

A Report on Efforts to Recruit, Retain, and Support Black Students at Mills College

Original Demands from the Black Student Collective* and Subsequent Work *(formerly the Black Women's Collective)

1. An active role in the reformation of the general education requirements/curriculum. Specifically, the replacement of the multicultural requirement with a requirement that addresses racism in the United States. This would be a required course for all students which encompasses the curricula covered in the "Introduction to Ethnic Studies" and the "Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States" classes.

- In December 2014, the campus was informed that the Curriculum Transformation Task Force (CTTF) met in summer 2014 and fall 2014 to propose a new general education requirement for early 2015 that incorporates Mills' values of justice and sustainability.
- The new requirement around race, gender, and power is in direct response to students' expressed concerns that the current multicultural requirement lacks specific focus on contemporary national issues relating to racial and gender-based inequities.
- The January 2015 faculty retreat focused on the new general education curriculum with the goal of having it in place for students entering in fall 2016.
- The new Race, Gender, and Power section of the core curriculum, which was passed through the faculty at the end of spring 2015, will replace the current multicultural requirement.

Responsibility: Provost's Office; update completed. The Provost, in collaboration with the faculty, will continue to evaluate the outcomes of the new requirement and suggest improvements to continue to meet the needs of students and curriculum.

Status: Completed. Implementation of action items began fall 2016.

2. A Task Force specifically charged with the tasks of investigating impediments to recruitment, retention, and matriculation of Black students, formulating solutions to those issues, implementation of those solutions, and ongoing evaluation of those solutions. This task force should include Black student representation and input on appointments to the committee.

Starting in April 2014, a Task Force was charged with identifying, reviewing, and assessing the College's practices in its recruitment, retention, and matriculation of undergraduate and graduate Black students. The purpose of the Task Force was to identify barriers to enrollment and persistence for Black students at Mills and to make recommendations to the President for addressing these issues. As per the charge, the following key expectations were put forth by the

President:

- Determine what unique barriers to enrollment and persistence exist for Black students at Mills, including academic, social, and environmental factors
- Promote data collection and analysis in conjunction with Institutional Research that monitors the impact of these barriers on enrollment over time
- Provide the President's Office and appropriate campus divisions with recommendations for data analysis and/or potential intervention strategies
- Promote discussion on how the work of this Task Force may be applied to assessment of other subsets of Mills' students to promote overall retention and persistence
- Liaison with the following areas as appropriate, Institutional Research, Enrollment Services, Academic Affairs, and Retention Task Force, with the understanding that the charge of this Task Force both impacts and overlaps with responsibilities of other areas on campus

The Task Force membership included faculty, staff, and students who were asked to serve by President Alecia DeCoudreaux. It is important to note that this report focuses primarily on the Black undergraduate experience but provides some tentative initial insights into the Black graduate experience at Mills as well as the experiences for other marginalized or underserved students.. Please also note that the terms "Black" and "African American" are used interchangeably in this summary to refer to individuals who self-identify as either.

Summary Points from the Task Force and Current Data

Recruitment

Currently, nearly 85% of undergraduate recruitment efforts are focused in California. The balance of effort is spent primarily recruiting in 10 additional states: Washington, Oregon, Colorado, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Illinois, Massachusetts and Wisconsin. In 2013 and 2014, the undergraduate recruitment process granted admissions counselors some autonomy in choosing which schools to visit, and new visits were made to high schools in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including schools in Oakland.

Enrollment

Analysis presented in *Facts & Trends 2014–15* by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Academic Assessment found that the percentage of Black students at Mills has decreased 1% over the past five years (from 8% to 7%). This compares to a 4% increase in White students (40% to 44%), a 6% increase in Bi/Multiracial students (4% to 10%), and a 5% increase in Latina/o students (19% to 24%). American Indian students have consistently represented 1% of Mills' undergraduate students over this five-year period.

An important aspect of enrollment is yield rate. Yield rate is defined as the ratio of students who move from one step of the selection process to the next (e.g., the number of students who move from application to admit and then from admit to enroll).

