

THE ANNUAL CELEBRATION
Black Excellence Awards

AUGUST 2024



2024

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Strategic Commitments to Address Anti-Blackness

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BACKGROUND

The Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life (DSACL) at UC San Diego recognizes that addressing issues regarding racism is a complex and consequential task. We see ourselves as courageous learners engaging in an iterative practice to confront anti-Blackness within our locus of control. This initiative and its process will continue to evolve as we examine our staff, their assessment results, literature, and other insights from experts.

The first iteration of the Commitments to Address Anti-Blackness began in 2020 when Vice-Chancellor Satterlund empowered the division's units to establish standing goals aligned with both the division's Strategic Plan and UC San Diego's Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence. In 2021, the first annual progress report was published, providing each unit's updates on their commitments, challenges faced, and resources required to overcome these challenges. The Assessment, Evaluation, and Organizational Development (AEOD) team, along with an Assessment subcommittee, conducted a thematic analysis of these updates to create the public progress report. Following this, reporting units presented their Commitments at a Triton Time session, as part of the weekly professional development series.

This year, we are excited to unveil a new iteration of the DSACL Commitments to Address Anti-Blackness. In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Assessment subcommittee and the Commitments subcommittee have developed a new process that emphasizes authenticity while ensuring accountability. For instance, we redesigned the reporting process to incorporate student perspectives and assessment results when relevant. Additionally, we requested updates only on commitments that have made progress rather than requiring updates on all listed commitments. As we move forward, each team will be required to meet with AEOD every three years for an in-depth consultation, with the option to meet more frequently if needed.

As the DSACL embarks on the 2024-25 academic year, we are eager to implement a new five-year strategic plan that will guide our work from 2024-29. The Commitments process will continue to evolve, maintaining its dedication to justice while fostering genuine and thoughtful engagement with our Black students, faculty, and staff.

BACKGROUND

Commitments Assessment Subgroup Members

- **Dr. Piya Bose** | Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (She/Her)
- **Dr. Shannon Milligan** | Director, AEOD (She/They)
- **Kirby Knipp** | Assistant Director, AEOD (He/Him)
- **Josh Borjas** | AEOD Specialist (He/Him)
- **Stephanie Estrada** | Senior Success Coach (She/Her)

Commitments Subgroup Members

- **Josh Borjas** | AEOD Specialist (He/Him)
- **Stephanie Estrada** | Senior Success Coach (She/Her)
- **Karen Van Ness** | Academic Support Coordinator (She/Her)

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

DSACL units were asked to update their Commitments using a standard reporting form and were also provided with the option to meet with the AEOD team to discuss them. Additionally, each unit also received their previous update submission, as well as a resource packet to help revisit and refine their existing Commitments.

New Questions

On the reporting form, units were asked: “*Did one or more of your team's Commitments reach a milestone or reach completion?*” and “*Did your team want to add one or more commitment(s) for this next cycle?*” If the respondents answered “yes” to those first questions, they were directed to a section asking them to provide an update or their new commitment.

The following sections asked all respondents to acknowledge the following: “*By clicking the box below, you are acknowledging that any Commitments not included in this update have the same status as last year.*” These questions allowed staff to focus on reporting on the progress of their program or department. The review assessment responses will be used in future consultations for the reporting unit.

The following new questions, which are intended to be more reflective in nature, were also included. The subcommittee will use these questions to fine-tune future resource packets, consultations, retreat contents, and analysis.

- ***How is your team incorporating this work into the spirit and responsibilities of your office or program?***
- ***Please describe how your team intends to engage with and advance your Commitments this next academic year.***

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Returning Questions

The following four questions were carried over by the subcommittee from the previous iteration of the reporting form and are used in creating the progress report.

- *Please share some of the accomplishments connected to your Commitments to addressing anti-Blackness. These responses will craft your unit's highlight in this year's progress report.*
- *Please share any student voices and/or assessment data from this past academic year around the effect you have had in addressing anti-Blackness in your area.*
- *Please share 3-5 challenges your unit has faced when implementing your Commitments. The responses to this question will be used for assessment purposes. If you didn't experience any challenges write N/A.*
- *Please share any information and/or resources that could be provided to help your unit meet your Commitments and address anti-Blackness in your everyday work.*

Once the progress report is published, units will present their progress on their commitments at a Triton Time in the following fall quarter.

Triton Time, a weekly program offered by the Student Affairs and Campus Life Professional Development Committee, focuses on supporting staff's personal and professional growth with sessions on various topics like health, anti-racism, and AI. These sessions are held every Thursday morning via Zoom and are open to staff across the university.

