



Race and Crime Center
for Justice

Levin College of Law

UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

A WAY FORWARD

UF Race Scholars on Support, Obstacles, and the Need for Institutional Engagement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research project was designed to identify strategies and steps the University of Florida (UF) can take to more effectively support faculty whose work focuses on race or anti-racism. These steps can considerably strengthen UF's foundations for scholarship on race, an imperative for a top-five public university that is also the state's flagship academic institution. This report is based on interviews with and survey responses from UF faculty members whose scholarship focuses on issues of race or anti-racism. The 39 faculty members who participated in the study represent a broad range of disciplines and colleges, spanning arts, humanities, social sciences, and STEM. Their responses draw on a wide range of experiences that represent the complexities of a large institution. After identifying and highlighting the concerns, perceptions, and thematic suggestions raised by UF race scholars, the researchers identify 23 recommendations for UF race scholars and campus administrators. This study received funding from the UF Grant, "Advancing Racial Justice through Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access at the University of Florida," established by the Office of UF Research and the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer.

INTRODUCTION

In June 2020, in the wake of George Floyd’s killing by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, there were national and international civil rights protests around the globe. In one response, University of Florida president Kent Fuchs announced that he had directed the UF Office of Research to make competitive grants available to faculty on topics including race, equity, justice, and reconciliation.¹ UF faculty members were invited to submit proposals to the UF Racial Justice Research Fund for grants ranging from \$15,000 to \$75,000. Forty-five grants were submitted, and following a peer review process, 16 were funded. UF had initially set \$400,000 as the amount of available grant funds. After the positive responses to the solicitation, the Office of Research increased the grant funds to \$970,000, more than double the initial amount. This grant funding opportunity is one of UF’s strongest recent statements about the value of race-related scholarship and programming at the university.

Which paradigms and strategies should the University of Florida implement to support and amplify faculty engagement on racial justice and the Black experience?

Dr. Katheryn Russell-Brown, director of the Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations (CSRRR)² and Dr. Diedre Houchen, the CSRRR post-doctoral associate,³ submitted a proposal, “Building Faculty Capacity to Develop Curriculum on Racial Justice Related to the Black Experience: A Mixed-Methods Study.” The question at the core of the proposal was, “Which paradigms and strategies should the University of Florida implement to support and amplify faculty engagement on racial justice and the Black experience?”⁴ This research question aligns with UF’s mission statement, which states that the “university welcomes the full exploration of its intellectual boundaries and supports its faculty and students in the creation of new knowledge and the pursuit of new ideas.”⁵ The proposal was awarded \$60,000 from the UF Racial Justice Research Fund.

In recent years, there has been a growing literature on how to build an anti-racist university. Little of that research, however, has focused on

1 <https://research.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020-RJcallFinal.pdf>.

2 Dr. Russell-Brown was the CSRRR director from 2003 to 2021 and in Fall 2021 became the director of the Race and Crime Center for Justice (RCCJ) at UF’s Levin College of Law.

3 Dr. Houchen was the CSRRR postdoctoral associate from 2016 to Spring 2021.

4 Earlier reports have addressed UF’s racial climate, usually focusing on student experiences. See Rankin and Associates Consulting (2016); Baker et al. (2001); and Gonzalez et al. (1990).

5 <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/administration/#missionstatementtext>.

the strategies for ensuring that a university can actively and structurally support race scholarship. In this study, the term “race scholarship” encompasses research, teaching, and curriculum development. In examining the question of what UF can do to support its race scholars and race research, some people may wonder why this would be necessary. Why would a university need to do something more or different for race scholars than it would for scholars in other research areas?

Research addressing race, racism, and Blackness has long been a fraught area of inquiry. This is especially true for scholarship that forthrightly focuses on race and challenges common understandings of race, history, and institutions. Research in these areas is bountiful yet largely unseen. It has thrived at the margins of mainstream analyses of race. In contrast, some race issues are never far from the center. This is true on college campuses. For instance, in the aftermath of local or national racial incidents or campus invitations to controversial speakers. At these times, race scholarship can become a national focal point. Thus, issues of race and racism often occupy dual spaces in the academy: They are both muted and hypervisible. Centering the work of race scholars and their scholarship is necessary to overcome this visibility/invisibility paradox.

