapestry of the campus. Below we offer a few representative examples in each of the five categories that we identify as important to capacity building. In the Appendix, we provide a full overview of key programs as well as links to important websites detailing their efforts to date.

Capacity building includes the scope and magnitude of effectiveness over time and how leaders continue to evaluate and address the needs of the community. Capacity encompasses the abilities that leaders demonstrate in their competence, empathy, and effectiveness to work with diverse communities.

1. STRATEGIC PLANNING, INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, AND GUIDING VALUES

The University of Missouri has invested significant effort in building a foundation for DEI work. Under the leadership of Kevin McDonald, who served as MU vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity, and equity and UM System chief diversity officer, and Emily Love, who served as director of administration and deputy Title IX coordinator, the university built upon the work of AACU's Inclusive Excellence Framework to guide the work of the campus. The Inclusive Excellence Framework anchored and embedded diversity, inclusion, and equity into the fabric of MU. The Missouri framework is metric-driven, requiring the university's units to use data to measure the effectiveness of their programs and practices. The investment that the university made to engage in a strategic planning process has been significant in guiding the work of the campus moving forward.

The primary goal of the Inclusive Excellence Framework is to build a more productive and innovative place for learning, creativity, and scholarship and to create the conditions for people to thrive within and across differences in background, culture, experiences, orientations, and ability. The development of the Inclusive Excellence Framework has resulted in units envisioning and developing unit plans and working to improve progress at the local level of the department. All members of the campus community were invited and encouraged to submit proposals for funding to support the programs outlined in their DEI plans. The framework increased engagement in the community and ownership in the DEI commitments on campus, and improved abilities to serve important local unit goals.

Laying the foundation for a campus vision is at the very core of the important work of weaving a campus cultural tapestry in which everyone is valued, engaged, empowered, and can make important contributions. The development of unit plans is not always seamless; thus, the DEI staff continue to work with leaders to review and evaluate the goals and metrics that they have identified.

2. LEADERSHIP EXPERTISE

The capacity of leaders to engage and respond to DEI issues is vital to the success and effectiveness of campus responses to racial incidents. This becomes increasingly important when the campus has differing views of the overall progress being made. MU has offered a number of programs to build the skills and expertise of faculty, staff, and senior leaders on campus. MU's Division of Inclusion, Diversity & Equity sponsored a faculty institute to bring together a cross-disciplinary network of faculty to explore promising practices around diversity and inclusiveness in the undergraduate classroom. Kristie A. Ford, professor of sociology and director of the Center for Leadership, Teaching, and Learning at Skidmore College, facilitated this institute. The program is a cohort-based model where faculty participants engage in peer-to-peer learning and work to identify course-specific improvements that build capacity for diversity and inclusiveness in the classroom.

New members of the Mystical 7 secret honor society join with recent inductees.
Photo: University of Missouri.

At the system level, there are a series of training opportunities across all campuses for leaders to receive social justice-based conflict mediation training. These training sessions have been made available for all stakeholder groups, including students, staff, faculty, and senior leaders. The sessions are designed to provide transformative experiences for participants to learn how to mediate while applying a social justice lens to their own technique of working, ensuring a fair process in dispute resolution. This work has been led by Leah Wing and Deepika Marya with the Social Justice Mediation Institute.

Both of these examples of leadership development are important, as most programs on campus focus on student training and development, with little attention to expanding the skills of senior leaders. It is imperative that campuses engage leaders in conversation and learning with each other as well as with other stakeholder groups on campus. These shared training experiences provide important common ground for understanding key learning concepts and how the vision of the campus is being advanced in the work of DEI. As a research team we were able to observe several of these training opportunities for senior-level administrators, and the engagement and work with professional facilitators opened important spaces for critical dialogue and learning about DEI work. These investments prepare leaders to serve as campus weaver-leaders who are able to move campus efforts forward.

3. BUILDING TRUST AND RESPECT ACROSS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Building trust and respect takes a long time after a racial crisis. Based on the many contexts impacting the MU campus, such as the history, state, and national contexts, feelings of trust and respect remain low. Many of the new programs, if sustained over time, have the potential to help the campus build strong respect and trust across key stakeholder groups, but the campus is fractured in its views about the progress. Later in this report we devote a full section to the importance of relationship building and the important work underway, as well as efforts that are needed moving forward. We provide concrete examples of how this relationship building is occurring at UM as well as the challenges it is encountering. Here we highlight an example of building trust and respect between the Mizzou campus and the immediate Columbia community. The hometown relationship is an important partnership that is often underutilized and undervalued as part of the DEI efforts of the campus.

The DEI leadership team determined that it was important to build stronger connections with the Columbia community and to have collaborative teams address current and future challenges. Ultimately, these efforts were undertaken to be proactive in building relationships that would fortify communications between the university and community. This has led to a robust partnership and commitment to DEI work in the local community. The Columbia community was very receptive to the Inclusive Excellence Framework that Kevin McDonald and his colleagues were leading.

As reported in *Como* magazine on July 26, 2018, members of the business community met with the Inclusive Impact Institute and the DEI team at the university to learn more about the five key areas in the framework and developing applications that would work for the business community. With over 100 organizations on board, these "businesses participating in the Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence diversity initiative will sign a document entitled 'Principles of Community' - an aspirational statement that embody an organization's level of commitment to diversity and equality and reflect the ideals they aspire to uphold" (Whitehead 2018). The unique relationship that has been forged with the community is creating a distinct connection that is gaining national attention from other communities that want to replicate this work and bring a DEI focus to their community.

The unique relationship that has been forged with the community is creating a distinct connection that is gaining national attention from other communities that want to replicate this work and bring a DEI focus to their community.

4. INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT IN CONTINUAL LEARNING FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS

A key aspect of capacity building is committing time and resources to DEI work. Beginning in 2017, the UM System has had a $1.7 million recurring budget for diversity efforts to incentivize inclusive excellence efforts across the system. A system-wide council was developed to review proposals for programs and to allocate the funds at each of the four campuses. Funds were used to support new programs, bolster existing programs, cover requested scholarships, and identify new positions necessary to accomplish continued efforts on the part of the university to be a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment for students, staff, and faculty. The council was developed in an inclusive fashion and made up of one faculty, staff, and student from each campus, plus MU Extension. The council was given all authority and power to allocate funds to the campus. In every way, this governing body represented key stakeholder groups who read proposals and allocated money based on their review of the proposals.

Resources are an important measure of commitment and allow communities to build and invest in programs that support their needs. As we note later in this work, there is concern for the sustained commitment of

Students attending a lecture series at the university.
Photo: University of Missouri.

resources to support DEI issues at MU. Following a generous funding cycle, any reduction in funds is likely to raise concerns that commitment to DEI programs is waning. Campus leaders must be transparent about future funding and how the campus or system makes these decisions.

5. EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Evaluation and assessment practices are important to building capacity and helping campuses understand the impact of their DEI efforts over time. Evaluation efforts allow campus leaders to assess the needs of key stakeholder groups on campus and to understand how effectively their needs are being met. While it is important for campuses to collect data, it is critical that they share findings with the community and use the data to inform decision-making moving forward. The University of Missouri has put in place a comprehensive evaluation process for the campus to provide important feedback regarding DEI efforts.

At the unit level, the staff worked with each of the departments/colleges to help them develop unit strategic plans that included metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts. In addition to these specific efforts to assess DEI initiatives, the campus has also worked to share more analysis of the data available on campus across a wide range of issues. As campus data are made more available to the community, deans and department chairs are beginning to look at the disaggregated data to evaluate potential changes in campus policies and practices, including those that overlap with DEI work.

> **While it is important for campuses to collect data, it is critical that they share findings with the community and use the data to inform decision-making moving forward.**

Evaluation of data has also been used to improve campus processes. For example, key stakeholder groups have collaborated on an inventory of student surveys, developed communication strategies to ensure results, and worked to disseminate results to the campus through dashboards and other communication outlets. The campus has also engaged in program evaluation efforts to assess key signature programs on campus.

CHALLENGES TO CAPACITY BUILDING

In MU's efforts to build capacity, the campus has certainly encountered challenges that impede an ability to build to the highest levels of moderate capacity into high capacity. The perceptions of the campus community

reveal an uneven awareness regarding the programs and the overall progress to date. It is important to continue to build internal communication between and among key stakeholder groups so that the community is more informed of all the work that is occurring. Even in cases where individuals were informed of the new programs, there were some who cautioned that the focus on developing new programs might suggest a level of progress that does not exist. There was concern that the new programs may be insufficient, or may detract from addressing the deeply rooted issues that led to the crisis. As such, campus leaders must balance the development of new programmatic efforts with initiatives that allow the campus to work on deeply rooted problems such as institutional racism embedded deeply into campus practices. Leaders need to be aware that these tensions exist and real systemic changes are important if there is a commitment to dismantling oppressive systems which move a campus to the highest levels of capacity building.

Although participants expressed confidence in leaders' abilities to talk about DEI issues, some participants were not always convinced that the leadership would stay the course to address DEI issues over the long term. Many of the senior leaders were new to campus and there simply was not enough evidence to judge their long-term commitment and efforts to support DEI work. As the leadership consistently demonstrates its commitment to the work, the campus will develop deeper trust and willingness to engage and support these efforts. As leaders work with the campus community to build capacity, it is imperative that they help the community connect their own contributions to this larger vision and plan. A plan sets the tone for expectations and communicates a level of commitment and accountability. When members of the community begin to see sustained levels of commitment to address and eradicate racism and other forms of oppression, progress will become more evident in the interactions and engagement of community members. The improved climate of the campus will reflect the deep progress and work that has occurred.