Yield Rates of First-Year Black Students at Mills

First-year undergraduate Black students			Yield rates		
	% of applications	% of admits	App to admit	Admit to enroll	App to enroll
Fall 2011	13.42	8.73	29.55	10.71	3.17
Fall 2012	13.15	9.90	38.07	15.08	5.74
Fall 2013	16.39	12.08	36.86	16.67	6.14
Fall 2014	13.35	10.33	42.65	15.00	6.40
Fall 2015	14.93	9.7	40.52	29.03	11.76

Enrollment of Black/African American students in fall 2014 was 62 undergraduate students, or 7%, of the Mills undergraduate student population, and 73 graduate students, or 12%, of the graduate population. Enrollment of Black/African American students in fall 2015 was 62 undergraduate students, or 7%, of the undergraduate student population and 59 graduate students, or 11%, of the graduate population.

Financial Aid

Over the past admission years of fall 2013 through fall 2015, the Office of Admissions used an evaluation process that incorporated SAT score and GPA. This overall composite score has been used to offer merit-based scholarship awards. Students with lower composite scores are eligible to receive financial aid awards that meet a lower percentage of demonstrated need than those with higher academic ratings, depending on their federal expected family contribution (EFC).

The overall score based on GPA and SAT has been lower for Black students than non-Black students. Mills is unable to interpret those who did not select a racial group or selected Bi/Multiracial. Therefore, the merit-based scholarship award available to Black students was lower than for non-Black students with a higher composite score based on SAT/ACT and high school GPA. SAT score and GPA are not the only two factors used for admissions, but they have historically been a large part of the decision process.

Another aspect of aid is access to Pell Grants. Pell Grants do not have to be repaid and are awarded via Mills from Federal Student Aid. The percentage of Black students at Mills who receive Pell Grants is outlined in the following chart.

Pell Recipient Data

	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
Percentage of undergraduate enrollment identifying as African American	7.82%	7.40%	5.36%	5.63%	7.00%
Percentage of Pell recipients identifying as African American	10.85%	11.88%	7.22%	8.06%	10.76%
Percentage of African American undergraduates who are Pell recipients	66.20%	76.92%	63.82%	73.07%	78.68%

Retention and Persistence

Mills data parallels national data that shows Black student retention and graduation rates are lower than those of non-Black students. However, Mills' 2014 Black student retention rate of 68% is higher than the national average of 42%. In addition, overall retention rates of all first-year students are up from fall 2013 (71%) to fall 2014 (81%). Over the past two years, retention rates for Black students have increased from 57% in 2013 to 68% 2014. However, there are clearly opportunities to further address the experiences of Black students in order to improve retention, graduation, and engagement rates.

Key Recommendations and Status

Included in this chart are some of the steps being taken to implement the recommendations of the Black Student Taskforce. There are additional efforts that are noted throughout the report and associated page numbers are included in the chart below.

Recommendations	Action Items	Status
1. Develop a recruitment plan specifically for Black student enrollment	<p>Continue to identify alternative recruitment locales/schools for Blacks students who are more likely to attend Mills College, including enhanced recruitment at Catholic high schools with significant Black student enrollment (see page 6)</p> <p>Assign a specific admissions counselor for Black student admissions (under review)</p> <p>Develop pipeline programs to familiarize junior high school and high school students with Mills (see page 6)</p>	See update below on Areas 1 and 3; some updates related to recruitment and pipeline programs
2. Revise the Admitted Non-Enroll Survey	Systematize this survey, providing more detail on the reasons that students do not enroll; ask for a ranking of reasons; and include the collection of student demographic information, including race/ethnicity (under review)	Currently in development: a more collaborative effort in supporting non-enrolled students