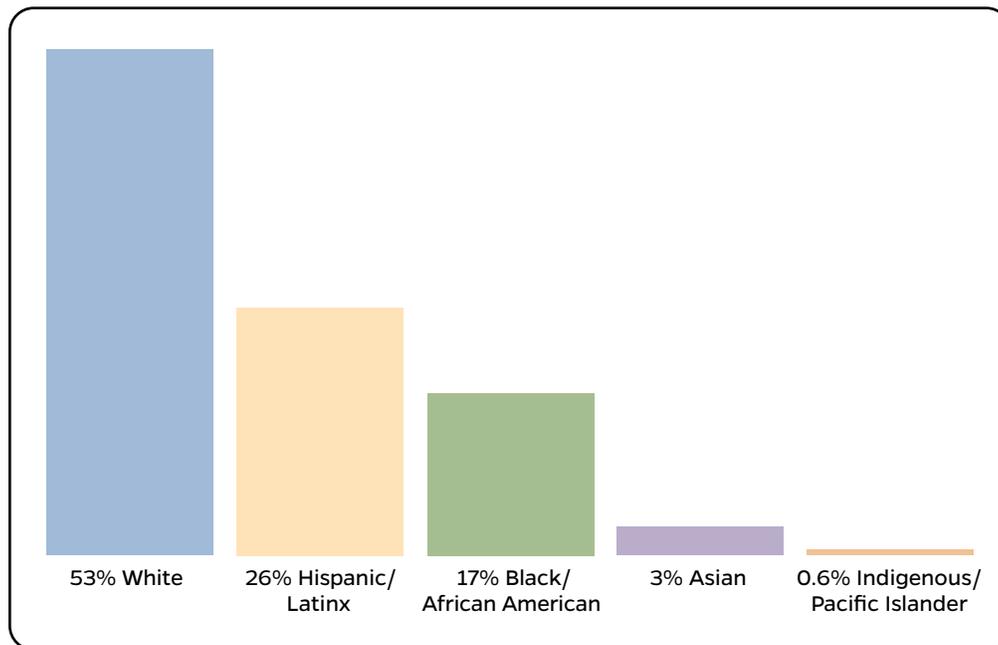
This report, written by Dr. Katheryn Russell-Brown and Dr. Ryan Morini⁶, provides a detailed examination and analysis of the research findings. The researchers have attempted to present and discuss these findings in ways that are thoughtful, informative, and instructive for future application. The researchers also offer context for interpreting and applying the findings. Ideally, this report will foster dialogue and action among race scholars and expand the lines of communication and support between race scholars and the UF administration. Where possible, the report cites material that may be of particular interest to race scholars and university administrators. The report includes the following sections: Executive Summary; Introduction; Review of UF Race Data; Review of the Literature; Research Methods; Findings and Discussion; Emergent Themes; Recommendations; Conclusion; References; and Acknowledgments.

⁶ Research Director for the CSRRR (April to December 2021).

REVIEW OF UF RACE DATA

To provide some context for assessing UF race statistics, it is helpful to consider the racial demographics of the state of Florida. As seen in Figure 1, U.S. Census data for 2020 indicate the following racial breakdown for Florida’s population of 23 million people: 53 percent White (but not Hispanic/Latinx), 26 percent Hispanic/Latinx, 17 percent Black, 3 percent Asian, 0.6 percent Indigenous (including American Indian, Native Alaskan, and Native Hawaiian) and Pacific Islander.⁷ Of this 0.6 percent, 0.5 percent is American Indian and Native Alaskan, and 0.1 percent is Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander.

FIGURE 1: FLORIDA POPULATION BY RACE, 2020 (23 MILLION)

