



Presidential Taskforce for Opportunity and Equity  
Sub-committee Charge – Recruitment and Retention of African American Staff

**Sub-Committee Members:** Angela Cannon, Kevin Coonrod, Madison Birkhead, Elizabeth Devore, Oladiran Fasina, Joffery Gaymon, Ada Ruth Huntley, Ronny Isaac, Mya Strickland, Ja' lia Taylor, and Gretchen VanValkenburg

**Overarching Institutional Goal:** To increase the number of full-time staff who identify as Black/African American.

**Recruitment**

1. **Refocus Office of Human Resource's Employment Administration department from a transactional function to a business partner model**
  - a. Invest in additional personnel to add capacity
    - Will require budget investment – **long term**
  - b. Equity Advisers - Provide search committees with advisers to assist with search committees.
    - With support from senior leadership (academic and non-academic) to make this required, we can create a training program for all Human Resource Liaison's to enable them to perform these functions. – **long term.**
      - Will need to build training
      - Will ID HRL's for each large unit
      - May need to encourage some units to create professional level HR roles
      - Will need support from senior leadership to *require use* of these roles in ALL search committees

**Office of Human Resource update:** The role of the Equity Adviser will be the AUHR Employment Specialists and Employment Manager (this may change in the future, but this will give us a chance to truly shape the role during the initial roll out). They will be intimately involved with each search that they are assigned – they will not be sitting/voting members of the individual searches. Their role is defined in the search committee toolkit, but will consist of the following primary duties:

- Provides policy, procedure, and system guidance to the committee.
- Oversees all search activity to ensure compliance with federal and state laws, as well as, University policy. Serves as the liaison between the search committee and AA/EEO when approval of the recruitment plan is required.
- Provides guidance and assists with the development of the recruitment plan. Recommends various advertising options when the pool's makeup is not diverse.
- Reviews the candidates chosen for interview and ensures there are not additional diversity candidates, in the existing pool, that should also be interviewed.
- Identifies and promotes practices that will advance diversity and minimize the impacts of unintentional and unconscious biases.
- Assists the department with the reasons for non-selection.

- c. Partner with HBCU's to increase awareness and recruit for positions at both in-person and virtual career fairs.

#### Office of Human Resource update

- All jobs are automatically posted to HBCUNetwork.com.
- Currently in contact with the following institutions who will post AU jobs to their Handshake/careers sites for students.
  - Alabama State University
  - Alabama A&M University
  - Tuskegee University
  - Florida A&M University (FAMU)

## 2. Establish a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategic communication plan

- a. Advertising – evaluate ROI on current efforts; establish baseline of total number of diverse candidates and successful hires.

#### Office of Human Resource update

- At the end of fiscal year 2020, AUHR evaluated the ROI on all of our current advertising vendors and determined that our lowest returns were coming from The OA News (where we were running a banner ad every week) and AL.com. Starting with fiscal year 2021, we are no longer using either of those services.
  - Starting in fiscal year 2021, AUHR added Academickeys, which is a premier source for academic employment – it (along with HigherEdJobs.com) has a diversity email blast feature that allows us to direct email our job announcements to an opt-in list of around 1 million diversity candidates.
  - February 2021 - AUHR joined the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) which is a non-profit coalition of colleges, universities, hospitals, research labs, government agencies, and related non- and for-profit organizations that is committed to diversifying the pipeline of faculty, staff and executives in academia. HERC supports Auburn and other member institutions in recruiting and retaining outstanding and diverse employees. With this membership, Auburn now additional exposure through unlimited job postings, toolkits to advance inclusive recruitment and equitable retention and cross-posting to leading job boards.
  - We are continuing to post all of our positions to Diversityjobs.com, which scrubs our positions and posts them to twelve different niche sites – included in those sites are BlackCareers.org and AfricanAmericanHires.com.
- b. Add diversity statements to **all** university websites.
    - Human Resources indicated this would be easy to implement on their website, but would like to be provided with an appropriate statement. **Short term**
      - *Suggested next step: OCM and OID to work together to craft a diversity statement.*

- c. Include proactive and specific language, beyond the required legal statement, in job qualification or summary statements to indicate that women and underrepresented populations are especially desired in positions advertisements.
  - Human Resources indicated this would be easy to implement, but they will need to be provided with an appropriate statement. **Short term**

#### Office of Human Resource update

- Will include after the AA/EEO statement on the job posting:  
*Women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply.*
  - Will include as one of the minimum qualifications on all job postings.  
*A commitment to a diverse and inclusive campus environment.*
- d. Feature current Auburn University diverse staff members, support groups (Black Caucus links) on the Human Resources website.
    - Current pictures/videos are diverse in nature but will work to feature stories or opportunities to highlight diversity. They would like to partner more closely with OID experts to update their “Working at Auburn” website to include more information from an inclusion and diversity perspective. They are currently working on re-designing their site to include links to these resources, as well as, design a place on the site to highlight diverse new hires that have recently come on board with the university. – **ongoing**

#### Office of Human Resource update

- Interviews with 3 AP and/or staff members will begin the second week of March. Goal is to highlight the interviews on the HR homepage, Diversity & Inclusions’ website, and AU Social Media sites. Initial goal is to have a new individual highlighted each quarter. We hope to have the first one ready to by the end of April.
- e. Actively promote Auburn University employment through the Auburn Alumni Association network, include link on Auburn’s Black alumni website.
    - Human Resources and Alumni Association will explore immediate opportunities to partner in this area. – **ongoing**

**Office of Alumni Affairs update:** The Auburn Alumni Association has added links on their [main website](#) as well as through their [diversity and inclusion pages](#).