	<p>Liaise with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office and incoming retention counselor (<u>completed</u>)</p>	<p>Purpose: to better understand and serve this population through SSD, Student Access and Support Services (SASS), and Student Support Coordinator</p>
<p>3. More intentional fundraising for scholarships to fully fund Black students</p>	<p>Employ the recent donor model from STEM to develop a student emergency student fund (<u>under review</u>)</p> <p>Develop an intentional development outreach plan for Black Alumnae/i at Mills (<u>under review</u>)</p> <p>Use a crowdfunding platform for some fundraising efforts (<u>under review</u>)</p>	<p>See update below on Areas 1 and 3 related to additional funding and the Oakland Promise</p>
<p>4. Highlight positive information about the City of Oakland in marketing materials</p>	<p>Enhance a true “diversity” presence throughout the Mills College website, including a specific webpage dedicated to diversity (see <u>new admissions website</u>)</p> <p>Incorporate aspects of the City of Oakland’s rebranding and Oakland’s history as a hub for social justice movements (needs update)</p> <p>Highlight accomplishments of the Summer Academic Workshop (SAW), Diversity and Social Justice Resource Center (DSJRC), and Black faculty, staff, and students more broadly (i.e., not only on the diversity page) (referred to Marketing and Community for implementation)</p>	<p>Content that accurately and effectively reflects Mills mission and college diversity is part of the new admissions site</p> <p>Admissions team is exploring how to better highlight positive information about the City of Oakland in marketing materials.</p>
<p>5. Better promotion of current “safe spaces” for Black students at Mills as well as the Black student presence at Mills</p>	<p>Implicit bias training for faculty and staff (see <u>page 10 of this report</u>)</p> <p>Encourage collaborative initiatives across diverse students and faculty to foster learning across racial/ethnic/cultural boundaries (needs update)</p> <p>Expand the SAW program (see <u>status update in chart</u>)</p>	<p>SAW program has been expanded over the last two years from 10 to 25 students, or 17% of the first-year class; New Oakland Promise will further expand this commitment.</p>

Areas 1 and 3: Due to significant turnover in the Enrollment Division, specifically in the Office of Undergraduate Admission, efforts to develop specific recruitment plans for various populations (including Black students) is ongoing; however, the Division of Enrollment Management has made a significant commitment to broadening access, equity, and affordability even in this time of transition. During fall 2015, Mills made commitments to enhance the admission process by offering a Mills-specific application, test score optional admission, and review of GPA requirements. Test score optional admission also addresses some of the concerns the Task Force raised about test score use in scholarship consideration.

Additionally, Mills has a new partnership with the East Bay College Fund and the Mayor of Oakland, which will bring the Oakland Promise to Mills. The Oakland Promise plans to triple the number of students from the Oakland Unified School District who graduate from college. By signing this memorandum of understanding, Mills has committed to broader recruitment efforts in the Oakland Unified School District, including middle school programs, financial aid and affordability programs, and specific college preparedness activities. This partnership also includes a commitment to funding by both Mills and the East Bay College Fund. This is considered part of the recruitment plan for various constituencies and we predict it can have a significant positive impact on Black students attending and graduating from Mills.

Status: Task Force report submitted to the President; recommendations in planning stages where appropriate. Several initiatives are already underway to address as outlined in this report. Mills will continue to explore the other recommendations and offer additional updates for those that can be implemented at Mills to positively impact the experiences of Black students, faculty, and staff.

3. An investigation and reformation of racist policies that police the presence of Black people on the Mills College campus, including those set forth by the Department of Public Safety and the Office of Student Activities.

Public Safety

Public Safety staff have completed trainings in the following topical areas:

- Diversity for all employees
- Diversity awareness
- Effective communication
- Business ethics
- Conducted Addressing Racial Profiling/Effective Cross Cultural Communications (training with outside facilitator)

In addition, Public Safety supervisors completed Leadership and Influence training. Over summer 2015, the Public Safety Department added the language provided below under a Racial Profile Statement to department standard operating procedure internal documentation and followed up with a survey to demonstrate comprehension.