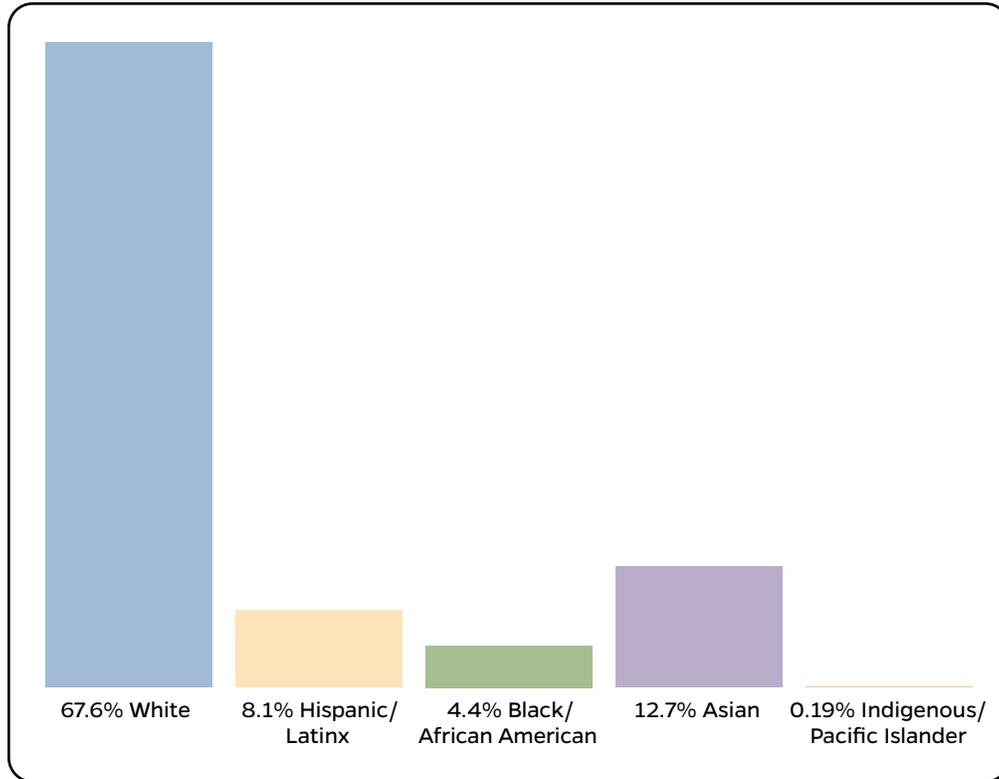


The most current statistics on race and UF faculty members are from Fall 2020. The numbers in Figure 2 include information for 6,384 full and part-time faculty members.⁸ The data cover all faculty at UF, of all ranks, including lecturers, professors, librarians, and extension agents.

⁷ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/FL>. It is noted that 2.2 percent of the population reported having more than one race.

⁸ <https://ir.aa.ufl.edu/uffacts/workforce/>. This number does not include faculty members who are identified as belonging to more than one racial group, those whose race was not reported, or those categorized as “Nonresident alien.”

FIGURE 2: UF FACULTY BY RACE, 2020 (6,384 FULL AND PART-TIME)



Using state population as the baseline, the data show that Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and Indigenous/Pacific Islander faculty members are statistically underrepresented at UF. For instance, Black people comprise 17 percent of Florida’s population, but only 4.4 percent of UF faculty members. In other words, the percentage of Blacks in the state is almost four times higher than the percentage of Blacks on the UF faculty. This underrepresentation also exists for Hispanic/Latinx people, who comprise 26 percent of the state’s population, but make up only 8 percent of UF faculty members. The percentage of Hispanic/Latinx people in the state is over three times higher than the percentage of Hispanic/Latinx UF faculty. Likewise, the percentage of American Indians and Native Alaskans in Florida (0.5 percent) is more than three times greater than their percentage on UF’s faculty (0.16 percent). The situation is similar for Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, who comprise 0.1 percent of the population of Florida, but only 0.03 percent of UF faculty.

Figure 3 offers a more nuanced look at race and UF faculty status.⁹ The table lists each racial group’s percentage for each faculty rank, which includes lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, and distinguished professor.

FIGURE 3: UF FACULTY BY RACE AND RANK (2020)¹⁰

	Lecturer (all ranks)	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor	Distinguished Professor
White	69.4%	51.1%	67.4%	77.1%	71.1%
Hispanic/ Latinx	9.5%	7.6%	7.6%	6%	3.8%
Black/African American	6.6%	4.0%	4.3%	2.5%	0%
Asian	6.4%	16.4%	17.9%	12.2%	25%
Indigenous/ Pacific Islander	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	0%	0%

These data show that except for Asian faculty members, faculty of color comprise a higher percentage of lower-tier faculty such as lecturers, and a much lower percentage of senior-ranked faculty. Strikingly, there has not been a Black/ African American, Indigenous, or Pacific Islander faculty member at the distinguished professor rank since at least 2011. Further, UF has no full professors who identify as Indigenous or as Pacific Islander. These data provide a snapshot of the demographic milieu within which UF race scholars operate.