BY THE NUMBERS

Table 1 provides high-level metrics on our progress as a division in meeting our Commitments.

Commitments by the Numbers (since 2020)

197 Total Made	114 Continuous	30 Completed	53 In Progress
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Table 2 counts the new commitments to address anti-Blackness, which were announced in this year's report.

New Commitments Made For 2024-25

4 Total Made	2 Continuous	0 Completed	2 In Progress
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FINDINGS

This section includes **general trends** among responses; **challenges** noted in implementing and advancing Commitments; and **recommended resources** needed to support these efforts.

Trends

Financial Savviness

Units leaned into their Commitments when choosing how to allocate and to secure funding. This savviness included ensuring representation among possible keynote speakers, applying for grants to help support Black students, and providing awards and opportunities that help underrepresented students, including our Black students.

Challenges to Implementing Commitments

Capacity

Many teams reported needing help dedicating proper time and space for anti-Blackness commitments within their work plans. Some staff communicated the need to coordinate this effort on a division-wide scale. Often, the work to address issues of inequity needs additional resources to address them sufficiently. Additionally, many reporting teams' Commitments themselves include additional planning, programming, or resources.

Anti-Racism

Teams are approaching the Commitments with an anti-racism lens, rather than one specifically focused on addressing anti-Blackness. Addressing anti-Blackness through an intersectional design may advance equity issues within the division's services but may not address specific issues pertaining to the Black experience at UC San Diego.

Expertise and Training

Overwhelmingly, the programs and departments communicate a need for more expertise in engaging in the Commitments work. Department leadership feels their lack of expertise would harm their Commitments' revision process. Should questions arise during team discussions about the Commitments or challenges unique to their area, they feel unprepared to tackle those challenges properly. Further, access to relevant resources could be more streamlined as one team resorted to hiring outside consultants to assist with their Commitments. In contrast, others desired to be trained to guide a conversation amongst their staff.

FINDINGS

Recommendations to Mitigate Challenges

The following are recommended approaches to address the aforementioned challenges:

Further Integration of the Commitments

As we implement our division's new Strategic Plan and roll out a refresh of the UC San Diego Strategic Plan, it would be beneficial to revisit how our Commitments align with these and other strategic initiatives. With this alignment in mind, the Commitments should be discussed in terms of resources, assessment and evaluation, staff hiring, staff development, and collaborations with other campus partners.

Ease self-imposed expectations of perfection and protection for staff's learning process.

Many units feel they need more skills to address anti-Blackness without making mistakes that result in more harm than good. Encouragement and direction should emphasize effort, learning, and progress rather than perfection. Staff would appreciate leadership's assurance that any genuine mistakes while learning or practicing equity-mindedness will be protected from any disciplinary actions.

Access to Expertise and Resources

In previous years, some staff participated in the Enhancing the Black Student Experience Symposium during the Spring Quarter, where they engaged in educational opportunities and received timely guidance on the needs of the Black community. With the symposium now scheduled to take place every two years, this creates a longer interval for units to navigate.

To support ongoing progress, it is crucial to streamline annual access to resources and connect with subject matter experts in pro-Blackness earlier in the academic year. This can be accomplished by integrating resources to combat anti-Blackness or creating spaces within existing meetings or events where teams can collaborate, discuss data, and strategize for the remainder of the year.

FINDINGS

Intra-Division Collaboration

There exists an opportunity to host a division-wide event where units can engage in this work, address any questions, and foster collaborative projects so that the division can take strides rather than steps in this work. These collaborative projects will keep a more regular cadence in discussing the Commitments and thus in results for the respective units.

Uplift the Impact of Staff on Each Other

While this initiative primarily focuses on students, the division must also recognize and elevate the positive influence the Commitments have on the broader culture within our division.

Subcommittee members have received feedback indicating that the Commitments to Address Anti-Blackness were a significant factor for some staff in deciding to apply to work with Student Affairs and Campus Life at UC San Diego. Striving to build an organization free of racism not only benefits the students who rely on our vital services but also enriches the experience of the staff who provide these essential services every day. The impact of this initiative extends beyond our interactions with students – it also profoundly affects our staff.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

The Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life is proud to share key accomplishments and future plans related to the Commitments that DSACL units made in the Summer of 2020. We acknowledge the efforts made towards achieving transformative change prior to the development of the Commitments, in addition to all of the continuous efforts from the division throughout the last few years.

Please note that the names of some units have changed in the last year, and others were part of departmental reorganizations.