Racial Profile Statement (OUTDATED as of 2/2016)

It shall be the policy of this Department to patrol in a proactive manner, to aggressively investigate suspicious persons and circumstances, and to actively enforce motor vehicle code, while ensuring that citizens will only be stopped when there exists reasonable suspicion to believe they have committed, are committing, or are about to commit a violation of the law or camps policy. Officers of this Department are prohibited from using bias based profiling in traffic contacts and field contacts.

- Feedback was provided from the collaborative meeting of campus administrators, faculty, and a number of Black identified students. In that meeting, the term “aggressively investigate was critiqued. That feedback was provided to the Director of Public Safety and the following new statement went into place in February 2016.

Racial Profile Statement (UPDATED 2/2016)

It shall be the policy of this Department to patrol in a proactive manner, thoroughly investigate suspicious persons and circumstances, and actively enforce motor vehicle code, while ensuring that citizens are only stopped when reasonable suspicion suggests they have committed, are committing, or are about to commit a violation of the law or camps policy. Officers of this Department are prohibited from using bias based profiling in traffic and field contacts.

- Feedback was also provide to DPS regarding ongoing climate assessment work at the front gate and with DPS training. DPS is currently working with Mujeres Unidas representative to update the “present ID policy” for DPS Standard Operating Procedures manual. Those updates are posted on their website for comment as of Feb 2016.
- ASMA representatives shared with DPS that an additional survey was being conducted with the student body however no results or other feedback have been shared with DPS as of 2/2016.

Student Activities

In light of critiques directed toward Office of Student Activities (OSA), now part of the Center for Leadership, Equity, and Excellence, policies in relation to racism on campus, OSA conducted a full evaluation of existing policies and made changes designed to alleviate any potential racial profiling that may occur as a result of event policies. OSA is committed to being as proactive as possible in its efforts to make Mills events inclusive and welcoming to all community members and their guests while maintaining a commitment to safety and wellbeing. The following policies were directly revised to reflect these efforts:

- Student clubs or organizations planning a Level 4 event (e.g., concert, dance) are required to meet with the Coordinator of Student Activities to set common expectations, event guidelines, and related security and safety measures.
- In accordance with the guest policy, all non-Mills guests must be over the age of 18 and are required to present valid government-issued or college-/university-issued identification.
- Estimated capacity for an event must be communicated to the Coordinator for Student Activities and to Public Safety one week prior to the event in order to properly and consistently provide adequate staffing for the event (both professional and security).

Once event attendance reaches estimated capacity, the event will be closed to new attendees.

- To accommodate social gatherings and commuting schedules, the Coordinator for Student Activities has revised the "doors closed" time to be 12:00 am, and events may only go on until 1:00 am.
- Center for Student Leadership, Equity, and Excellence continues to hold meetings with Public Safety regarding upcoming events as well as ongoing trends in student concerns and security matters.
- In summer 2015, OSA and the Social Justice Resource Center came together under leadership to ensure that all work within these areas is conducted through a social justice lens and meets the needs of Mills' diverse student population.
- Center for Student Leadership, Equity, and Excellence will be undertaking a policy review during winter break 2015; review will be completed with a particular focus on social justice and access for all students

Status: Completed. Initial policies, updates, and training provided. Training and policy review will be ongoing.

4. Establishment of an emergency fund for Black students and other students who experience low rates of persistence due in part to difficulty financing their Mills College education.

In the initial fall 2014 report, responses to this request noted that a fund exists in the amount of \$100,000 to assist all current students who file a financial appeal. In the 2014-15 academic year, the College allocated \$97,000 of those funds to help students persist.

It was also noted that student financial assistance funds awarded exclusively on the basis of race or ethnicity would need to come from an endowed fund established through donations. Since that time, one such fund has been established to support students of color in the sciences. This fund is open to all donors; Institutional Advancement staff can direct donors who are specifically interested in supporting students of color in the sciences to this new emergency fund. This initial effort models the type of program that, if developed, can support the request to provide funding in financial emergencies.

The Office of Institutional Advancement, the Office of Financial Aid, and the Division of Student Life will continue to work with the campus community respond to this need.

