Addressing Anti-Blackness on Campus:
Implications for Educators and Institutions

CORA (Center for Organizational Responsibility and Advancement)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=an8cws3wR-w

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Presenters:

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Description: In this webinar, the presenters discussed tangible strategies for addressing anti-Blackness in schools, colleges, and universities.

1. Acknowledge the Past and Revisit the History of Anti-Blackness

Addressing anti-Blackness begins with an authentic reconciliation of an institution’s history and legacy of racism

- Identify a task force that can be charged with conducting archival research and sharing its findings with the campus community
- Search for letters, photographs, yearbooks, journals, newspaper articles (campus and community) speeches, meeting minutes, etc.
- Consult with local historical societies
- Interview former students, leaders, or educators
- Share findings publicly

Identify and remove campus rituals, symbols, and artifacts that express racism and anti-Blackness

- Statues, named buildings, donors, scholarships, mascots, traditions
- Rename schools named after people who helped to advance racism in any way

Identify tangible and concrete ways to account for the history and legacy of racism against Black people

- Scholarships, named programs, free tuition, endowed professorships

2. Address Anti-Blackness in the Campus Culture

The Context of Teaching and Learning

- Curricula
- Invisibility and Hyper-surveillance
- Persistent and unchecked racial microaggressions (ascription of intelligence, pathologizing culture, and assumption of criminality)
Student Services
- Underserved—“There’s nothing more I can do for you.”
- Underchallenged—“That is a very rigorous major, I am not sure it's best for you.”
- Unwelcomed—“Why are you here?”

Human Resources
- Position descriptions
- Hiring committees
- Campus visits
- Employee grievances
- Performance evaluations

3. Critically Examine Student Conduct & Discipline Data

Student Conduct
- Are Black students overrepresented amongst those referred to student conduct for campus policy violations?
- Who are the sources of referrals for Black students (faculty, residence hall coordinators, campus police)?
- Are sanctions equitably applied?
- Do students have access to an advocate?

4. Address Anti-Blackness in Campus and School Policing
- Conduct an analysis of campus arrest data, citations, referrals/calls from faculty
- Comprehensively review complaints filed by students—particularly those that allege mistreatment on the basis of race
- Assess cultural proficiency in the hiring process (ask for concrete examples)
- Include culturally responsive policing as a criterion in performance evaluations
- Intrusive and ongoing professional development that focuses on:
  - Racism and anti-Blackness
  - The experiences of boys and men of color in education
  - Policing in schools and colleges
- Convene an advisory board that includes Black students, faculty, and staff, and community members
- Provide opportunities for humanizing and relationship building (open houses, intramural sports, no uniforms at special events and meetings)

5. Devise a Comprehensive Strategy for Addressing Anti-Blackness
- Statements of solidarity absent of concrete actions are symbolic and performative, but not meaningful
- Make addressing anti-Blackness and strategic priority with measurable goals and resources
- Add “anti-racism” to the institution’s mission statement
- Engage the governing board on a consistent basis
  - Add “addressing anti-Blackness” (and corresponding action steps) as a standing agenda item
  - Advocate for Black representation on governing boards
  - Hold special governing board meetings that focus on professional learning
- Develop clear policies on hate crimes and hate speech
6. Disaggregate Student Success Data to Reveal Hidden Patterns of Racial Inequity

Access
- Proportion of Black students applied, enrolled, and admitted to the university
- Proportion of Black graduates of local high schools enrolled
- Proportion of Black students who were admitted to their desired major/program of study
- Proportion of Black students who transfer to public universities

Retention
- Fall to Spring persistence rate for Black first year students
- Fall to Fall persistence rate for Black first year students

Campus Effort
- Black student to faculty ratio
- Proportion of Black students who transfer to a university
- Black student representation on student government
- Proportion of Black students utilizing campus support services
- Proportion of Black students involved in high impact programs

Excellence
- Proportion of Black students who graduate with honors
- Proportion of Black students on the Dean’s list (compared to overall representation)
- Four-year graduate rate of Black students
- Two-year transfer rate of Black students
- Proportion of Black students awarded merit-based scholarships
- Proportion of Black students awarded competitive fellowships (e.g., Fulbright, Rhodes, Truman)


7. Engage in Intrusive Outreach to Black Students when Racist Incidents Occur

- When racist incidents occur on campus or in the local community contact every Black student (or parents) to check in and offer support
  - Deploy a response team
  - Messaging should convey:
    ▪ We are aware of the incident and taking all feasible actions to address it
    ▪ We are concerned about your well-being
    ▪ These acts are are not acceptable and are not aligned with our values, who we are, and who we aspire to be as an institution
    ▪ These are some concrete actions we are taking
    ▪ There is immediate support available to you

8. Build a Culture of Commitment to Eliminating Anti-Blackness

- Pursue ongoing professional learning opportunities on anti-Blackness
  - “Black Minds Matter”
  - Reading lists