Finally, often there can be a mismatch between what the DEI goals are for the campus, the broader vision, and the micro-politics on the ground with administrative and academic departments. As noted by a participant, some community members are resistant to the direction of the campus's DEI efforts because they perceive that they are being told how to do their jobs. When particular concerns are raised they often respond, "We can't talk about that," and "We can't change that." These comments point t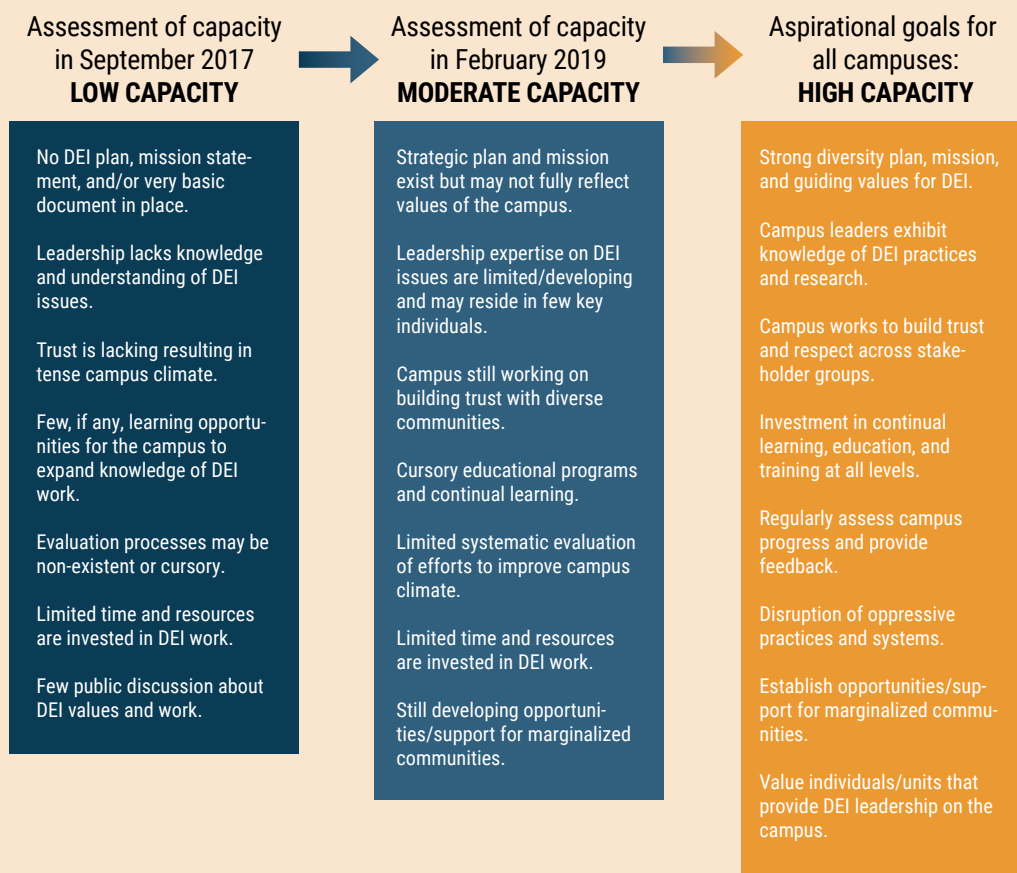o the challenges that can occur between leaders at various levels on campus and their buy-in and commitment to the campus's vision of DEI work. Leaders who are guiding the broader campus vision of DEI work may not fully understand how campus leaders at other levels are representing and supporting the mission and work of DEI. Leaders further down in the organization may not have the same level of commitment. They may feel like they are being told what to do and losing their own authority to make decisions in their units. These leaders may not see the DEI efforts in the same way as the campus's broader vision; this can lead to differing perspectives and perceptions of campus commitment to DEI work, which contributes to a fragmented view of the progress being made.

Leaders who are guiding the broader campus vision of DEI work may not fully understand how campus leaders at other levels are representing and supporting the mission and work of DEI.

While we documented major progress in the campus's capacity in DEI, many people on campus had different perceptions of the campus's progress, uneven appreciation of the efforts of the campus, and various degrees of awareness of the efforts undertaken across the campus. The section that follows attempts to understand these gaps in perception and knowledge and seeks to outline the fragmented worldviews that have emerged that make seeing the overall tapestry of the campuses challenging. These differing views also make attempts at a shared vision for the DEI work particularly difficult during this phase of the recovery process. It is important for leaders to be aware of the tensions that emerge that can further polarize the community.

MU's Current Capacity

In the first report, we assessed MU's capacity prior to the crisis of 2015 to be at low to moderate capacity, and at the height of the crisis we assessed it as having low capacity.[2] We assessed the campus in 2019 to be solidly in moderate capacity. Several key factors informed this placement. First, the campus community has expressed confidence in the current leadership's ability to respond to and address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Members of the community consistently noted how leaders are comfortable and effective in their ability to talk about DEI issues, and leaders demonstrate a commitment to DEI work in their attendance at programs, fiscal support, and public communication. Individuals were confident that if a crisis were to occur, the current leadership team would have the skills and abilities to address the crisis effectively and in a way that would be responsive to community concerns. Secondly, the campus has approached DEI issues in a much more strategic way, including accountability measures to evaluate progress. These broad and comprehensive mechanisms have provided an important framework and strategy for advancing the work and building a common set of expectations across the campus for DEI work. Thirdly, the campus has provided important DEI learning opportunities for faculty, students, and senior leaders and this has increased the capacity of individuals across campus to engage more effectively individually and collectively. These training opportunities have also provided a shared set of experiences for leaders to build their knowledge and skills for diversity and inclusion. Finally, MU has developed and supported a wide range of initiatives and commitments to DEI work across campus. The staff of the DEI office have reached out to leaders in various units to help them develop and outline programs appropriate for their area. Each of these levels of engagement have resulted in the expansion of the campus's capacity to be responsive and knowledgeable moving forward. In Figure 1, we demonstrate how much MU has advanced in its DEI capacity since our last visit.

FIGURE 1: CONTINUUM OF DEI CAPACITY

Assessment of capacity in September 2017 **LOW CAPACITY** → Assessment of capacity in February 2019 **MODERATE CAPACITY** → Aspirational goals for all campuses: **HIGH CAPACITY**

| LOW CAPACITY	MODERATE CAPACITY	HIGH CAPACITY
No DEI plan, mission statement, and/or very basic document in place.	Strategic plan and mission exist but may not fully reflect values of the campus.	Strong diversity plan, mission, and guiding values for DEI.
Leadership lacks knowledge and understanding of DEI issues.	Leadership expertise on DEI issues are limited/developing and may reside in few key individuals.	Campus leaders exhibit knowledge of DEI practices and research.
Trust is lacking resulting in tense campus climate.	Campus still working on building trust with diverse communities.	Campus works to build trust and respect across stakeholder groups.
Few, if any, learning opportunities for the campus to expand knowledge of DEI work.	Cursory educational programs and continual learning.	Investment in continual learning, education, and training at all levels.
Evaluation processes may be non-existent or cursory.	Limited systematic evaluation of efforts to improve campus climate.	Regularly assess campus progress and provide feedback.
Limited time and resources are invested in DEI work.	Limited time and resources are invested in DEI work.	Disruption of oppressive practices and systems.
Few public discussion about DEI values and work.	Still developing opportunities/support for marginalized communities.	Establish opportunities/support for marginalized communities.
		Value individuals/units that provide DEI leadership on the campus.

Fragmented Worldviews

"Where people enter creates what they see." – *Faculty member at University of Missouri*

This quote captured a major theme that we identified in visiting the campus in 2019: faculty, staff, administrator, and student perspectives varied based on key background characteristics and experiences. Leaders can benefit from appreciating that after a racial crisis, staff, faculty, students, and administrators may have very different perspectives about the work of the campus going forward, progress, and even the possibilities for improving the racial climate. Social identities, such as race, will of course shape how people interpret the actions of leaders and the work moving forward. Leaders tend to be more cognizant of race and will likely consider it in their diversity work. Moreover, they are right to reach out and understand how faculty or staff of different racial backgrounds perceive, for example, a memo issued in response to a national racial incident. Do African American faculty perceive the memo displayed as an appreciation for the ongoing fear and anxiety they face in the presence of threats to their existence? It is important to be aware that White, African American, and Latino faculty, staff, and students may respond differently to a campus's work to rebuild the campus climate.

As we saw at Missouri, other factors will likely also emerge that create a fragmented view of campus diversity, equity, and inclusion work. While leaders might be observant of differences in perspective based on race, we found that perspectives are fractured by many other dimensions that make communication challenging and improving the climate difficult. It is thus important for leaders to understand this fragmented worldview that can emerge in order to be able to navigate a complex landscape in which not one or two realities exist, but indeed dozens of realities and/or views of the campus efforts exist simultaneously.

In this section, we review the various facets (see Figure 2) that we found shaped the views on campus and which ultimately determined the campus's ability to work together to create a shared vision around diversity, equity, and inclusion. These may need to be bridged through leaders observing and explaining the different perspectives to enable communication, carefully outlining expectations, organizing face-to-face meetings, and other communication strategies that can help make sense in a divided world. We do not believe this is a comprehensive list and leaders may want to consider other facets that may shape views on their own campus. Later portions of the report will reflect on ways to address these issues. Here we want to describe the issue so that leaders can become knowledgeable of the communication and interaction challenges inherent in this process. It is also important to note that previous studies in higher education have identified some of the varying perceptions that we describe as a result of the decentralized and complex nature of higher education institutions (Kezar 2018).
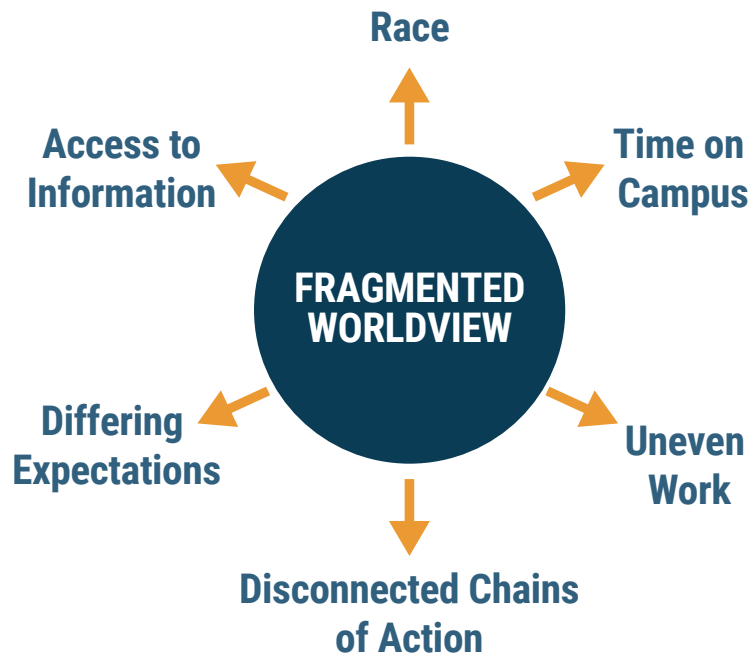
RACE

Faculty, staff, administrators, and students of color were much more likely to be cautious of acknowledging progress, to see a backlash as imminent, to worry, and to be protective about their colleagues doing diversity, equity, and inclusion work. These individuals were vigilant and believed that the campus was still fragile and could move backward, denying the institutional racism that they fought so hard to make visible. White faculty, staff, administrators, and students were much more likely to describe improvements on campus, to perceive progress, and to feel that a stable state of racial "harmony" was perhaps not imminent but possible.

DIFFERENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION

On top of differences by race were differences based on access to information. Faculty, staff, students, and administrators all have very different access to information about DEI efforts. Select student leaders had open access to campus leadership and were very informed about change efforts and new initiatives. They reported seeing progress and being encouraged by campus efforts. On the other hand, we spoke with "typical" students who voiced being unaware of changes, believing their views were not heard or appreciated, and being disappointed that "little" was happening to improve the climate. Similarly, faculty and staff that sit in formal governance roles articulated how they were hopeful on the progress and encouraged by campus efforts while those who were not formally engaged in governance were largely unaware of campus work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Even administrators had different access to information, with department chairs noting they were not informed of new policies or practices on campus, but deans were very knowledgeable of changes made by the senior administrators.

TIME ON CAMPUS

There was a clear difference in perspectives by those who had experienced the campus before the racial crisis and lived through it when compared to faculty, staff, and students who came afterward. Those who have been on campus for a while had more difficulty seeing progress and had strong emotions (typically anger, frustration, and anxiety that we will discuss later) tied up with and connected to how they viewed campus actions and communications. These emotions made them skeptical and guarded. The upside is that they pushed more for progress and were willing to hold the campus accountable. The downside of their view was burnout from holding onto challenging emotions. As would be expected, those who were new and had not been on campus during the racial crisis had fewer or no emotions around the diversity, equity, and inclusion work. They had no anger or anxiety that tinged their view. This had the upside of making them more open to actions and communications being undertaken and more optimistic about future possibilities. The downside is they may perhaps be less sensitized to issues or naïve in their approach. Those who were new tended to see the campus as making more progress than those who had been on campus for a long time.

DISCONNECTED CHAINS OF ACTION

University of Missouri, like many campuses, is decentralized with each school or college operating largely independently. Furthermore, departments often function as their own independent operating unit. The atomization of work leads to very different views of diversity and equity work as the knowledge about these issues is either owned or not by the department or college leadership—the department chair or dean, respectively. Colleges and departments often lack an understanding of what others are doing. While this is problematic for many change efforts, it becomes even more difficult after a racial crisis. Efforts to improve climate are challenging to implement when every unit has its own microclimate which is largely insulated from the rest of the broader equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts. As a result, attempts to create a shared vision for advancing equity and diversity, or an agenda of the work, is a hard task.

UNEVEN WORK TOWARD CHANGING THE RACIAL CLIMATE

The campus prioritized improving the racial climate for students as its first priority. Far less attention has been focused on faculty climate. While the campus is hiring more faculty of color, there has been little attention to, for example, curriculum or pedagogy. Less attention has also been paid to staff climate thus far. Given the great lift of diversity work, and the inherent challenges of culture and climate change, immediate responses are most often uneven, especially when working with limited resources.

It is important to recognize that uneven progress will lead to campus stakeholders experiencing very different campus racial contexts and climates that affect their views of whether and how campus climate is changing. Helping people understand the progress being made with different stakeholder groups and across units on campus can begin to bridge the gaps in perceptions and understanding of the overall progress that is being made. Moreover, it moves the campus towards a shared vision for change when faculty, staff, and students may not be experiencing change within their own microclimate.

DIFFERING BEGINNING EXPECTATIONS

Faculty, staff, administrators, and students also differ in their expectations about an improved racial climate and what that looks like. Expectations heavily shape perspective. Some people communicated that individuals who have lived in Missouri their whole lives may have a much more conservative view of racial diversity efforts which are focused on eradicating explicit discrimination. But faculty who come from other states with more progressive ideas about racial justice may feel that eradicating explicit discrimination is not really progress at

all, compared to implementing transformative race-conscious policies. Campuses bring together faculty, staff, and students with very different views of an improved racial climate. These views may be shaped by their race (e.g., being a faculty member of color), but they may also be framed by disciplinary background, professional work subcultures (e.g., student affairs), and other experiences. Creating a shared vision is very difficult work when you have so many fractured views of racial justice and what it looks like to improve racial climate on the campus and in society.

While not a complete list of characteristics that can alter the views of campus stakeholders, this provides leaders a glimpse of the fractured views that are likely to emerge and need to be carefully navigated. Leaders need to build the campus capacity for DEI work, but this may be challenging if people feel hopeless, hurt, or disconnected from the work. Differences in views are natural, but DEI work is especially difficult if perspective among campus stakeholders cannot be bridged. These worldviews can contribute to tensions as the community endeavors to find ways to find solutions and common ground.
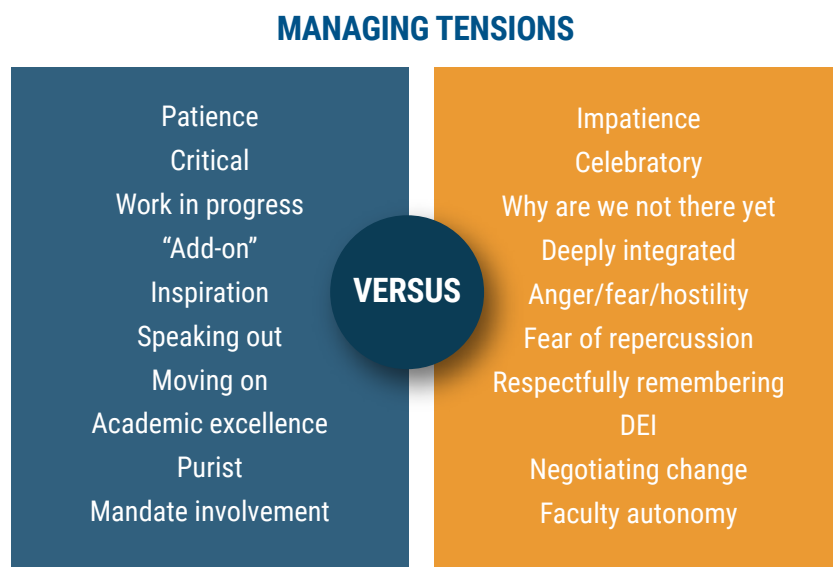
Key Takeaways

- Fragmented perspectives are a natural part of complex university environments, and leaders who are aware of ways to understand different views will be better able to navigate them.

- Some fragmentation we documented was also specific to views around DEI work, and leaders need to be aware of how campus stakeholders may develop unique perspectives.

- The weaver-leader approach we will describe in Part 2 is important for helping to bridge diverse perspectives through communication and relationship building.

Tensions

Once an initial racial crisis has settled, tensions emerge that relate to priorities becoming less well-defined and the differing perspectives that surface. If a campus already has a high DEI capacity, then these tensions are less likely to emerge, and if they do, leaders are able to work with the community to bridge the divide. However, without that foundation, DEI work will encounter challenges and can succumb to divisions that undermine or destroy needed progress.

Importantly, leaders aware of these tensions can leverage them for change rather than be sidelined. Specifically, leaders can balance and address these tensions by helping to weave sensemaking across these tensions and providing avenues to "knit" ideas across what look like diametrically opposed views. This also will require leaders to have strong empathy skills to understand the views of different people and be able to bridge and connect divergent views as "weavers." The following is a sampling, rather than a full list, of the tensions. Figure 3 summarizes the key tensions.

FIGURE 3: KEY TENSIONS ON DEI WORK

MANAGING TENSIONS

	VERSUS	
Patience		Impatience
Critical		Celebratory
Work in progress		Why are we not there yet
"Add-on"		Deeply integrated
Inspiration		Anger/fear/hostility
Speaking out		Fear of repercussion
Moving on		Respectfully remembering
Academic excellence		DEI
Purist		Negotiating change
Mandate involvement		Faculty autonomy

SENSE OF PATIENCE AND IMPATIENCE

Faculty, staff, and students at Missouri expressed very different views about the need to be patient and allow new DEI work to take hold. For example, some felt that the campus was moving far too slowly and needed to push for more DEI work. These individuals felt compelled to call out administrators for not being accountable enough for rapid changes. Others felt that the campus was moving along at an appropriate pace, allowing faculty, staff, students, and community members a chance to learn and develop an understanding about racial histories and inequities that would lead to deeper change in the long run. Both perspectives might have value if they are both embraced and perhaps each perspective moderated. Those with an extreme sense of impatience might undermine the good work going on by delegitimizing it. Those who are being patient could support entropy, a natural deterrent to change. If leaders can meaningfully tap into and balance both perspectives, they can better support movement forward as they help the campus to weave together different perspectives.

BEING CRITICAL VS. CELEBRATORY

Some faculty, staff, and students felt the need to critique the campus in order to generate more movement forward. They feared that without diligence, the campus would regress back to its former state where DEI work could not flourish. Yet, other faculty, staff, and students felt that the campus needed to celebrate progress more and that the ongoing critique was exhausting and destroying momentum forward. A weaver-leader embraces critique as an important part of the improvement process, while also celebrating the progress that is being made. We identified how positively this was received by members of the campus when leaders were open to critique and able to remind everyone of progress made. Both critique and celebration have to be woven into the culture of the campus to accurately reflect the challenges and progress.

WORK IN PROGRESS VS. WHY ARE WE NOT THERE YET

Missouri faculty, staff, and students were also divided on how to approach DEI work. Some acknowledged that DEI work was likely going to be perpetually in progress and that they needed to be invested for the long term. Other stakeholders believed that the campus needed to set an end goal and were wondering when DEI work would be over, or when they would arrive at a healthy threshold. Again, balancing these views is important. The campus can certainly reach thresholds of progress that should be acknowledged and celebrated, yet campuses cannot rest on their laurels. DEI work will be something campuses will engage in on an ongoing basis. The changing nature of the work and thresholds/benchmarks, as well as the ongoing nature of the journey, need to be balanced and communicated.

Bri Dinwiddie, sponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., is crowned Homecoming Queen as she is congratulated by Homecoming King Clayton Johnson (Marching Mizzou).
Photo: Sam O'Keefe/University of Missouri.

ADD-ON VS. BAKED IN

Faculty, staff, and students were divided about how integrated DEI efforts needed to be. Some campus stakeholders described a concern that DEI efforts might be more surface-level and mostly for show so that the media, general public, and others see that DEI work is going on. They also worried whether the work was truly going to lead to, or even was intended for, culture change. There was concern if DEI work was an "add-on" that over time, as priorities changed, it would dissipate and culture change would not occur.