As of February 2016, an endowed fund has been established at Mills in the name of President Alecia DeCoudreaux. The purpose of this fund is outlined in the last section of this document. It will be administered by Financial Aid. We hope the first disbursements from this fund to be available for students for the 2017 fall class if enough funds are donated for the endowment.

Status: Completed. Aid evaluation completed, initial fund developed, and process for contributing to that fund outlined. Growth of that fund in progress.

5. A shift away from lumping students of color together in one group and a recognition of the unique issues that students of each racial group experience, including but not limited to publishing an accurate racial breakdown of the student population as opposed to the “student of color” percentage published on the College’s website.

This was completed in summer 2014. Instead of a student of color percentage, Mills now publishes a racial breakdown of students. Current information is shown as below at <http://www.mills.edu/about/facts.php>

Student Body (2015–16)

- Total students: 1,405
- 867 undergraduates
- 538 graduates
- 43 states represented
- 12 countries represented
- 17% undergraduate resumer students (aged 23 or older)
- 51% undergraduate students of color
 - 1% American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 9% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 7% Black or African American
 - 24% Hispanic/Latina
 - 10% Two or more races
 - 47% White
 - 2% Unknown
- 42% graduate students of color
 - 1% American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 11% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 11% Black or African American
 - 14% Hispanic/Latino
 - 6% Two or more races
 - 44% White
 - 13% Unknown

Status: Completed.

6. A marked increase in tenure track faculty of color, such that each academic department is home to at least one permanent faculty member of color.

The Provost has reviewed this request and acknowledges the importance of a diverse faculty body. Over 35% of Mills faculty self-identify as people of color, compared to a national average of 21.5% at other post-secondary institutions. Mills will continue to hire faculty of color when there are opportunities to do so and will strive to cultivate a more diverse applicant pool in all searches across campus. (Statistics available at the National Center for Education Statistics www.nces.ed.gov)

Each academic department will also consider how to use the adjunct hiring process to address areas of concern related to representing a diverse community through faculty. Along with the visiting faculty process, this has the potential to allow for a more timely response to concerns. In addition to immediate adjunct hires, long-term efforts to diversify faculty will continue.

Status: Evaluation of demographics completed. Ongoing work to continue efforts in establishing an increasingly diverse faculty.

7. An emergency crisis response team comprised of Black mental and emotional health professionals taking appointments with Black students, faculty, and staff to provide counseling and therapy in light of Facebook Confessions page incident.

While administrative response to this demand addressed immediate needs, Mills' commitment to the mental and emotional health of Black student is ongoing. The Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) in the Division of Student Life is currently limited to two full-time staff members; however, Mills employs a diverse group of staff who come in at least once a week and represent various identities and clinical backgrounds. CAPS will continue to ensure that a position is available to meet the needs of Black students who prefer to see a Black-identified counselor. In addition, the Black Healing Circle--which was developed as a result of the original Facebook Confessions page incident--continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis and will continue to receive support from CAPS and the Center for Student Leadership, Equity, and Excellence.

Status: Completed.

8. A revision of the Social Justice Mission statement that includes mechanisms to hold the institution accountable for addressing student/faculty/staff behavior that is incongruent with the mission statement.

The President has updated the charge and mission. In addition, the name of the Committee on Diversity and Social Justice has been changed to the Committee on Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice Equity. The new charge of this redefined group is to promote equity, inclusion, and social justice in every aspect of the academic, co-curricular, residential, and administrative life at Mills. To that end, the Committee works to identify proactive, sustainable strategies to generate and institutionalize attention to equity and inclusion in relation to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, religious and spiritual beliefs, class, age, color, sexual orientation, ability, immigrant status, and national origin. The Committee, using innovate best practices, creates infrastructure to address inequalities arising from any differential distribution of power, resources, and privilege at Mills and to support initiatives that enable students, faculty, and staff to engage in social change leading to a more just and inclusive society. The Committee, representing the breath of Mills, is empowered to identify possible changes within programs and departments, address equity and inclusion concerns, and forward broader changes in campus-wide policies and practices to Mills leadership for consideration.