** Units with a dotted line to the VC-SACL were not required to submit updates.*

VC-SACL Office

The Vice Chancellor provided updated guidance for representation on committees and workgroups within the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life. This new guidance aims to ensure diverse representation on Student Affairs and Campus Life work committees, including leveraging the strengths of staff and implementing strategies that promote inclusivity and equity. This past year, the division expanded to include new units and initiatives such as **Campus Activation**, the **Career Center**, the **Stuart Collection**, and the **Craft and Glass Centers**. The Vice Chancellor continues to support these units in transition as they acclimate and craft their first set of commitments for next year's progress report.

AVC-Global Initiatives

Global Initiatives secured \$2.5 million in grant funding from the Chancellor to create the **Chancellor's Study Abroad Scholarship**; within this program, they established a **Black Academic Excellence Initiative** cohort and provided one-on-one mentoring and a future job opportunity within their office for these students. Through the establishment of this cohort of Black students who have been awarded the Chancellor's Study Abroad scholarship, Global Initiatives is working to further elevate the Black student experience.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

AVC-Student Affairs

Assessment, Evaluation, and Organizational Development

Assessment, Evaluation, and Organizational Development (AEOD) continued to embrace that assessment and organization development are tools and methods for advancing equity and anti-racism practices. Internally, the team demonstrated this by frequently discussing and assessing the Commitment process and brainstorming ways to advance equity and pro-Blackness in their various projects, among others. Externally, AEOD collaborated with various units to develop their assessment practices; partnered with EDI to present an equity-centered **Assessment Day 2024**; and collaborated with IR and colleagues from UC Santa Cruz to host workshops on accessible, equity-centered assessment. AEOD, along with the Professional Development Committee, featured a Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) speaker for **Professional Development Day** and continued to provide space within the **Triton Time** series for units to showcase their progress on their own Commitments.

Center for Student Accountability, Growth, and Education

The Center for Student Accountability, Growth, and Education (SAGE) continued to offer **Social Injustice Community Dialogues**, which use Restorative Justice circle practice to engage participants in dialogue on the impact of social injustices in their personal and professional lives. Through these dialogues, SAGE is able to have open and safe conversations about issues surrounding social injustice affecting the Black community, resulting in environments conducive to pro-Blackness.

Student Affairs Case Management Services

Student Affairs Case Management (SACM) introduced training on implicit bias, anti-racism, and de-escalation practices for crisis management that emphasized strategies other than police interactions. Monthly EDI-centered discussions, led by a collaborative team within the department, were also held to address issues faced by BIPOC students in particular. In addition, SACM analyzed their records and found that BIPOC students were experiencing challenges in accessing the SACM team. To address this finding, the team removed barriers to BIPOC student success by increasing access to case management services. To further support Black students, they fortified their relationship with case managers and resource center directors. Finally, the SACM has targeted recruitment to diversify the Case Management Team, explicitly reaching out to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges for Graduate Assistant positions.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

AVC-Student Affairs Resource Management

Recreation

The **Recreation Inclusion Council** has addressed anti-Blackness through measures to foster inclusivity, such as a strengthened partnership with the Black Resource Center (BRC). The BRC reviewed their facilities and programs through an anti-racism lens to ensure awareness and sensitivity toward Black participants. They also reviewed Recreation's hiring practices to help eliminate barriers and promote equitable access to jobs in Recreation. Additionally, the council engaged in open dialogues about race and inclusion, actively seeking feedback and making necessary adjustments to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone. The expertise of the BRC helped guide Recreation's commitments and allowed them to address the Black student experience at the facilities more directly.

AVC-Student Life

Student Life Area Commitments

Currently, Student Life requires implicit bias training for any hiring committees within the Student Life area, including the Graduate and Professional Student Association and Associated Students. Human Resources in Student Life leads this charge and ensures compliance. Student Life also has an **Equity Diversity and Inclusion staff coalition group** that has met bi-weekly since the murder of George Floyd and holds community circles in response to national and global trends. Moving forward, Student Life will expand awareness of and the number of resources available, including opportunities to engage with the Black Resource Center.