The campus can certainly reach thresholds of progress that should be acknowledged and celebrated, yet campuses cannot rest on their laurels.

Given these competing views, leaders that play the role of weaver can help the campus to have discussions about the need to "window-dress" by trying out efforts and becoming more comfortable until they can be fully woven into the fabric of the institution. There existed at Missouri a tension with some faculty and staff seeing DEI as "extra work" on top of their already long list of priorities, as opposed to other faculty and staff who conceived DEI work as "just the way we do things on campus." If DEI is not woven into the fabric of campus it can indeed be additional work. Weavers help the campus to see the value in DEI being part of daily practice. They help units to integrate DEI into their work, so it is not on top of other priorities, becoming woven in over time.

INSPIRATION VS. MANDATE

Faculty, staff, and students described their divided views about what would motivate their colleagues to be involved in DEI work. Some believed that others should be inspired through appeals to a set of values and shared vision. As one administrator noted: "I have never attracted anyone to diversity work with threats." Others however, believed that only by mandate or accountability would their colleagues make diversity a priority. They believed that righteous anger was needed to push and stir their colleagues into action.

Certainly, people's motivations are complex, and people can be motivated by different approaches. Leaders can and should utilize multiple strategies—the tapestry of diversity, equity, and inclusion is sewn from inspiration, hope, anger, and fear. They can communicate that research supports using multiple types of motivations and helping individuals from particular perspectives understand the value of engaging different approaches to advance DEI efforts. Whatever strategies campuses adopt, there *should* be real accountability measures and rewards that align to communicate the overall importance of DEI work.

SPEAK OUT AND BE VISIBLE VS. FEAR OF REPERCUSSION

The nested context of the state of Missouri continues to matter significantly in how the campus moves forward with DEI work. For many, being visible about the work brought the threat of the legislature lashing out against the campus. Many believe that the student protests resulted in the significant decline in state funding, thus reinforcing a notion that continued attention to DEI may bring further criticism and action. Some felt that supporting particular approaches to DEI work could threaten future funding, such as the establishment of DEI-focused courses, programming, or training. Yet, many campus stakeholders also believed that without strong visibility, DEI work would suffer, and could lead to other poor financial outcomes such as students not choosing to enroll at Mizzou or choosing to leave. Balancing these opposing concerns is important for leaders, presidential cabinets, and boards such that a strategic approach to communication can be developed in light of internal and external pressures.

Some faculty and staff also worried about on-campus backlash or retaliation for progress made to advance DEI efforts. Faculty pointed to several examples of colleagues who were challenging such efforts and who threatened to make the work on campus visible to external groups in the position to undercut DEI work. These faculty worried about the backlash that they and their colleagues would incur and how they would continue making progress in the presence of this backlash. The weaver-leader helps faculty and staff to see that backlash can be strategically navigated and that it is just part of the tapestry and the complex change journey.

MOVE ON VS. RESPECTFULLY REMEMBER AND MOVE ON

The campus was split into three different perspectives about how to reconcile the student protests and ensuing racial crisis. Some faculty, staff, and students wanted to move on and not enshrine that moment for the campus. By moving on, they hoped the new DEI work would help the campus to become a fresh environment and believed holding onto the past only threatened progress forward. This sentiment was reflected in 2018 when the campus did not celebrate the protests as they had in previous years. Another group of faculty, staff, and students wanted to remember this history to ensure that the campus does not forget its legacy (and continued) institutional racism along with the need to fight against the status quo. These groups feared that not holding onto the past meant that the campus is doomed to repeat it.

Yet a third group hoped to respectfully remember the past as a milestone marking when the campus stood up to institutional racism, but to also move on, allowing the campus to grow and not be mired in an old view. In this instance, some campus stakeholders had identified an important middle ground we think is needed when these tensions arise. Leaders will benefit from this middle ground perspective of respectfully remembering the past and also moving on. This means continuing to acknowledge and remember the 2015 protests but also recognize new changes on campus that acknowledge progress.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE VS. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Administrators and faculty spoke about the pressure to maintain Missouri's academic excellence, including a focus on research, awards, and publications. Yet it is perceived by some that these metrics create an environment in which it is very challenging to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion, even while university leadership consistently expressed that DEI is an important aspect of such excellence. Faculty feel as if they have to choose between meeting the goal of research prestige or fulfilling diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. This also overlapped with a pressure to focus the campus on STEM activities, where more grants and research opportunities are readily available. Because the faculty in the humanities fields were often the champions of DEI work, this reinforced the secondary status of DEI work and its incompatibility with campus priorities that seemed more aligned with STEM. Some saw no path for doing both and asked for models of campuses that achieved a balance in meeting certain metrics of academic excellence while also prioritizing DEI. A few noted that there are individual faculty, staff, and administrators on campus that describe how diversity leads to greater academic excellence by drawing in cognitive complexity.

PURIST VS. NEGOTIATE WITH INTEREST CONVERGENCE

Administrators, faculty, and staff differed in their beliefs as to whether DEI efforts can be advanced without altering the mindsets and hearts of members of the campus community. Some held the perspective that you can come to a shared interest even when colleagues may not have altered their fundamental worldview about the value of DEI or have an appreciation of what the work really means. Other faculty and staff were convinced that only those who have undergone a transformation of heart and mind can support DEI and authentically be a part of the effort.

Faculty and staff pointed to examples of individuals, units, and larger groups that do not have a genuine understanding or appreciation of DEI, noting that this prevented any real progress forward until more individuals were "converted." They worried that the "untransformed" could do some real damage in DEI efforts because of their lack of understanding. A weaver-leader appreciates that those whose hearts and minds have changed make stronger allies, but also that allies exist among those whose hearts have not changed. If administrators, faculty, and staff are willing to support DEI work then they should be embraced and groomed over time. While there is a risk of damage from the opportunist ally, risks can be measured over time and directions changed.

A weaver-leader appreciates that those whose hearts and minds have changed make stronger allies, but also that allies exist among those whose hearts have not changed. If administrators, faculty, and staff are willing to support DEI work then they should be embraced and groomed over time.

MANDATE VS. FACULTY AUTONOMY

There were some faculty, staff, and administrators who wanted the campus to mandate that everyone be involved in DEI work in order to more clearly make it a priority. There were concerns that too many people on campus were able to pick and choose whether and to what degree they would be involved in DEI efforts. Others worried that anything mandated or even prioritized would lead to resistance, particularly among faculty who have a culture of professional autonomy. Weaver-leaders are needed so that a shared vision and sense of priority is not perceived as a mandate and that it can be compatible with professional autonomy.

These tensions, left unaddressed, provide fuel for divisions that make conversation challenging, common ground difficult to find, and miscommunication rampant. This context sets the stage for weaver-leaders who can help the campuses to move from irreconcilable differences to participating in multiple parts of weaving the tapestry of DEI work.

Key Takeaways

- Tensions around how to make progress are natural and need discussion.

- Tensions may not be resolved, but leaders can better lead if they are aware of tensions that exist.

- Leaders can create ways to balance tensions, and examples were provided throughout this section.

- The weaver-leader framework is also important for addressing tensions through relationship building and setting expectations.

More than 2,000 graduates received diplomas in December 2019.
Photo: University of Missouri.

Ongoing and Shifting Emotions on Campus After a Racial Crisis

The Missouri campus is on a journey of moving forward from the sharp, intense emotions of the 2015 crisis, and is now in a period of recovery from sustained and prolonged emotional trauma. As one participant describes, Mizzou's campus is "still in surgery, repairing the wound." Participants expressed an ongoing, but shifting, set of emotions when reflecting on the current state of Mizzou's campus and community. In acknowledging the range of sustained emotions experienced, it is critical for the campus to be aware of the new facets of emotions that have emerged, and how these emotions continue to be a part of the healing journey.

Rather than pit one group's needs against others' needs, weaver-leaders expand their capacity and ability to serve all students.

During our 2019 data collection, participants continued to express feelings of fear, distrust, anger, and fatigue. While these feelings are less visceral from when we first visited, they remain important emotions to process. For example, when asked about the campus's perception of the new leadership at Mizzou, most had very positive things to say about their commitment to DEI issues. However, several participants described feelings of distrust and apprehension among faculty and staff who feared that some of the history and patterns exhibited by leadership in the past may repeat themselves. Some felt cautious about putting their trust in new leaders out of fear of being disappointed again. While the emotions of anger, fear, and distrust are still present, new emotions have emerged for the campus to address, including feelings of frustration, anxiety, and exhaustion. We explore each of these emotions in more detail below. It is important to note that these emotions were felt across faculty, staff, and students. Given space limitations, we offer examples from one or two groups but not across all three.

FRUSTRATION

Some students expressed a growing frustration regarding the targeted efforts and focus on improving the racial campus climate and the experiences of students of color, particularly for Black students. While participants expressed appreciation and recognition for the importance of DEI efforts, they noted frustration in acknowledging and supporting the experiences of other student identity groups, such as the Latinx, queer, and trans communities, along with students with disabilities. Some participants acknowledged that small efforts were underway to address the needs of other student groups, but progress was slow.

We learned from the some staff members that there are plans to develop more programs aligned with DEI efforts, as well as overall support for other student populations. Communicating with students about both the immediate and long-term plans is important. While it might be useful for staff to bring students together to address shared concerns, it is also important not to overreact to the concern that Black students are receiving too much attention. It is understandable that Black students' needs are centered at these times given the nature of the racial crisis and its history. Rather than pit one group's needs against others' needs, weaver-leaders expand their capacity and ability to serve all students. Leaders can start by allowing students to express concerns and find ways to build and add onto the work that is being done to support Black students, as well as other social identity groups.

Faculty and staff participants also exhibited feelings of frustration with the campus's inability to retain faculty of color. Though there have been efforts to hire more faculty of color, there is also a rapid turnover, and those that do remain feel frustrated by the perceived lack of progress in retaining colleagues of color. There are any number of reasons why faculty of color may leave an institution. In an extensive review of the research on faculty of color, Kimberly Griffin (in the forthcoming 2020 edition of *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*) details the range of factors that can impact the experiences of faculty of color, including the institutional context as well as department culture, support networks, and promotion and tenure processes. While turnover and other issues impacting faculty of color are enduring problems across the academy (Johnson et al. 2018; Khalil and Edwards 2018; Levin et al. 2015; Taylor et al. 2017), every campus must examine its own distinct and local context to understand how the issues are uniquely manifesting and shaping the perceptions of the community.