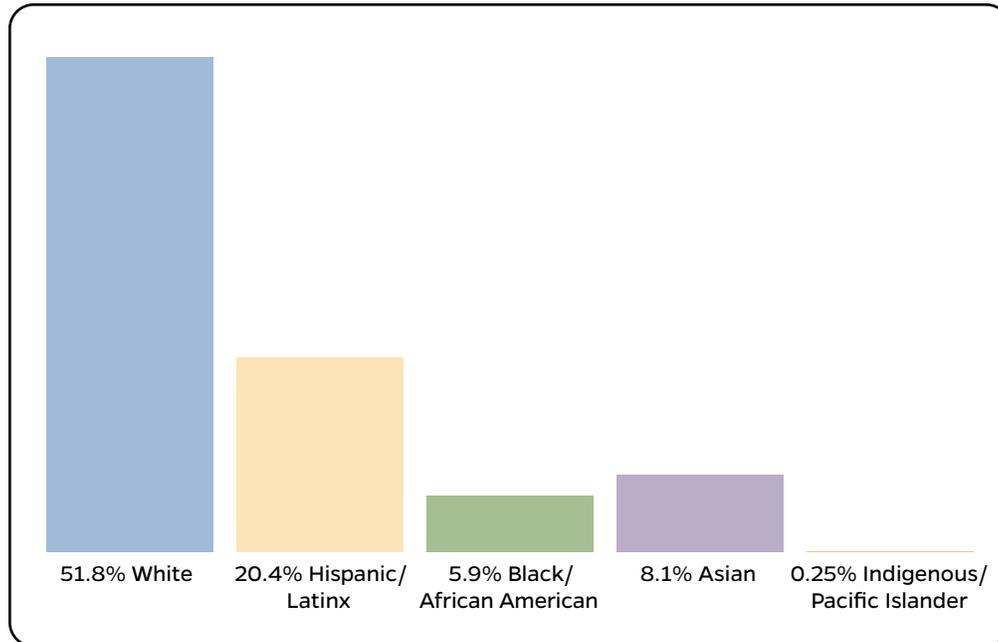
A look at race statistics for UF students allows for a more detailed understanding of the university environment for race scholars and scholarship. In Fall 2020, 57,841 students were enrolled at UF, either part-time or

9 Column percentages do not add up to 100 percent because categories such as “Nonresident alien” and “Two or more races” are not included here.

10 The National Center for Education Statistics reports that in Fall 2018, out of 832,119 full-time faculty at US higher education institutions, 68.8 percent were White, 10.2 percent Asian, 5.5 percent Black or African American, 5 percent Hispanic or Latinx, while American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander combined accounted for approximately 0.5 percent. While UF’s Hispanic/Latinx faculty representation is higher than the national average, UF’s Black faculty representation falls below the national average (13.5 percent) and far below the population percentage in Florida (17 percent). See https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_315.20.asp.

fulltime—including professional, graduate, and undergraduate students. Figure 4 provides the racial demographics for UF students.

FIGURE 4: UF STUDENT POPULATION BY RACE, 2020 (57,841)



Black, Indigenous and Pacific Islander students have the lowest representation in proportion to the state population. In recent years a decline in Black student enrollment has been a particular point of tension at UF.¹¹ Race scholarship of the type that this study considers can help to address why such a decline has occurred, further underscoring the importance of supporting faculty who do this work as well as generating solutions for stemming or reversing such declines.

The racial makeup of top-level university administrators offers another contextual point of reference. The UF president’s cabinet, the Provost’s Office, and the roster of UF deans include few people of color.¹² Analysis of the available information appears to indicate that upward of 80 percent

11 See https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/college/At-UF-black-students-feel-a-reckoning-on-race-is-long-overdue_171057831/ and <https://www.gainesville.com/opinion/20200527/where-are-all-black-students-at-uf/>.

12 University of Florida, president’s cabinet <https://president.ufl.edu/cabinet/>; University of Florida, Provost’s Office, <http://aa.ufl.edu/about-the-office/staff/>.

of upper-level positions are held by White people.¹³ A more comprehensive assessment would include race data for all UF associate and assistant provosts, as well as members of the UF Board of Trustees.

Factors that operate beyond the campus walls also affect race-related academic inquiry. One recent example has been the national backlash against race-focused curriculum and inquiry. This movement seeks to ban the reading, teaching, and discussing of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in particular, and analyses based on systemic racism more broadly. While the primary focus of these attacks has been the curriculum in K-12 public education, race studies and race scholars at postsecondary institutions, such as the University of Florida, have been placed in the bull's eye of anti-CRT protests.¹⁴ Florida has sanctioned restrictions on instructors who discuss or assign readings that address the histories of people of color and U.S. colonialism. In 2021, the Florida State Board of Education passed a "Required Instruction Planning and Reporting" rule, which includes the following language:

Instruction... must be factual and objective, and may not suppress or distort significant historical events... Examples of theories that distort historical events and are inconsistent with State Board approved standards include the denial or minimization of the Holocaust, and the teaching of Critical Race Theory, meaning the theory that racism is not merely the product of prejudice, but that racism is embedded in American society and its legal systems in order to uphold the supremacy of white persons. Instruction may not utilize material from the 1619 Project and may not define American history as something other than the creation of a new nation based largely on universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence.¹⁵

13 This is an estimate based upon the available online information. The researchers were not able to locate reported race data for UF administrators.