The goal of this updated charge and membership structure is to ensure that evaluation of work toward the Mills' social justice mission is ongoing and at the forefront of Mills leadership. This group will be one way for leadership to identify areas of change, identify where practices and policies can be addressed to improve campus climate and institutional accountability, and report back to the college community changes to meet those ends.

Status: Committee redevelopment completed. Committee will begin meeting its charge in spring 2016 and providing outcomes that demonstrate commitment to the College's social justice mission.

9. Comprehensive, social justice based racial sensitivity training for faculty and staff who have sustained contact/interaction with students.

During the 2014-15 academic year, the following trainings to address inclusive teaching practices took place:

- An introductory session on racial microaggressions; conducted for the Mills Board of Trustees during their fall 2014 meeting
- An introductory session on racial microaggressions; conducted for the Alumnae Association of Mills College- Board of Governors at their December 10, 2014 meeting.
- A five part workshop on inclusive teaching in STEM; conducted early spring 2015 under the leadership of Dr. Lisa Urry (biology department chair) in collaboration with Dr. Sharon J. Washington (interim provost).
- A two-session workshop on inclusive teaching and classroom climate; conducted in spring 2015 by the School of Business in collaboration with Dr. Sharon J. Washington
- Faculty Talk on facilitating difficult dialogues in the classroom on April 22, 2015

During fall 2015, the following training to address inclusive teaching took place:

- A session regarding microaggressions in the classroom; offered September 2015 through the Center for Academic Excellence

Status: Mills leadership is exploring the types of trainings that would best fulfill the educational outcomes outlined in this section, with the goal of providing more and ongoing opportunities to cultivate an inclusive campus climate with a specific focus on the Mills mission and values. This might be met through either virtual or on-campus required trainings; however, this has not been presented for decision at this time.

10. A complete and timely overhaul of the bias response committee and an appropriate disciplinary process for tenure and tenure track faculty that continue to impact students due to their racist behavior, teaching styles, and materials (fall 2015 addition).

Bias Response Committee

The Division of Student Life has reviewed previous work on the Bias Response team proposal and conducted research on college best practices. Below are the action steps that have been taken and planned updates to how bias and issues of campus climate are addressed at Mills:

- The grievance process has been reviewed and suggestions have been made to improve the clarity and functionality of the process. Human Resources completed a search for a Director of Human Resources who serves as the EEO Compliance Officer and head grievance officer. The aforementioned suggestions will be forwarded for review.
- A student-centered guide and accompanying flow chart are in process for completion by summer 2016 to clarify the grievance process. These materials, intended to make it easier for students to navigate the process, include information about how to address any complaint at Mills and how to access the available support resources. The guide and flow chart, when completed, will be posted on the website and in the student portal.
- The Division of Student Life is forming a Restorative Justice (RJ) Team and will host a training for students, faculty, and staff to serve as RJ facilitators. This model, used by Mills' college peers, is regarded as the best practice to address incidents of bias that fall outside the student code and/or criminal action. For more information about this process, please contact Associate Dean of Students Gabriella Tempestoso. The first training will be held in February 2016 with a full team prepared to offer this service in fall 2016.

Disciplinary Process for Faculty

Below are the policy and process for formal faculty discipline and/or dismissal outlined in the faculty handbook and constitutes a contract between Mills and the faculty. This process must be followed in cases where there is believed to be cause for discipline and/or dismissal. Dismissal for cause is a severance action by which Mills College terminates its contract with the faculty member for just cause. Dismissal for just cause must be directly and substantially related to the fitness of the faculty member to continue in a professional capacity as a faculty member. Any teaching contract is subject to action as described in this section. Dismissal for cause should in normal circumstances be preceded by progressive discipline of the faculty member (2.10.7).

2.10.5.2. Procedure

A faculty member faced with dismissal for cause is entitled to a hearing before both the APT Committee and the Educational Personnel Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Educational Personnel Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee of the Board, before acting, shall confer with the APT Committee.