### 3. Deploy Inclusive Hiring Practices and develop an inclusive hiring tool kit –

- a. Human Resources can include i, iii and iv in the work they do related to Equity Partners as mentioned above. ii is not possible with our current electronic system.
  - Increase search committee DEI training - ensure all candidates feel welcome. – **Short term**

### Office of Human Resource update

- Search Committee toolkit is in development. Areas/information included are:
  - Composition of the search committee
  - How to form a search committee
  - Developing the search committee charge
  - Organizing & leading the search
  - Position posting & recruitment
  - Screening & Interviewing
  - Post interview and closing the search
- Templates, guides, and examples included are:
  - Search committee checklist
  - Sample search committee charge
  - Sample recruitment plan
  - Sample selection rubric and template
  - Do's and Don'ts of search committee documentation
  - Examples for supplemental questions
  - Sample interview questions
  - Sample interview agenda
  - Sample evaluation form
- Résumé review: Conduct a blind review of résumés—that is, have the candidates' names and dates of degrees removed from their résumés before the search committee reviews them.
- Rubric - Create a standard rubric for all search committees to more equitably evaluate key skills and experiences for each candidate. [Included in the toolkit](#)
- Search documentation - Ask search committees to document the procedures they use to maximize the diversity of the applicant pool, the fairness of their procedures, and their outcomes. [Included in the toolkit](#)
- TES review – to ensure equitable process and avoid pre-selection.

## Retention

1. **Expand and fully support University's Onboarding Center & decentralized processes**
  - a. Check-in with employees (30, 60, 90, 180 & 360 days) utilize virtual platforms

### Office of Human Resource Update

- Planning the "Coffee and Conversations" concept with the appropriate timing is underway.
  - Conduct onboarding surveys for new hires that include questions around engagement and inclusivity.
- b. Connect new Black faculty and staff with Auburn Black Caucus (affinity groups)
    - i. Human Resources can do this. – **short term**

### Office of Human Resource Update

- We have some specific resources that we have gathered from OID and other contacts and will include links to the information on our revamped website (should be live the week of March 1st); however, we have spoken with and requested more resources from Jocelyn Vickers – they are going to have to find that information because it was gathered by a former employee. She indicated that she would follow-up with me a later time or have someone contact me.
- c. Include culturally specific community and university resources
    - i. Human Resources is coordinating with OID to include this kind of information on their website and will link accordingly. They are also reaching out to the Chambers of Commerce in Auburn and Opelika to see what diversity related resources they offer that we could use to connect our new employees with the community.– **short term**

### Office of Human Resource Update

- The onboarding team is in the process of this. Initial contact with both chambers and the tourism organization was not successful in gathering resources – they indicated that they do not have information that would be pertinent. However, Onboarding will follow-up with the chamber presidents for further dialogue in the coming weeks.
- d. Establish a mentoring program –
    - This is a broader program need. We would not support or build a program to assign mentors because they have similar physical characteristics or ethnicity. Can be a great program but will take a longer planning period with broader support.

2. **Enhance supervisor training**

- a. Appreciation of employees
- b. Hold supervisors accountable
- c. Active listening – **already available**
- d. Bullying, micro-aggressions – **already available**

Once we see what is available through EverFi, we may be able to use that content for c and d. We do offer many of these classes through HRD. We can work on building more into Supervisor Pathways. – **short term**

## Human Resource Development Offerings

- I. Courses offered:
  - a. DI300: Informing an Everyday Diversity and Inclusion Mindset
  - b. DI 200: Contemporary Issues in Workplace Diversity and Inclusion
  - c. TW300: Working Among Multiple Generations
  - d. ER500: Safe Zone
  - e. DI220: Primer in Allyship
  - f. DI210: Microaggressions
  - g. DI 230: Psychological Safety at Work
  - h. DI400: Leading the Inclusion Imperative
  - i. AA101, LG180E: Title IX
  - j. LG 120, 120E: Legally Effective Hiring Processes
- II. DEI info, recommendations, and specific content is incorporated in classes:
  - a. Management Fundamentals
  - b. Working Among Multiple Generations

Currently, **Supervisor Pathways** supports the Auburn effort to bring DEI to the forefront of supervision training in the following ways:

- I. Courses
  - a. Core/**required** classes:
    - i. MG400: Management Fundamentals (covers DEI efforts and legalities in the Communications and Selection sections of the course)
    - ii. LG120e: Americans with Disabilities Act
    - iii. LG180e: Title IX
    - iv. DI200: Contemporary Issues in Workplace Diversity and Inclusion
    - v. LG240e: Legally Effective Hiring Practices
  - b. Suggested **electives**:
    - i. DI300: Informing an Everyday Diversity and Inclusion Mindset
    - ii. TW300: Working Among Multiple Generations
    - iii. ER500: Safe Zone
- II. Community of Practice (AKA Cohorts)
  - a. The Supervisor Pathways Community of Practice (CoP) has dedicated one discussion topic per quarter on DEI issues.
  - b. In 2020, the following were part of weekly discussions:
    - i. How Generational Stereotypes Hold Us Back, *Ted Talk*, video: [https://www.ted.com/talks/leah\\_georges\\_how\\_generational\\_stereotypes\\_hold\\_us\\_back\\_at\\_work](https://www.ted.com/talks/leah_georges_how_generational_stereotypes_hold_us_back_at_work)
    - ii. What it Takes to Be Racially Literate, *Ted Talk*, video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bs2Fv3YiSFM&feature=youtu.be>
    - iii. Stereotype Threat and Growth Mindset, *Ted Talk*, video: <https://youtu.be/yiZQaE0q9BY>
    - iv. High Context Culture vs. Low Context Culture: Communication Design for Avoiding Uncertainty, *Techtello*, Article: <https://www.techtello.com/high-context-culture-vs-low-context-culture/>
  - c. 2021 additions:
    - i. Live Q&A session with the AU Office of Inclusion and Diversity
    - ii. ADA Week (Posts and scenarios centered around Americans with Disabilities)

#### DEI Courses Attendance Summary since Jan 1, 2018

Course Code	Course Name	
AA101	Title IX Rights and Obligations for AU Employees	155
DI150	Diversity and Inclusion Special Topics	12
DI200	Contemporary Issues in Workplace Diversity and Inclusion	459
DI210	Recognizing and Responding to Microaggressions	39
DI220	You, Me, We: A Primer in Allyship	42
DI230	Psychological Safety at Work	25
DI300	Informing an Everyday Diversity and Inclusion Mindset: Understanding and Managing Implicit Bias	158
DI400	Leading the Inclusion Imperative: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity	40
ER500	Safe Zone	110
HR750	Bullying in the Workplace	60
LG120E	Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	270
LG180	Preventing Unlawful Harassment: Rights and Responsibilities as an AU Supervisor	3
LG180E	Title IX and Discrimination: Identifying and Responding to Sexual Misconduct	209
LG120	Legally Effective Hiring Processes	39
LG220E	Legally Effective Hiring Practices	104
LG260	Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act	2
MG400	Management Fundamentals	572
MR150	Preventing Unlawful Harassment: Rights and Responsibilities as an AU Employee	8
TW300	Working Among Generations	88
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2395</b>

**Supervisor Pathway** Participants to date: **215**

### 3. Implement mandatory exit surveys

- a. Human Resources is on board to implement this effort and will start working on program development. “We’ve wanted to do this for a long time!” – **short term**

**Office of Human Resources update:** Research indicates that exit surveys are being conducted at the local level in some divisions. We have gathered examples of six surveys to date. The information is not shared, to date, with Employee Relations except in cases where there is a disciplinary action or concern. It is best to gather information in a dialogue while meeting with the employee. Currently, there is not an Employee Relations staff member that can be dedicated to exit survey interviews. However, we are still discussing and exploring options.

### 4. Create university-supported and encouraged pathways for professional advancement

- a. Lowest -wage staff to matriculate for greater skill development and towards degree completion
  - i. This is exactly what Supervisor Pathways was meant to do. Once we have the new compensation job architectures in place, people will be able to see paths to progression. We have programs and training in place. People just have to use them! – **long term**
- b. Staff to A & P positions

Information on Supervisor Pathway:

[http://www.auburn.edu/administration/human\\_resources/hrd/supervisor-pathways.html](http://www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/hrd/supervisor-pathways.html)

**5. Recognize and appreciate employees**

- a. Spirit of Excellence program – enhance to create more awareness and participation
  - i. Human Resources encourages nominations, but despite their efforts, people simply don't participate. There are many months that don't have any nominations in certain categories.

**Office of Human Resources update:** We continue to reach out to the Human Resource Liaisons and supervisors in the areas where few recommendations are submitted i.e. Technical and Service and Maintenance. We have put reminders on our Facebook page and regularly post the monthly winners to generate interest.

- b. Administrative professional day – increase participation for this on-campus educational opportunity by eliminating barriers to attend.
  - i. The only barriers to attend that we are aware of are cost. We do charge for each seat because we have to cover all of the costs from the revenue generated. With funding to cover costs, we could make this a free event. If we had access to a larger venue (**again, funding**), we could invite more people. Again, we would LOVE to do this. – **long term**

**Office of Human Resources update:** The former Administrative Professional Day is now the Auburn University Employee Conference. This helps all employees to know that they are invited. Since this program was changed from a luncheon event to a conference, departmental training funds can be used for the employee registration / conference fees.

- c. Elevate at least one of the Office of Diversity's awards to the university level and tie it into the Staff Appreciation Week.
  - i. If Human Resources is provided funding for this, they would love to create a staff award or two that is university level for diversity, equity and inclusion efforts and that do not duplicate OID's efforts. – **long term**