14 See <https://www.wcjb.com/2020/08/20/uf-law-students-defend-online-critical-race-theory-class-after-the-college-cancelled-it-for-the-fall-semester/>.

15 See Required Instruction Planning and Reporting, 6A-1.094124, 3(b), <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=6A-1.094124/>. Additionally, Florida legislation proposed in September 2021, would expand the reach of anti-CRT legislation. The ban would make it unlawful to teach CRT in public schools, colleges, and universities. It would also extend the prohibition of CRT to municipal, county, and state agencies, as well as private contractors who work for the state of Florida. Fla. HB 57 (2021): <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2022/57/BillText/Filed/PDF>.

Nationally, twenty-six states have introduced anti-CRT bills. Twelve states have bans that have already taken effect.¹⁶ These rules consign race scholarship to a kind of academic purgatory, based on an overly broad definition of CRT that potentially encompasses all race scholarship.

In the current climate, faculty members who conduct race-related research face additional burdens. They must consistently evaluate whether their teaching and scholarship run afoul of CRT legislation. Ultimately, UF race scholars must engage in an existential inquiry: What are the values and costs of studying and teaching about race and racism and are they worth the risk?

These rules consign race scholarship to a kind of academic purgatory, based on an overly broad definition of CRT that potentially encompasses all race scholarship.

A review of race data for UF faculty, students, and administrators, and the state of Florida, provides context for evaluating the university's support of race scholars and their research. An assessment of the current social climate for this research also helps to situate the work of race scholars. This backdrop frames the comments and perspectives made by the faculty participants in this study.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A robust and growing body of literature investigates how universities can become anti-racist institutions. Research on this topic typically centers on one or more of the following six interrelated questions. One, where and how does structural racism operate within institutions of higher learning?¹⁷ Two, what are the barriers to creating an anti-racist institution?¹⁸ Three, what practices and processes are necessary to create an anti-racist university?¹⁹ Four, what are some strategies for adopting an anti-racist curriculum at a predominantly White university?²⁰ Five, what role should institutional leaders play in initiating a culture of racial change at their universities?²¹ Last, how can universities disrupt institutional practices

16 <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/map-where-critical-race-theory-is-under-attack/2021/06>.

17 See Law (2017); Tate and Bagguley (2017); Welton, Owens, and Zamani-Gallaher (2018).

18 See Tate and Page (2018) and Tate and Bagguley (2017) (article argues that universities operate in ways that legitimize “epistemologies of ignorance,” at 146).

19 See Gaudion (2021); Law (2017); Tate and Bagguley (2017).

20 See Brunnsma, Brown, and Placier (2012); Gaudion (2021).

21 See Conway, Saidman-Krauss, and Schreiber (2021); Portugal (2006); Welton et al. (2018: 11-12).

that reinforce and perpetuate longstanding racial disparities or points of contention on campus?²²

The existing studies meet at the intersection of two distinct literatures: anti-racism and organizational change.²³ This research is instructive, seminal in fact, because it identifies the infrastructures that universities must build to uphold race scholarship. However, deep voids are present in the existing studies. Specifically, they do not fully investigate how universities can support faculty members who engage with race-related subject matter in their teaching or in their research. The scholarship does not investigate the key role of college and university administrations and how they can support faculty members who write and teach on racial topics, such as African American studies, Indigenous studies, immigration, mass incarceration, Critical Race Theory, and Whiteness. The research does, however, offer a framework within which to think about the individual and structural needs of faculty whose scholarship and instruction involve race.²⁴

RESEARCH METHODS

Participants were required to meet two eligibility requirements for the research project. One, they had to be current members of the UF faculty. For purposes of this study, “faculty” includes the following titles: adjunct, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. Second,

22 See Grande (2018) and Leong (2013).

23 See Welton et al. (2018:2).

24 In the wake of George Floyd’s killing, scores of universities, in the United States and abroad, issued statements expressing their commitment to racial justice, diversity, and inclusion. Some of these statements included action plans and curriculum guides. See e.g., John Jay College of Criminal Justice (2021) “Culturally Responsive, Inclusive and Anti-Racist Curriculum.” (2020). http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/u1862/principles_for_a_culturally_responsive_inclusive_and_antiracist_curriculum_adopted_by_college_council_april8_2021.pdf; Select Penn State Presidential Commission on Racism, Bias, and Community Safety—Recommendations (2020), <http://perma.cc/7497-U4LH>, <https://dickinsonlaw.psu.edu/important-university-report-dean-conway-co-authored-released-comment>. For a discussion of campus statements following Floyd’s killing, see Wesley, Dunlap, and Russell. (2021).