- a. Any complaint about a faculty member will normally be filed with the appropriate Dean or Department Head. If the complaint is judged serious by the Dean or Department Head, then the Dean or Department Head shall meet with the faculty member and attempt to resolve the matter.
- b. If the matter is not resolved at step (a), then the Dean or Department Head shall refer the matter to the Provost/Dean of the Faculty. The Provost/Dean of the Faculty shall provide to the faculty member a copy of the charges from the complainant, in writing,

and shall meet with the faculty member concerned. The Provost/Dean of the Faculty either resolves the problem with the individual or refers the case to the APT Committee.

- c. If the Provost/Dean of the Faculty refers the case to the APT Committee, that committee will institute formal proceedings to consider demotion or dismissal. The Provost/Dean of the Faculty may also consult with the President, who may, at this or later stages of the process, suspend a faculty member, with pay, until final resolution of the complaint.
 - d. When formal proceedings are instituted, a statement of reasons for the proceedings, composed jointly by the Provost/Dean of the Faculty and the APT Committee, shall be sent to the individual. Section 2.10.5.2, parts a and b Rev 3/13 69
 - e. Upon notification of formal proceedings, the individual may, within ten working days, ask for a hearing before the APT Committee. The Chair of APT Committee then convenes a hearing within ten working days of receipt of the individual's request.
 - f. Attendance at the hearing shall be limited to witnesses called by the APT Committee, members of the APT Committee, the faculty member and her/his representative, and a representative and/or legal counsel designated by the President. The proceedings will be tape-recorded by the Secretary of the Board of Trustees.
 - g. The APT Committee shall make its recommendation in writing to the Provost/Dean of the Faculty within ten working days of the hearing.
 - h. The Provost/Dean of the Faculty shall decide within ten working days of receipt of the APT Committee's recommendation and shall communicate his/her recommendation, in writing, to the President.
 - i. The President shall decide within ten working days of the receipt of the Provost/Dean of the Faculty's recommendation and shall communicate his/her decision, in writing, to the APT Committee and the faculty member. The individual may appeal the President's decision to the Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee of the Board of Trustees. The request for a hearing must be received by the President within ten working days of the faculty member's receipt of an adverse decision. The President and his/her representative, and the faculty member and his/her representative, may be present at the appeal to provide statements to the Committee. The Educational Personnel Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee will report its findings to the full Board, which will make its decision acting solely upon this report.
 - j. The termination of a faculty member may take place immediately upon the recommendation of the Educational Personnel Subcommittee of the Educational Policies Committee and a confirming vote of the Board of Trustees.
- 2.10.6. Action Short of Dismissal
- a. Depending on the circumstances, the President, in consultation with the Provost/Dean of the Faculty, may elect to impose a disciplinary action short of dismissal, for causes listed in section 2.10.5, such as suspension for a period of time without pay and/or withdrawal of faculty privilege. In unusual circumstances, the President may take disciplinary action without previous citation or warning.
 - b. Suspension may also be the temporary separation of a faculty member from the College when it is determined by the President, in consultation with the Provost/Dean of the Faculty, that there is a strong likelihood that the faculty member's continued

presence at the College poses an immediate threat of harm to the College, or to individual members of the College community. Such suspension shall be with pay and shall last only so long as the threat of harm continues or until dismissal for cause occurs.

- c. In view of the past merits of the faculty member, final action by the President may take a milder form of temporary suspension rather than outright dismissal. Such suspension may not last beyond a full year, but may entail the total or partial discontinuance of all salaries and benefits, the suspension of all promotion and salary increments, and the temporary suspension or withdrawal of all faculty privileges.
- d. The APT Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the President and the Provost/Dean of the Faculty on such matters and shall be called upon to review cases where the faculty member questions the decision. The President's decision after such a review shall be final.