In the case of the University of Missouri, several faculty of color were being recruited. As is the case for some universities, faculty of color may be recruited by more prestigious institutions, and it can be very challenging to compete with these elite institutions. Missouri experienced this as faculty of color were recruited by prestigious institutions; however, participants felt like the university put little effort into expressing its desire to keep these faculty of color at the institutions and didn't make sincere efforts to offer packages that would meet their needs. Many of these perceptions were based on the fact that individuals had access to more of the backstory of why their colleagues were leaving the university. Clearly the circumstances surrounding the departure of a faculty member are personnel matters and confidential. Moreover, there are many factors shaping these complex decisions, and even those who feel they have insider information are still not privy to all of the negotiations and efforts that may have occurred. Yet each individual case of departure, no matter the reason, adds to an overall collective narrative that the campus has a revolving door for faculty of color.

Because the campus has experienced a significant loss of key faculty (Kelly, Gayles, and Williams 2017), causing continued feelings of frustration (Johnson et al. 2018; Khalil and Edwards 2018; Levin et al. 2015; Taylor et al. 2017), it is important to take seriously these feelings and explore more deeply the experiences of faculty of color to look for systemic problems and barriers that may be impeding the institution's ability to retain faculty of color.

Furthermore, as staff at Mizzou take on increasing responsibility for DEI work, some have grown frustrated by feelings of invisibility and a perceived lack of voice on DEI issues across the broader campus community. Staff working on DEI efforts described feeling overworked day-to-day, while additionally providing emotional support to one another and to students. Many staff members mentioned frustration with the feelings of isolation in their work, given the siloed aspect of initiatives on Mizzou's campus.

ANXIETY

Many staff, faculty, and students continue to express the need to be supported and fortified in their work. Staff across campus are still healing from the pain of the past wounds, and this causes some anxiety. Some staff also expressed additional fear that campus leaders may be more concerned with "the Mizzou brand" and its public appearance than with the general well-being of its campus community. As noted above, the loss of key faculty and staff on campus has left many in the community feeling anxious about where the campus is heading in terms of its commitment and support of diversity issues. Several of the faculty who left the campus played a prominent role in the leadership of DEI issues on campus. One staff member described the recent loss of the chair of Black Studies as "the rug has been pulled from under us." After the chair of Black Studies left the university, there were feelings of confusion and anxiety as to whom would take her place and if her initiatives would be continued. These faculty losses were coupled with key losses in the DEI office for the campus.

Furthermore, there is general widespread anxiety around financial concerns about how the budget will be handled, and whether DEI issues will continue to be supported. Financial constraints seemed to be named as one of the major challenges holding the campus back from being able to move forward. One participant said that staff engaged in DEI work are expected to address the campus culture, yet are not supported with the necessary resources; this makes it difficult to expect individuals to remain committed to the work.

EXHAUSTION

One of the most clear and apparent emotions described by the participants across the campus is that of exhaustion. Though fatigue was an emotion expressed by participants during the first phase of data collection, fatigue has become even more evident and evolved into exhaustion for many. Certain units and individuals on campus, particularly those with significant responsibilities for DEI work, feel overworked and overwhelmed. This is especially evident in understaffed areas where individuals are providing emotional and psychosocial support for many in the community, especially students. Moreover, these staff members are being asked to participate in, and show up for, many programs on campus and to be in many spaces "in the name of diversity" (Franklin 2016; Gorski 2019). It is important that weaver-leaders understand that the emotional labor that goes into DEI work is often unrecognized and unappreciated. This can be compounded for members of the campus who come from communities that already experience a lack of support and sense of belonging on the campus.

REFLECTING ON EMOTIONS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND REPORT

In the first report, we acknowledged the collective emotional pain experienced by members of the campus community. Through drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed (2015), who writes about the complexity of emotions and the impact of individual emotions on collective community, we were able to better understand the importance of acknowledging and addressing the collective emotions of trauma. We emphasized the key role of leaders in creating space for the community to process elements of trauma, and we described ways for leaders to navigate the dynamics of a racial crisis in the context of the emotions of anger, distrust, fear, and fatigue.

The original emotions we described in the trauma framework are still relevant and ongoing for the Mizzou campus community. As discussed above, in addition to the ongoing experience of anger, distrust, fear, and fatigue, new emotions have emerged. This adds an additional layer of context for campus leaders to consider in addressing continued recovery. After the initial crisis has subsided there will be ongoing emotions and experiences of the community for leaders to understand. This is illustrated in the words of Samuel Stanley Jr., the new president of Michigan State University, who observed in the fall 2019 issue of *Spartan* alumni magazine: "I want to meet with the survivors and their families, listen to their voices and their thoughts and learn from them. I want to work with them and the entire community to ensure the changes that need to be made are implemented" (2019, 9). His comments reflect that he acknowledges the current phase of healing and emotions of the community whose trust has been broken by the horrific racial incidents that occurred at MSU. So, while this report emphasizes the weaver-leader framework, the trauma framework described in the first report is still important for leaders to utilize as most campuses—like Missouri—will still be in phases of recovery and healing.

Key Takeaways

- Leaders need to know the emotional pulse of the campus.

- Leaders should be aware of how emotions shift over time and therefore may need to develop new strategies to help navigate emerging emotions.

- Leaders should publicly acknowledge the emotions on campus (including their own), making people feel normal and affirmed.

- Leaders should set up opportunities for the campus to process emotions that can prevent healing and make improvement on the racial climate more challenging.

- Leaders should be aware of and use the trauma recovery framework as a way to increase and improve their interactions with the community (see Kezar et al. 2018).

Part 2: The Weaver-Leader Framework

In Part 2, we review the steps campuses can take to move forward as they progress in their DEI efforts. However, when the campus community's views are split and fragmented, making a shared vision for forward direction can be problematic. The first section of the report set the context to understand the need for a weaver-leader that can connect, bridge, and help overcome the divided campus. The weaver-leader knows to over-communicate, set expectations, and build relationships, which can create shared expectations and common ground on which to build a shared vision.

A shared set of expectations is best developed inclusively with the voices of all on campus, providing a foundation for a shared vision as well. Communicating, relationship building, and setting expectations are the three critical areas at this point of the journey to advance the campus in its DEI efforts and to continue to build capacity. These three aspects are a foundation that needs to be in place to eventually reach a shared vision. See Figure 4 for an overview of the weaver-leader framework.

FIGURE 4: THE WEAVER-LEADER FRAMEWORK

We caution leaders not to focus on establishing a shared vision in DEI work for the campus unless they have set expectations, invested in building relationships, and expanded communication venues.

Over-communication

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of communication; at this moment for campus addressing a racial crisis, we would say "over-communicating." As we noted in earlier sections of this report, members of the community have very different perspectives and expectations of the DEI work on campus. Weaver-leaders take up the mantle to communicate the progress being made, address the approach taken, and to draw on more personalized forms of communication.

The "Tensions" section in Part 1 addressed how weaver-leaders can begin to link and connect what appear to be opposing views and approaches to DEI work. This lesson about the weaver-leader or importance of communication is not specific to this campus but a generalizable lesson. In this current phase it is very important for universities to invest significant time and resources in enhancing formal and informal channels of communication in ways that are public, proactive, personal, caring, and transparent. The reason for the importance of "humanized" over-communication is that it builds relationships and trust that are so critical in healing and recovery. Here, we review the key ways that leader communication can be honed to best support the campus moving forward in DEI efforts. Communication was also a significant part of our first report; the trauma framework we presented notes the importance of listening and speaking from the heart. Here we build on the communication ideas in the first report, emphasizing new facets for this next stage of the campus.

PUBLICLY RECOGNIZE LEADERSHIP AROUND DEI

Because the work of DEI is still evolving and capacity is still being built, publicly recognizing this work helps to continue to build the momentum and to combat the view of cynics that the work is going away now that the crisis is over. We heard examples of how certain groups were doing exemplary work—faculty and graduate students in the School of Education were often described and brought up as doing important work as the school's "bridge," providing a space for racial dialogues, hiring faculty of color, and providing training and professional development. The dean of the veterinary school and her leadership team were spoken about by campus stakeholders as having a solid commitment and plan for change. The faculty and leadership within the school of law and journalism were noted as good examples of hiring and retaining faculty of color and of making curricular changes and improvements in the racial environment. Campus stakeholders need ongoing reminders of the successes and acknowledgment of all the individuals—staff, faculty, administrators, and students—driving these changes.

PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION

In general, when communities are fragmented, being proactive in communication is important. Leaders need to realize that those who have become cynical or those healing will be likely to read into silences—to think that the campus is not prioritizing DEI work or does not care. Instead of allowing silence to turn into rumor, leaders on campus need to be out front sharing information even if there is only incomplete information to share. For example, if something occurs with a student experiencing something negative, the campus should issue a statement that it is looking into the issue and will be forwarding information to the community shortly.

Instead of allowing silence to turn into rumor, leaders on campus need to be out front sharing information even if there is only incomplete information to share.

It would also be helpful to reach out personally to faculty or staff who may be impacted by the incident to let them know that you are working on the problem and to gain their insights in the early stages of exploration of the incident. If a faculty or staff member reports an issue, notify all relevant leaders and provide information about when follow up will occur. If deans or department chairs are asked a question, they can genuinely respond that information is forthcoming, rather than saying that they do not know what is going on.

Another example of being proactive with communication is with external groups such as local and regional community groups, the legislature, and alumni. The campus had worked diligently in the last few years to regularly update external groups about changes on campus, and the campus community felt this was having a very positive effect on the relationships with external stakeholders. The campus had "taken control" of the external narrative as this was the more immediate focus after the crisis. Similarly, the campus needs to turn towards building stronger communication and information internally about the work that it is engaged in and how it will be continued over time.

Another dimension of being proactive involved inviting and encouraging campus stakeholders to participate in communication forums. During a time of healing and fragmentation, faculty and staff spoke about the importance of being invited and encouraged to engage in forums, professional development, and proposals for DEI work. One faculty member commented on this issue: "The leadership has had several open forums but they are not well attended. Faculty and staff just do not feel that this is 'for them' but when they get a personal invitation, they tend to go. We are all just so busy and the invitation makes us prioritize this, makes us aware that leaders do really care about this issue." This example shows how being proactive and inviting people into these communications forums can vastly increase their impact.