Several universities have adopted faculty-directed initiatives as part of a larger anti-racism action plan. For instance, U.C. Berkeley’s \$2.8 million Mellon Foundation grant provides for research grants to researchers in African Americans Studies. (See <https://news.berkeley.edu/2021/01/15/berkeley-african-american-studies-awarded-2-8-million-grant-to-expand-community-impact/>.) Some colleges have identified the need to hire more professors who teach race-related subjects. For instance, the University of Michigan has stated that it will hire twenty additional faculty members, “who focus on anti-racism and justice scholarship.” It has also created research seed grants for faculty members, to incentivize scholarship on anti-racism. See <https://lsa.umich.edu/ncid/antiracism-collaborative/funding.html>.

they had to be currently engaged in either research or instruction that focuses on race-related subjects, such as anti-racism or Blackness. All participants were required to sign an informed consent form.

Data collection for this project took place during May and June 2021. The two-tiered research design included interviews and questionnaires.²⁵ The researchers generated a list of UF faculty members known to be engaged in race-related scholarship and/or curriculum. The list included a racially-diverse group of faculty who represent more than a dozen academic departments and several colleges. These faculty members varied widely in their teaching positions, academic ranks, and time of employment at UF. Participants included faculty members across a wide age spectrum, different genders, and different sexual orientations.

After reviewing the list of faculty members, the researchers identified nine people to invite for a discussion—an individual meeting or a small group conversation. Small group interviews were scheduled for sixty minutes, and individual interviews were arranged for thirty minutes. The interviews were conducted using an online video recording platform. A professional transcription service was used to prepare a written document of the interview conversations. Interviewees were eligible to receive \$50 electronic debit cards for their time and participation.

At the conclusion of each interview session, the researchers asked interviewees to share the names of other UF faculty members who are engaged in research or curriculum that addresses race, racism, anti-racism, and/or Blackness. This inquiry was very helpful and yielded the names of several faculty members who were not on the initial list drafted by the researchers.

Questionnaires were sent via email to forty-eight faculty members who were identified as meeting the criteria for participation.²⁶ Participants were given approximately three weeks to complete the survey and received weekly email reminders. Qualtrics was used to create the web-based five-item survey. The estimated time for completion of the open-ended questionnaire was fifteen minutes. Participants were given

25 The initial research plan was to conduct a series of focus group discussions. However, attempts to schedule six or more faculty members for a focus group meeting were unsuccessful.

26 To avoid redundancy, questionnaires were not sent to faculty members who took part in individual or group interviews.

information about the particulars of the survey and the grant. Each person was offered a \$25 electronic debit card as compensation for their time and participation.

The individual and small group interviews were completed prior to dissemination of the questionnaires. These discussions aided the researchers in preparing the questionnaire and interpreting the responses. A total of thirty-nine people participated in this study (nine were interviewed and thirty completed questionnaires). Of the faculty participants, eighteen were Black, twelve were White, and nine were Latinx.

Response Rates and Confidentiality Concerns

As noted, 48 faculty members were invited to take the survey. Of that number, 30 completed the questionnaire—a response rate of 62 percent. Some faculty members informed the researchers that they were hesitant to complete the survey for fear of being identified and possibly retaliated against for any perceived criticisms of the University of Florida. Notably, only 53 percent of the faculty members who took the survey completed the form required to receive the \$25 gift card. Completion of the form required name and contact information.²⁷ To reduce the chances of compromising anyone’s confidentiality in this report, when quotes are used or references made to faculty members’ comments, no information about the participant’s demographic background or affiliation is included.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Individual and Small Group Interviews

The conversations with faculty race scholars offer layered reflections and insightful strategies for UF to use to support these scholars and race-related scholarship. Over the course of these discussions, common concerns

²⁷ It was necessary to gather this information so that the researchers could keep track of grant spending. Participants were informed that the contact information was separated from the survey responses so that completing the form would not compromise the anonymity of the survey responses.

and understandings emerged. The stories, information, and observations coalesced around two focal points, discussed below.