Basic Needs

According to the 2022-23 Basic Needs Annual Report and the UC Information Center, Black students represent 2.5% of campus but comprise 4.15% of all services rendered by the Basic Needs. A strengthened partnership between the Basic Needs (BN) staff and BRC staff established warm referrals for students with elevated or emergent needs this past academic year. This referral process aims to provide timely support while maintaining the dignity and respect of the students being referred to services. The referrals may include services such as **Basic Needs Emergency Grant** assessments, **Emergency Housing Services**, and CalFresh. The Basic Needs staff also regularly conducts assessments to center student voices and experiences to guide their work.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

Center for Student Involvement

One of the most significant accomplishments for The Center for Student Involvement areas has been the opening of their **National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Plaza** and the growth of the NPHC community. NPHC groups have been able to use the NPHC Plaza, the first of its kind in California, for events such as new member probates and the **Inaugural NPHC Yardshow**. Along with the space and events, the NPHC community grew from two active chapters with four members total to five active chapters with just under 20 members collectively. The Sorority and Fraternity Life (SFL) Office has worked closely with the students and their advisors to cultivate a relationship that allows these organizations to grow and feel supported. Additionally, SFL staff meets bi-weekly with the professional SFL staff from San Diego State University, University of San Diego, and Cal State University San Marcos to connect on how the Center for Student Involvement Team can collectively support city-wide NPHC chapters in their growth and retention.

Student Governments, Auxiliaries, and Services

Student Government serves a key role in initiating change on campus. By providing students who are elected and appointed into governing roles with additional educational resources in their tenure, this student-led department fosters advocacy for the Black community at UC San Diego. Among these resources was supplemental work through national consulting avenues that focused on addressing issues of conflict, identity, and positionality. Through a series of workshops and one-on-one coaching on how best to represent their peers, this supplemental work focused on strengthening student leaders in advocating for students, especially those from marginalized backgrounds.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

University Centers

University Centers has been leading the effort to explore options for coily/curly/textured hair salons and barbers to have a shop on campus. This effort is in recognition that having specialized hair care that addresses the needs of the Black community would help to foster a sense of inclusion and belonging. Discussions with campus and community partners, including student representation, have been ongoing to try and find the right fit. University Centers also continued their support of pro-Blackness through supporting others, such as providing the Black Resource Center with rent-free space at the Student Center, giving discounted or free rates for events held in their facilities intended to address anti-Blackness, annually promoting Black History Month events through their marketing channels, and serving as the home of the **Black Legacy Mural** and adjacent dining area. In addition, University Centers has multiple staff who serve on the **Student Life Equity Diversity Inclusion committee**, which champions all Equity Diversity Inclusion initiatives, including addressing anti-Blackness.

Campus Performances and Events Office (CPEO)

Over 70% of artists represented in CPEO programming during 2023-24 identify as Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC). With the elimination of a ticket fee (previously \$9) to ArtPower tickets, CPEO saw a 57% increase in student redemption. They also curated and facilitated a workshop featuring local Black artists for Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) healthcare's EDI workgroup. The following are quotes from some of their student staff and attendees that speak to CPEO's commitment to diversity.

“As somebody who’s a first gen student, who is latinx and queer, as someone who, has always been underrepresented in whatever category I’ve ever tried to like delve into”

“ArtPower has given me the chance to be 100% myself, always. I’ve never once felt like it was a community that wasn’t open, that was frightening, that was scary. I was always met with 100% love, with 100% open arms, and always be able to feel authentically myself. And I think that’s isn’t something you find in a lot of many jobs, many career choices, or just many career environments. Thank you ArtPower for that.”

“ArtPower creates meaningful dialogues through innovative events that activate the community. From all walks of life, you can see diverse stories right before your eyes and what it means to connect through art and storytelling.”

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

AVC-Student Retention and Success

Student Retention and Success Cluster Goals

UC San Diego's Student Retention and Success (SRS) has made significant accomplishments in supporting underrepresented students. They have partnered with the **Black, Latinx, and Native American Orientation**, the **Enhancing the Black Student Experience Symposium**, and the **Black History Scholarship Brunch** to promote student success throughout the academic year.

Additionally, SRS has collaborated with Global Initiatives and Student Affairs and Campus Life as a whole to create opportunities for "Women of Color" to build community and connection. The area remains committed to promoting social and racial justice, combating racism, and advancing efforts to close equity gaps within the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life and the university.

Chancellor's Associates Scholars Program

The Chancellor's Associate Scholars Program (CASP) has continued to evolve its **"Addressing Anti-Blackness Training"** to suit emerging student needs and social forces. This year's topics included the history of racism and anti-Blackness in higher education, unspoken racial agreements in higher education and how to dismantle them, and digital racism. The training is to help their student workers address anti-Blackness in their work as CASP student leaders and beyond as they embark on their respective professions.

Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services

UC San Diego's Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services (OASIS) demonstrated its dedication to enhancing academic success by providing tailored programs, ensuring equitable access to resources, and continually improving support services. During the 2023-24 academic year, OASIS piloted a satellite tutoring program at cultural/community centers, including the Black Resource Center, which saw over 100 student check-ins. This success highlights the importance of identity-affirming environments in academic support. OASIS also implemented the Student Fee Advisory Committee Innovation Grant, targeting local Black students through outreach and hiring student ambassadors to share their stories. Additionally, OASIS secured a \$35,000 grant for the **"Equity-Driven Assessment and Innovation"** project, aiming to enhance academic support practices and develop an equity-centered assessment toolkit for marginalized populations. Through these initiatives, OASIS is working to combat anti-Blackness, support Black student life, and recognize the contributions of Black individuals at UC San Diego.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

Student Success Coaching Program

This academic year, the Student Success Coaching Program collaborated with the Black Resource Center to facilitate a four-week **Career Launch** pilot group for five participants to help them develop networking skills and focus on post-graduation. Additionally, the staff completed three quarters of thoughtful and reflective professional development learning opportunities, including reading books, participating in the YWCA Racial Justice Challenge, and watching previous virtual trainings.

Student Veterans Resource Center

The Student Veterans Resource Center (SVRC) demonstrated its commitment to addressing the dismantling of anti-Blackness by fostering a diverse and inclusive environment. By continuing to hire student staff from various backgrounds, the SVRC ensures that different perspectives are represented within the center. This approach enriches the SVRC's community and promotes a culture of inclusivity and respect. Additionally, the SVRC developed an initiative to honor the contributions of Black Americans during wartime. For example, they hosted a screening of the film "Glory" during Black History Month. "Glory" highlights the bravery and sacrifice of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, one of the first African American units in the Civil War. By featuring this film, the SVRC aimed to educate and inspire their community, recognizing Black soldiers' significant yet often overlooked contributions to American history.

Undocumented Student Services

The Undocumented Student Services (USS) team initiated two impactful events dedicated to addressing anti-Blackness on campus. In Fall, USS organized a workshop titled **"Defining Race & Anti-Blackness: How USS Can Support Black Students at UC San Diego,"** which delved into critical topics such as racial formation theory, anti-Black racism, and implicit biases. Staff engaged deeply, reflecting on how this knowledge could enhance their support roles for marginalized students. In Winter, they collaborated with Dr. Felicia S. Russell to host a workshop during Black History Month.

Dr. Russell, a scholar with personal experiences as an undocumented Black immigrant, shared her research on this underrepresented group. Her workshop, attended by 45 individuals across UC San Diego, underscored the need for inclusive programming and support services. Attendees expressed appreciation for gaining insights into supporting Black undocumented students.

UNIT HIGHLIGHTS

Transfer Student Success

The Triton Transfer Hub team has worked progressively towards incorporating elements of critical mentorship (Weiston-Serdan & Sanchez, 2017) into peer coach and student staff training. This approach recognizes the impact of race, class, gender, ability, and sexuality on mentoring relationships. In Spring, the Triton Transfer Hub introduced the **Social Identity Wheel and Empathy Mapping** to student staff training. These two exercises intentionally focus on developing an understanding of identity and intersectionality. The Social Identity Wheel exercise was followed by an empathy mapping exercise adopted from an exercise that the UC San Diego Design Lab executed with the Undergraduate Research Hub. The adopted training asked peer coaches to build out case studies for students emphasizing specific intersectional identities to explore and discuss how social and intersectional identities can impact students as they navigate their unique UC San Diego experience. A thorough debriefing supplemented each exercise to help students reflect on and learn strategies for adopting critical mentoring in their peer coaching or helping-centric relationships. These exercises encourage reflection on how identities influence perceptions and experiences and how they can impact students navigating their UC San Diego journey. By incorporating critical mentorship, the team aims to address transfer students' diverse needs better and provide tailored support – in particular, for the Black community.

Undergraduate Research Hub

The Undergraduate Research Hub (URH) continued their effort to match Black and other Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students with Underrepresented Minority mentors. In January, URH intentionally directed students in the new class of Black Alumni Scholarship winners to apply to URH programs. Similarly, URH welcomed the **Triton Underground Scholars** into the Summer Research Program (SRP), expanding access for these students to work on issues that disproportionately affect communities of color.

Several undergraduate students have focused on research relating to the Black experience and have shared this research at the **Summer Research Conference** at UC San Diego in August, the **Undergraduate Research Conference** held in April, and the **Online Undergraduate Research Symposium (OURS)** held in May.

LEGAL

The Vice Chancellor’s Commitments to Address Anti-Blackness initiative was reviewed by UC San Diego’s General Counsel, and is in compliance with CA Prop 209. This initiative aims to expand access for and inclusivity of all UC San Diego students, through reflection using a student-centered, equity-minded lens.

Should you have any question or comments please contact the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life Office via phone at **858-534-4370**, or via email at **vcsacl@ucsd.edu**.



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