PERSONALIZED COMMUNICATION

When appropriate, we particularly encourage forms of communication that are more personal. Many faculty and staff commented on the dilemma of sending out memos or emails as a way to reach people with information—whether it be introducing new staff for DEI work, new policies or procedures, or changes in priorities or direction. Emails were fine for announcing professional development, for example, but everyone emphasized that because DEI work was still new and unstable that any changes should be more personally communicated. Any "incident" that could impact the racial climate definitely needs to be addressed personally by leadership. Modes of personal communication could vary but might include reaching out by phone, leaders providing direct access to cell numbers so they can be reached if an incident occurs, and following up after a meeting to provide updates and progress reports. Several deans shared their strategies for supporting faculty, especially new professors and professors of color who encounter more challenges in their transition to campus. They gave examples of how they offered their cell numbers to faculty so that they could have direct access at any time. Often for faculty of color this is important as it is a sign of support from the dean and the importance of being able to communicate directly.

COMMUNICATING WITH CARE

One of our key themes in the first report was the importance of listening so that communications from leaders can address emotions and concerns expressed in the community. Speaking from the heart expresses care. This care is essential for healing. As the campus is continuing to heal, this communicating with care remains essential and should be overlaid as leaders consider any communications decision. We heard examples of people feeling campus leaders were beginning to lose touch with care. For example, when a prominent activist faculty member died, there was a perception by some that no statement or acknowledgment from the campus was offered. However, we subsequently learned that in fact an event was held to acknowledge the life and legacy of this individual. The perception of lack of care could be about the timing of communication to the community as well as reaching a wide range of individuals to make sure that they are informed about campus events. Even with the best of intentions, communicating with care is still subjective, and the perceptions of the community and understanding of what is occurring on the campus can be very uneven. Leaders need to realize that the care so essential after a crisis remains needed as emotions continue to be raw, even three or four years after a crisis. We heard calls for humanized and caring communications. For some, there has been a shift. One staff member who directly works with students shared that students feel more heard by faculty and staff who take the time to listen to their concerns. A different administrator who also teaches attended her class on a day in which the campus received threats of a possible shooting. This instructor expressed how she felt protective of the students who expected her and others not to show up in order to look out for their own safety. Such actions need to occur on a campus-wide level alongside acts of care between individuals one-on-one.

Some participants described a growing culture of a lack of care and concern among leadership, which tends to trickle down from leaders through departments and colleges. It can be additionally challenging to build relationships if there is a perception of lack of care and concern. Staff in the focus groups emphasized that sincerity and candor can go a long way in making individuals feel connected, heard, and supported. Beyond the power, position, and title held, leaders should prioritize their authentic and genuine care and concern for others as people. Often this may mean stepping beyond the outlined duties of their position and seeking ways to demonstrate human empathy and connection, while acknowledging the realness of trauma and challenges faced within communities. It is important for leaders to be familiar with, and to attend, signature events sponsored by groups across campus. Having senior-level representatives on the campus present at and engaged in these events matters. Taking the time to know the names of individuals and to personally interact with students, staff, and faculty is of consequence. This is another way in which individual interactions can demonstrate care and concern and "humanize the role" of leaders.

TRANSPARENCY

When possible, leaders should share important information in advance and ask small advisory teams to maintain confidence before the general public is notified. Building respect and trust depends on opportunities to share and work collaboratively. Transparency may not always be an option, but when it is leaders should err in the direction of using it. We heard examples of when the campus was transparent, and this built trust. For example, the transparency around the Inclusive Excellence process of choosing priorities and funding for DEI efforts was spoken about very positively. Also, the communication between campus leaders and the local community around some misconduct related to policing was helpful in building goodwill. Yet we also heard examples of when transparency was not present. As noted earlier, when a prominent African American woman leader decided to take a position at another campus, it appeared to the community there were no efforts to keep her, and because other women of color left in the last year it raised even more concerns. Personal matters are often delicate and full disclosure not possible. Yet even communicating constraints around what is possible to share with the community helps build confidence and trust, as many members of the community will not be aware of, or consider, the relevant human resource laws.

DEI Staff as Exemplars of Effective Communication

Effective communicators were identified as using all the approaches above—they are transparent, proactive, caring, and personalized. For example, Kevin McDonald and Emily Love, both leaders in the DEI work, are viewed positively by campus stakeholders for exemplifying all these communication skills. Faculty and staff noted their "consistency and transparency in communicating" and "actively reaching out to and engaging with all constituencies." By acknowledging concerns, responding to questions, and involving stakeholders in change efforts, the DEI unit has exemplified proactive over-communication which fosters positive working relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGING AND ADDRESSING COMMUNICATION MISTAKES

In addition to the positive forms of communication desired within a healing environment, we also heard about a key communication error—not acknowledging communication mistakes. It is important for leaders to address communication mistakes and to use these opportunities to get ahead of crises like layoffs, enrollment challenges, and anticipated turnover in staff. Nothing builds trust more than acknowledging communications mistakes such as being slow to respond to a national issue and issuing a campus statement, noting when the tone was off on a message, or not personalizing a message when that was the approach needed. The practice of acknowledging mistakes really offers the community real-time opportunities to co-construct the work of DEI together. When leaders demonstrate that they heard the feedback and are willing to improve their communication, the community feels valued. Perhaps most importantly, leaders can model the practice of addressing mistakes by example of their own vulnerability. We heard examples of ways that staff, faculty, and student confidence was built by a leader admitting to approaching communication inappropriately when this occurred. We also heard examples of leaders who lost confidence when they did not condemn a racial incident on another campus or speak out quickly or genuinely about a campus comment that was inappropriate.

Key Takeaways

- Publicly recognize the good work of DEI leaders on campus as a way to communicate a commitment to this work and provide a role model for others.

- In challenging times, it is important to proactively communicate, even as leaders reflect on and are careful about their messaging, particularly on sensitive topics.

- Inviting stakeholders to meetings and forums and personalizing communication to different groups and individuals from varying races, genders, and other identities ensures the messages are received.

- After a racial crisis and with emotions still being processed, communicating with care is essential to rebuild trust. Caring is shown through more personal communication but is also demonstrated through knowing people's names or reaching out to faculty or staff when they experience a challenge.

- Transparent communication is vital in building back trust lost during a racial crisis. This means sharing climate studies even if they are not flattering, budget or enrollment data even if it is negative, and not hiding problems.

Setting Expectations

One of the most important ways to address the fragmented worldviews and emerging tensions is to set expectations. Setting expectations is a valuable practice for leaders to implement large-scale change during the aftermath of a racial crisis. Expectations influence the pattern or design that the weaver is envisioning to create a full tapestry. While patterns might alter as progress is made, they are still useful in setting the overall course and direction. Without expectations to follow, weavers might lose sight of how all the campus efforts and work on DEI are contributing to the tapestry. Expectations are a form of communication, but they take on such a prominent place during this phase that we identified them as their own area of attention for leaders. See Figure 5 below for ways leaders should consider setting expectations.

FIGURE 5: DIMENSIONS FOR MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Communicating Expectations

Customizing Information Across Stakeholders

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Accepting Non-linear and Uneven Progress

Managing Different Expectations

The events of 2015 brought attention to the host of unaddressed issues and pain among students, staff, and faculty. A campus-wide racial crisis requires attention to immediate, short-term needs and long-term planning to implement systematic solutions. Setting expectations is essential for transparent communication and rebuilding trust. One administrator commented, "While there have been policy changes, I'm not sure how that trickles down. My fear is that because we've made some changes, [we can wash our hands of this and]

there won't be opportunities to grow because this has to be an ongoing, consistent process." The administrator's observation illustrates a lack of clarity and communication from leaders on how new policy changes set long-term expectations.

There may be ambiguity in the middle of a change process; constant expectation setting can be a tool to keep faculty and staff engaged. One dean noted that having regular check-ins with faculty is a practice which allows for expectations to be reiterated, clarified, and negotiated so there is consensus and trust. As noted in the first section of the report, participants varied in their awareness of the changes that have been implemented. In some groups, the views of the campus leadership were hopeful because participants saw the links between the reforms and their needs. For other groups, their perspectives were pessimistic due to ongoing problems they perceived as being ignored. When creating expectations or using a pattern, the weaver can ensure that every contribution is guided by a larger vision for the tapestry. The pattern should reveal how each policy, program, and work across the campus community on DEI issues represent a piece of the "fabric" that contributes to the larger tapestry, and also how it interconnects with the overall mission of the university.

As noted in Part 1 of the report, the vastly divergent views of participants suggest that expectations have not been clearly conveyed, which contributes to conflicting perceptions of the campus and the persistence of emotional wounds among students and staff of minoritized identities. Logistically, organizational change is a long-term process that requires the scaffolding of priorities. Repairing relationships and strengthening a sense of community is equally as important to pragmatic planning and implementation for a university. The University of Missouri leadership at all levels engaged in varying practices related to setting expectations as a means to alleviate pain, promote healing, and generate buy-in for campus change. In this section we provide suggestions on the following areas related to setting expectations: 1) communicating expectations; 2) accepting non-linear and uneven progress; 3) managing different expectations; and 4) customizing information across stakeholders.

COMMUNICATING EXPECTATIONS

Transparent communication about what the campus community can expect needs to be an ongoing action, particularly relating to the details of planned changes to address a racial crisis. We heard how the Inclusive Excellence plan helped establish timelines, roles, and activities. Aside from conveying actions and policies executed by senior administrators, role expectations need to be clearly stated for members of the campus community and the importance that change will be a community effort. Leaders need to be outlining what role each division or office has in DEI efforts and that without everyone's involvement and collective responsibility the effort might fail. One way the University of Missouri has communicated expectations is through funding for new educational programs to help positively shape the campus climate. Senior leadership can motivate people to participate by clearly conveying each person's role and providing a clear timeline of changes that will be implemented. The proactive outreach and support from the DEI office was mentioned by staff as positive motivator that helped bring people together and clarify the change process. Communicating expectations is constant and is impactful when done interpersonally as staff, faculty, and administrators work to meet established goals.

The University of Missouri leadership at all levels engaged in varying practices related to setting expectations as a means to alleviate pain, promote healing, and generate buy-in for campus change.

Campus police host a Pizza with Police night for students on campus.
Photo: University of Missouri.

CHALLENGES

Yet, there can be challenges to leaders' efforts to communicate expectations. Participants shared instances of new campus members not buying into equity and inclusion programming, which does not help transition new students, staff, and faculty who arrive each year and must be educated about the history of racism at Mizzou and the campus's current activities to transform the climate.