2.10.7. Progressive Discipline of Faculty Members

Progressive discipline is defined as a written admonition by the appropriate administrative officer describing an alleged problem involving a faculty member and warning that the faculty member's contract status is in jeopardy due to reasons specified in (2.10.5).

Normally, the warning must also stipulate a period of time within which correction of the alleged problem is expected. If the faculty member does not contest the allegation and fulfills prescribed duties, the matter is settled. If the faculty member fails to correct the negligence, dismissal procedures or a lesser sanction may be applied.

2.11. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

2.11.1. Academic Freedom Mills College is committed to upholding the right of every faculty member to academic freedom in teaching, research and creative expression. This right means open investigation, expression and discussion. It extends to pedagogy, the expression of ideas in the classroom, and to all aspects of creative and scholarly work engaged in by faculty. Academic freedom is fundamental for the protection of the rights of faculty to teach and of students to learn. The College pledges to uphold the right of every member of the Faculty to academic freedom. In return it expects that members of the Faculty will observe scholarly standards in statements of fact, will practice courtesy in controversy, and will make clear that they speak as citizens or scholars rather than as representatives of the College.

Status: Review completed. Recommendations will be made to the faculty leadership to consider these concerns during their process of faculty governance.

Additional Efforts

Responding to the direct student requests for the support they need is vital; simultaneously, Mills must look ahead and take leadership for other areas that may better serve marginalized students in the campus community. Below are updates on the initiatives as outlined in the Black student retention report and additional initiatives that should continue to address systemic barriers in students' capacity to apply, be admitted, enroll, engage, and graduate.

Test Score Optional beginning with the incoming class of fall 2016

Implementing a test score optional policy will allow the admissions office to better serve marginalized students by deepening the holistic review process. The holistic review process would be expanded by examining students' academic profile in context of the curriculum they have available and by allowing the admission team to examine applicants' writing skills, service to and interactions with others, leadership, and resiliency. Not only will marginalized students' voices be heard more clearly through this process, but the admissions office will advocate for these students without the constraints of a point-in-time standardized test score. Schools like Pitzer College note that they have experienced a 58% increase in racial diversity, while other schools on the East Coast also saw increases in application and enrollment from students of color and Pell Grant-eligible students.

Creation of the Mills Application

For the past several years, Mills only used the Common Application process to select prospective students for admission. While the Common Application offers a broader pool and allows students to complete one application for many colleges' admissions process, its standardization allows few adaptations for areas such as gender categories. In light of this, Mills now offers a new Mills Application to provide an alternative way for students to apply for admissions. This new application is under the complete purview of the college and allows for more inclusive questions and detailed data collection.

GPA Minimum for Transfer Students

Mills will no longer publish a minimum GPA requirement and will instead focus efforts on a more holistic review process. This change in process encourages Admissions staff to use their skills and experiences as well as the mission of Mills College to better recruit an entering class of diverse students from a variety of lived experiences. A holistic review process will also acknowledge the relationship between lived experience and academic success while still maintaining academic quality.

Review of Financial Aid Appeal Practices

Financial Aid is currently exploring ways to move the appeal process online to provide a single location for students to access information and submit appeals as well as improve tracking. Financial Aid will also develop a how-to-guide to be available online to help students throughout this process.

Scholarship information specific to Black Identified Students

Below is a list of the current gifts or endowed funds at Mills College that have restrictions that identify minority (prior term used in gift awards) or students of color as intended recipients. All are considered budget relieving funds and do not result in a net increase of aid awarded but can offset set loans and awards that would have to be paid back.

- Alumnae of Color DeCoudreaux -- Scholarship for students of color with financial need, to be awarded for the over the academic year. This award is currently be fundraised to provide for future endowment.

- Kaiser Minority Scholarship -- Scholarship intended for “minority” students (now interpreted as students of color), undergraduate or graduate, who are pursuing engineering, business, or PLEA (Political, Legal, and Economic Analysis).
- Shetterly, Robert Scholarship -- Scholarship for students from the East Bay, undergraduate or graduate students; preference is to be given to students of color.