INADEQUATE FOCUS ON RACE SCHOLARSHIP

Several faculty members commented that research on race is not a recognized strength or an apparent interest by UF's administration. One person stated, "My fear is that our work [is going to be] ephemeral... that we do our work and we just vanish." Several participants said that their scholarship does not appear to register on the UF radar. Some concluded that race scholarship at UF does not have institutional heft or longevity. This work is not considered part of the larger, important work that UF produces as an R1 university. One participant stated, "We need to talk about the long term." To do this, UF will need to create a structure that treats race-related research and instruction as viable and integral to UF's institutional mission.

"My fear is that our work [is going to be] ephemeral... that we do our work and we just vanish."

The responses indicate that UF's apparent disinterest in race manifests in other ways. An example is the commissioning of surveys that measure faculty climate, but then not applying the findings. Some faculty members noted that over the years, the results from UF surveys have not translated into substantive or lasting changes. Some wondered how, for instance, UF uses reports from university committees, such as the UF Faculty and Staff Climate Report.²⁸ One faculty member asked, "[Do these committees] really have an impact on campus or is this just a showcase thing and we'll forget about it next year?"

One participant said it is important for UF to signal that race scholarship and race scholars have institutional value, beyond discussions about national rankings or current events. This is particularly important in view of the 2021 challenges to race-related research and curriculum, such as Critical Race Theory.²⁹ The research silos discussed next may be exacerbated by the fact that UF does not appear to treat race-related scholarship as one of its research strengths or areas of emphasis.

DISCONNECTEDNESS, ACADEMIC SILOS, AND UNIVERSITY STRUCTURES

Several interviewees emphasized a need to establish a physical, collaborative workspace for scholars who study and teach on race. Various names were used to name this space, including a "Black Politics Institute," an

²⁸ Rankin and Associates Consulting (2016).

²⁹ See discussion in "Review of UF Race Data."

“Anti-Racism Center,” and an “Ethnic Studies department.” Respondents commented that this workspace should not be limited to a particular college or department but serve the entire university. One faculty member said, “It can’t belong to any one college, it has to cut across [UF] colleges in the same way that racism cuts across all institutions of our society.” The respondent continued, “UF needs to invest in a center, a meeting place, a physical structure, staff, resources, so that there’s a clear intellectual hub. I think that is key.”

Faculty respondents noted that UF has had institutional supports for race-related teaching and research. The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program and the Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations were referenced by several faculty members as having provided key support for race-related curriculum and programming. Faculty members also observed that due to a variety of factors—including inadequate funding, sparse staffing, lack of faculty lines, and targeted or circumscribed program missions—existing centers and programs cannot address the gaps in support for race-related faculty scholarship. The Institute for Black Culture (IBC), the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures (La Casita), and the cluster hires in the African American Studies Program were also mentioned as forms of institutional support for race-related scholarship.

An overview of UF structures would address how the university could highlight race scholarship and curriculum. For instance, the discussions pointed to a disconnect between UF’s existing online race/anti-racism content and content that would be particularly useful to race scholars. UF has webpages that address its recent anti-racism efforts.³⁰ However, most faculty respondents indicated that they were not aware of these webpages and had no input in their creation or content.

“UF needs to invest in a center, a meeting place, a physical structure, staff, resources, so that there’s a clear intellectual hub. I think that is key.”

Overall, the concerns raised in the interviews urge UF to be more proactive, more transparent, and bolder in its support of race scholarship. The recurring themes indicate that UF race scholars believe their work is marginalized and is not treated as part of UF’s core research.

The observations that emerged in the interviews offer useful organizing principles for assessing which steps UF should take to build an institution that fully supports race-related faculty scholarship and curriculum. The

³⁰ See <https://antiracism.ufl.edu/central-initiatives/history/>.

responses to the questionnaires, discussed in the next section, echo and illuminate these observations. Those responses detail why greater administrative engagement and support are essential, and the responses identify specific forms of administrative support that would be beneficial.

B. Questionnaires

Five questions appeared on the online survey. What follows is a summary of the responses to each question.

QUESTION 1 PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR WORK ON RACE AND/OR ANTI-RACISM. WHAT ARE YOUR AREAS OF EXPERTISE?

UF has a deep well of faculty expertise on race-related topics. Faculty members cited numerous research topic areas for their work on race, including gender, class, technology, ability, slavery, sexuality, art, language, law, sports, immigration, media, social movements, and religion. Most respondents noted that their research and courses exist at multiple intersections.