Additionally, long-time campus members may be resistant to changing their practices to meet expectations. They may view these new efforts as yet another cycle of change that won't last or reflecting changes that they simply do not support. Participants from various offices shared anecdotes of supervisors and administrators unwilling to hear new ideas to change the campus racial climate and be part of the collective team responsible for making change.

This adds to the burnout among those who have been vocal advocates for years, a common problem in long-standing diversity efforts. One staff member who has been an equity champion expressed, "They want us to mother; they want us to labor because they know we love these kids. [It is] what we are expected to do for so little." Her comments point to the implicit expectation among those who do not want to take on "new" expectations for DEI work for the DEI stalwarts to continue emotional labor. This comment also reveals that there may be no clear expectations for how staff can be compensated and supported in and for their efforts. These comments demonstrate the benefits of providing students, staff, faculty, and administration with a clear set of expectations for how they can contribute to the vision of the campus moving forward.

ACCEPTING NON-LINEAR AND UNEVEN PROGRESS

The racial crisis revealed problems at all levels of the university, from the undergraduate experience, external relations, and faculty retention to decision-making processes. Some changes can be made more quickly (e.g., training, hiring, student support) and others will take much longer (e.g., changes in curriculum, admissions policy, climate). Policy and practice changes that must be made to cultivate a positive racial climate require different levels of strategic planning and time commitments and may not be able to be engaged simultaneously due to workload, feasibility, and the immediate needs of the community following a crisis. And during the change process, new issues may arise that will build in new work and require administrative action, adding to the demands and potentially slowing the process. The number of sheer changes means they are unlikely to be addressed all at once, even for a high-capacity campus, and present an opportunity for leadership to engage the campus community.

One example of being able to cater to only a partial need shared was the implementation of diversity trainings which cater primarily to novices. Faculty and staff with more experience and knowledge expressed there is a lack of investment to help them advance in the skills. Students also discussed various unmet basic needs (e.g., food insecurity, mandated internships that require driving) that have been long-standing issues alongside acts of racism. For students, faculty, and staff, this often made them feel progress was not being made as their specific concern was not addressed. Others did notice the impact of the immediate reforms that were implemented. One staff member noted that students are feeling heard by faculty. Deans have reported hiring faculty of color, diversity specialists, and expanding student services staff. However, senior leadership possessed a long set of priorities, and changes are being made incrementally. In order to demonstrate how progress is being made, leaders can communicate priorities, and explain how and when changes will occur over the arc of the change process. Leadership can also build trust by setting expectations for their own intentions and expected progress. Setting expectations must include a clear acknowledgement and discussion with the campus that change is happening in line with current capacity.

MANAGING DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS

The different perspectives outlined in the "Fragmented Worldviews" section resulted in very different expectations among campus community members and can contribute to the non-linear and uneven nature of repairing the racial climate. Leadership can proactively respond to differing expectations by establishing communication channels and venues so they are aware of campus needs and can respond accordingly within their capacity. How expectations are communicated is reflective of the change process. A helpful strategy, noted already above, that addresses these different expectations is personalized communication instead of standard memos or open forums. Emails and memos do not allow people to communicate their differing expectations and for leaders to clarify any misunderstandings. Open forums, while better, are not always accessible or beneficial for everyone as people may be afraid to bring up their views. Targeting communications to individuals or offices is useful in providing clear expectations, as well as updates on progress.

We heard many people acknowledge and appreciate when leadership had directly met with them and come to their setting, from students to faculty to local community partners. These efforts demonstrate an awareness of different needs and the importance of incorporating different expectations into the university's plans for improving the racial climate. Leaders can use this practice as an opportunity to give and receive feedback. Ongoing feedback loops are instrumental, specifically if leaders want to gain perspective from people of marginalized identities. A clear path of expectations to outcomes should be outlined by senior leadership to facilitate the process of healing the campus and creating new sustainable structures for equity and inclusion.

ACCESSING AND CUSTOMIZING INFORMATION ACROSS ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Effective expectation setting includes a tailored communication plan for each of the different stakeholder groups—students, staff, faculty, and administration. Students, staff, and faculty expressed varying levels of awareness of and insight on the administrative and programmatic changes that have occurred. As noted earlier in the report, individuals have different access to information and different levels of engagement with campus change efforts, which shaped their views. Participants also revealed that they have differing levels of access to senior leadership. For instance, students who hold formal leadership roles in select organizations have been given direct contact to the chancellor. According to one student, "When students are in leadership roles, they are in the room and are heard from administrators. But not every student gets a seat, and not all know they can ask for a seat. They don't think to ask." While there is contact between administration and students, it is limited to a select few, and opportunities for contact may not always fit with students' schedules. Thus only some student needs are reaching senior leadership and the resulting changes that are being implemented are not reaching all students.

Staff and faculty committed to advancing equity and inclusion experience the challenge of a decentralized campus. Various individuals reported feeling "splintered" and explained how departments are "reinventing the wheel" in the absence of overarching guidance. Sharing information that is tailored for each stakeholder group can address the issues that were expressed by participants. Sharing information is a two-way channel that can benefit leadership and stakeholders, ensure change is obvious and relevant, and cultivate buy-in. The deans across the colleges and schools recently began cultivating an intentional network of information-sharing through monthly meetings. Although each college and school sets independent goals with senior administration, the monthly exchange allows the deans to share diversity and inclusion practices. An example of a new practice is one college's use of exit interviews with graduating students of color. Such information can be used to better tailor the college's services and communications to foster a positive student experience.

Key Takeaways

- Setting expectations is an integral leadership practice in the aftermath of a campus racial crisis.
- Expectations need to be over-communicated and personalized for different stakeholders.
- Non-linear and uneven progress is unavoidable. Leaders need to be transparent about the change process at all stages.
- Understanding the needs of different stakeholders is key. Managing differing expectations can be embraced as an opportunity to cultivate partnership and community.

Relationship Building

Relationship building is a significant aspect of the recovery process, and at this stage it requires multiple levels of engagement between leaders, key stakeholder groups, and members of the community. When communities are fractured and feel uninformed about decisions that are being made on their campus, it is even more imperative that senior-level administrators are on the ground connecting with the community. In this way, community members can know who their leaders are, feel comfortable approaching them to offer feedback, share their perceptions and experiences, and offer their insights on how the campus can make progress. Too often we can see these interactions as community grievance sessions and personal complaints and not opportunities to learn what can work to improve the campus. We also miss opportunities to deepen trust and a sense of mattering between community members and the campus leadership. Interviews with participants reveal that leaders must make intentional investments to connect with the community in many of the ways that we have detailed earlier, such as improving all aspects of communication and communicating expectations. Here we focus on the broad connections that leaders will have to continue to make to engage the community, and important ways to enhance these broad connections as evidenced by examples of how the leadership team at the University of Missouri is expanding these broad connections.

BROAD CONNECTIONS

Broad connections occur when leaders engage with the community directly through open forums and meetings with key constituency groups. These connections provide an opportunity to focus on the needs of the community and to learn firsthand of their concerns. It affords leaders an opportunity to communicate their priorities directly and to address the tensions and concerns of the campus in a public setting. Moreover, these broad connections allow the community to interact and engage with each other and to learn from diverse perspectives. Over time these open meetings can have an impact on how the campus community interacts with each other.

Broad connections also occur when leaders host invited events/meetings that include a wide cross section of individuals across campus, including academic, student services, and administrative units. Special invitations matter, and when they are extended they communicate a degree of connection and access to the leadership. On many campuses these invitation lists are typically represented by deans, directors, and department heads. Certainly, these leaders are an important group to invite; however, it is also important to expand this list to include other campus organizations and individuals who may not reflect the typical leadership categories. Moreover, expanding this list will allow leaders to invite an even broader community of individuals who reflect the ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual diversity of the campus community.

Maintaining broad connections is critical during the recovery process to keep the community informed and connected. Our data reveal additional examples of how Mizzou's leadership is making connections with the community.

- The president and the chancellor held a number of campus-wide meetings and open forums to discuss diversity and to answer questions from the community. These forums provided an opportunity for all members of the campus to have direct access to senior leadership and to hear firsthand messaging from campus leadership. Open meetings such as this demonstrate an important level of connection, as they allow the community to directly hear the thoughts and feelings of leaders, and to gain a better understanding of how leaders are responding to questions and concerns.

- Deans of various colleges described ways in which they sought opportunities to arrange and participate in meetings with faculty of color, students, women faculty, and others. These opportunities allow for deans to learn more about the experiences of individuals of all identities in their departments and to consider ways to best serve their diverse communities. In addition, these meetings serve as opportunities for building relationships and broad connections across campus, beyond the scope of individual departments.

- In an effort to learn more about the DEI efforts in units across campus, the new provost took the time to visit each department on campus. Her visits provided an opportunity not only to learn about the work of various units, but also to share her vision to the community, including her support of DEI efforts. Additionally, the new provost's meetings with units across campus helped to signal the opening of channels of communication and forming relationships based on care and achieving common goals.

Key Takeaways

- Leaders should build a practice of meeting several times a year with the campus community.

- Leaders should take the time to meet with divisions and units to provide more personal access to them.

- Leaders should periodically review campus invitation lists and expand these when necessary to reach key campus leaders and community members.

- Leaders should meet with key stakeholder groups to learn more about their distinct challenges.

Building Shared Expectations

When we view a tapestry, we see a complete picture, a coherent work of art. While the various threads appear to have come together smoothly, tapestries are made up of discontinuous threads of various materials, not all of which are fully seen. In a similar way, campus weavers work to bring together all the emotions, perspectives, needs, and possible solutions to produce a complex, democratic, and inclusive vision to guide the campus community forward. Rather than produce a campus vision selectively, according to their own preferences or acquiescing to the easiest, less confrontational option, campus weavers embrace the challenge of weaving together different pieces. Successful campus weavers add texture from all segments of the campus community to weave an authentic and truthful story that represents both positive and negative experiences, while finding the strength and beauty in the unique pattern that emerges—shared expectations emerge. We saw several ways this happened at Missouri that provide guides for other campuses seeking to create shared expectations.

Successful campus weavers add texture from all segments of the campus community to weave an authentic and truthful story that represents both positive and negative experiences, while finding the strength and beauty in the unique pattern that emerges.

PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

The University of Missouri's Inclusive Excellence Framework is one example of how campus weavers draw upon the strength of its various units to proactively engage in diversity, equity, and inclusion work. The flagship campus not only involved all of its internal units to participate, but also made the framework a core element in the larger University of Missouri System's Inclusive Excellence plan. Furthermore, the University of Missouri's leadership development initiatives demonstrate a commitment to cultivate new leaders who can serve as a voice for different campus stakeholders and collectively lead the university with a diverse set of strengths. Finally, the university's openness to evaluation and assessment shows how weavers must be able to adjust and change the course of action as issues arise and as opportunities present themselves, especially in those areas that address the needs of the most marginalized groups on campus.

SHARED GOVERNANCE

In addition to these examples already demonstrated by the University of Missouri, we recommend that campus weavers examine shared governance, the senior leadership team, and its mechanisms for recognition. Whereas nationally shared governance has eroded, campus weavers have an opportunity to redefine and reinvigorate the principles and practice of shared governance. A commitment to fully engage students, staff, faculty (including non-tenured positions), and administrators to all have an equal voice in decision-making processes can help shift shared governance to be a vehicle that results in equitable outcomes and a redistribution of power.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Senior leadership teams are often the key decision-making body of a university as the president and her cabinet exercise executive leadership over all aspects of the institution, from finances to student services to the curriculum. All members of the senior leadership team can be campus weavers if intentionality is put into the team composition process and all members put the community's needs seriously before their own interests. Those in charge of hiring senior executives must keep the campus community in mind and hire individuals who will prioritize the well-being of all stakeholders.

REWARDS AND INCENTIVES

Finally, a common ground and eventually a shared vision is predicated on recognizing all those who contribute to the mission of the university and its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Rewarding the work of individuals, departments, and student organizations can help reinforce norms of inclusion and collective responsibility for everyone's well-being. Examining incentives systems like annual reviews, merit systems, evaluation, and tenure and promotion for the ways they address DEI work is also important to set shared expectations.

All of these areas were ways Missouri was beginning to work toward shared expectations.
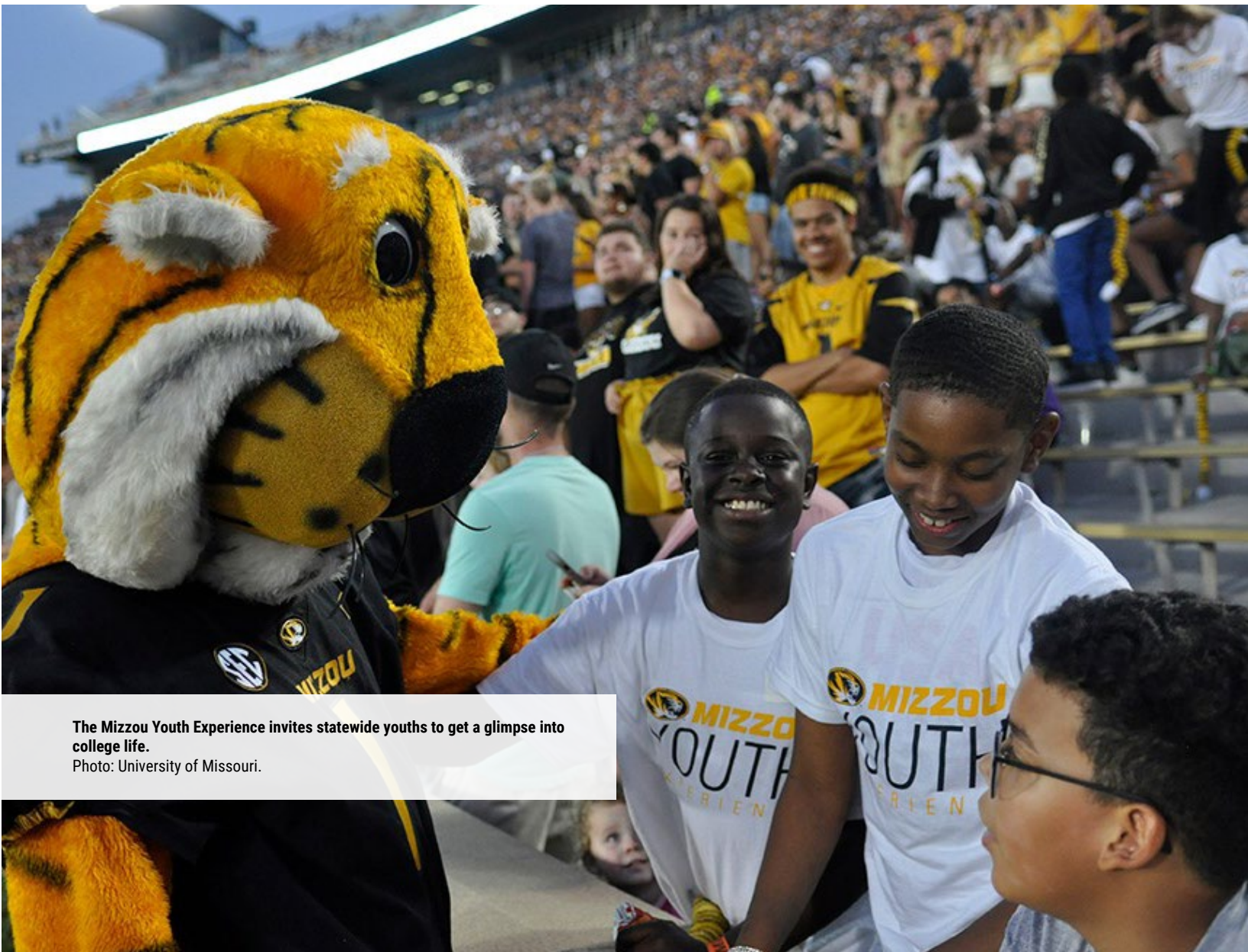
The Mizzou Youth Experience invites statewide youths to get a glimpse into college life.
Photo: University of Missouri.

Conclusion

This report reveals the challenges and opportunities that exist for a campus as it continues through the recovery process after a racial crisis. It identifies the struggles that can emerge when a campus is fractured and dealing with conflicting perspectives and tensions. The recovery process requires attention to deep emotions and time to heal and build trust long before the work of envisioning a new campus culture can begin. To overcome racist and exclusionary cultures embedded in our campuses, leaders must be willing to stay the course and regularly engage with the community to ensure that they have a pulse of the campus and the needs at every stage.

Every campus recovery process and journey to build capacity will be unique and distinct. Here, we are profiling a campus that had low-to-moderate capacity when the racial crisis hit, and thus the challenges have been more pronounced as the campus has sought to build and repair relationships. The progress that has been made over the past 18 months represents an important part of Mizzou's new capacity to be responsive to subsequent challenges as the campus is solidly in a moderate capacity. The current tensions and fractured perspectives are all signs of progress and opportunity to build and move forward. They mean that Mizzou has been doing the work and having the difficult conversations. DEI work takes courage and a level of commitment that recognizes the ongoing nature of the work.

The frameworks provided here will be salient for the many campuses that will experience a racial incident in the coming years and highlights the leadership skills needed to navigate forward and to help the campus weave important aspects of the community back together. The weaver-leader framework is an essential metaphor and set of lessons to guide campus planning when a racial crisis occurs. However, the more compelling message is to not put off for tomorrow the capacity-building work that will be important to sustain a campus during a time of crisis. The long-term recovery and damage to this campus underscores the need for campuses to be invested in the process of building their capacity long before a crisis occurs.

With time and without a strong foundation in DEI, campus priorities also become conflicted, making progress more difficult. Again, the shared sense of crisis and the need for attention to DEI may naturally dissipate. Therefore, leaders need to identify and create a foundation for making this work normative and a part of the natural process of how campuses are strategic, thoughtful, and innovative in addressing the challenges such as diversity, equity, and inclusion. Put differently, this work is never done—it will always be in process as our society remains unequal, discriminatory, and racist. Higher education is uniquely positioned to serve society in building the important leadership skills needed in complex environments and across issues of race, equity, and diversity if we are willing to remain committed to the work.

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Appendix: University of Missouri Diversity and Inclusion Programs and Resources

- Collaborative development of a system-wide strategic diversity, equity, and inclusion plan called the **Inclusive Excellence Framework**.

- **MU Campus Climate Survey** and distribution of results.

- Adoption of the Framework by a plethora of local community organizations to serve as a backdrop for the entire city of Columbia and Boone County in an effort to become an **Inclusive Excellence city and county**.

- Creation of a mandatory diversity, equity, and inclusion, musically infused workshop for incoming first-year and transfer students called **Citizenship@Mizzou**.

- Creation of a corresponding musical workshop for faculty and staff called **CitizenshipToo**.

- Collaboration with the State Historical Society of Missouri's Center for Missouri Studies on the **African American Experience in Missouri Lecture Series.**

- Development of **Communicating Across Differences** workshop series, which was designed to provide students, staff and faculty with the tools to engage in critical conversations.

- Development of the **Core Concepts Series,** which provides foundational understanding of essential ideas that promote diversity and inclusion.

- Development of the **Diverse Innovations Series**, which engages creativity and innovation to reflect on issues of diversity and inclusion.

- Development of the **Inclusion and Belonging Series,** which nurtures personal, professional, and community development to enhance belonging. The series seeks to create spaces for participants to deepen community connections on campus.

- Co-sponsorship and promotion of **relationship and sexual violence prevention** programs.

- Co-sponsorship and promotion of **Safe Space training.**

- Inclusive Excellence grants to support research with diversity, equity, and/or inclusion implications.

- **Inclusive teaching incentives** to support the infusion of diversity, equity, and/or inclusion subject matter into the curriculum.

- National Eminent Scholar Mentoring initiative that supports diverse tenure-track faculty retention.

- Men of Color, Honor and Ambition (**MOCHA**) and Women of Color, Honor and Ambition (**WOCHA**): one-year leadership programs for undergraduate students. Students attend monthly workshops facilitated by faculty, staff and community leaders. The program aims to serve as a personal, academic, cultural, social, professional, and leadership development program. Includes the inaugural **MOCHA Conference**.

- Diversity leadership development programming for faculty, staff, and students, including annual offerings of **Social Justice Mediation Training**, faculty from the **Social Justice Training Institute**, and Diversity 101.

- Inaugural statewide **Show Me Title IX Conference**.

- **Faculty Inclusive Excellence Fund** to provide incentive funding for colleges and departments to actively recruit, support, and retain diverse tenured and tenure-track faculty.

- Ten students per year are awarded with a $2,500 **Excellence Grant Initiative for Students** to improve research on diversity, inclusion, and equity at MU.

- Ten university employees per year are awarded with a $2,500 **Excellence Grant for Employees** to improve teaching, pedagogical practices, and research for inclusion, diversity, and equity at MU.