While this list is inclusive of topic areas referenced by survey participants, it does not adequately capture the breadth and depth of race-related work that UF scholars are doing. They are engaging in research that involves analyses of institutional structures (e.g., educational systems, courts, and political units); they are conducting studies that involve people from various racial backgrounds; they are assessing how laws and practices impact girls, women, and mothers; they are engaged in historical and contemporary critiques of how systems work; and in some instances, they are conducting cross-continent analyses of select behaviors. Faculty also report various modes of research engagement, including qualitative research, quantitative research, legal analysis, and theoretical development and critique.

QUESTION 2 WHAT STRUCTURES OR FORMS OF SUPPORT EXIST AT UF THAT HELP YOU WITH YOUR WORK ON RACE AND/OR ANTI-RACISM?

Formal Support

Most faculty respondents said that UF provides inadequate institutional support for race-related research and curriculum. One person responded, “I have not received any direct support from UF for this research.” Another answered, there are “no structures.”

Many participants said that there is scattered and limited support for their work. This includes forms of assistance that have been made available at the department, college, or university level. As one faculty member commented, “In my areas of research, there is little to no research support that exists beyond the general [college] support for UF faculty.” Several people described receiving support from the university that was not specifically geared toward race scholarship. Examples include general faculty grants made available from their department or college, summer stipends, research assistance, and travel allowances for conferences. One respondent said that allowing faculty members to have flexibility in their course schedules is another form of general faculty support, which allows them to prioritize their research on race.

Faculty members also referred to the efforts of several interdisciplinary UF centers and programs that, though located within particular colleges, also provide support or programming that is available to individuals or units across campus. This includes the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program, the Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations,³¹ the Center for Latin American Studies, the Center for Humanities and the Public Sphere, and the African American Studies Program. Additionally, a few people said that they used resources from one of the special collections within UF’s library system.

“In my areas of research, there is little to no research support that exists beyond the general [college] support for UF faculty.”

Examples of campus-wide support include faculty-led workshops and other forms of training, knowledge-sharing, and mentorship. Numerous comments reveal that faculty have worked to create the forms of community and support they need. To the degree that these activities took place within the university, they may technically qualify as “university support.” However, because these activities are not embedded within existing UF structures, they could justifiably be called “ephemeral”—the term a faculty respondent used to describe temporary, non-institutionalized practices.³² An example of this would be a one-time event or program that does not impact the university’s long-term approach to race.

31 Several faculty members referred specifically to the CSRRR Course Development Grants. These grants were designed to encourage and support the teaching of race-related courses at UF. Funding was available to professors and doctoral students to teach upper-division undergraduate courses on race. From 2008 to 2020, the CSRRR awarded more than twenty-five course development grants. The grant recipients represented a wide range of disciplines, including psychology, education, health services research, English, political science, African American Studies, history, anthropology, and sociology.

32 See “Individual and Small Group Interviews,” in “Findings and Discussion.”

Informal Support

In their comments about the types of support that are available at UF, faculty members often compared the availability of formal and informal assistance. Most faculty respondents stated that formal supports were few and far between. One said, “I do not find UF to be genuinely supportive of race issues.” Most scholars, however, referenced informal supports. One person commented, “There is little structure at UF that helps support my work. Fortunately, there is a small pool of faculty and graduate students that share an interest in work on race and racism.” Another said, “Network[ing] and supports from colleagues with similar expertise have functioned as the primary support in my work on race/anti-racism.”

In the absence of strong and identifiable institutional aids for race-focused scholarship and curriculum, race scholars have adopted numerous strategies to engage in and bolster their work. As noted, many have initiated successful informal supports to build community, such as workshops and informal gatherings. Some have developed informal structures for peer collaborations and mentorship. In the absence of systemic structures at UF that support their work, faculty members (and each faculty cohort) who do research on race or anti-racism are left to figure out their own academic support structure. These makeshift adaptations, borne of necessity, have been successful for many. However, they impose added layers of academic labor and usually no additional compensation. On this point, one respondent shared:

I have not found structural supports for the kind of work that challenges and seeks to transform institutional inequalities (pay equity, disproportionate teaching and service loads, and compensation for cognitive and emotional labor involved with doing anti-racist work).

This comment underscores the observation that the university’s primary assistance for race scholarship is in the form of generic support for traditional scholarship. At best, this approach provides superficial support for race research. The absence of more substantive race-related resources exacts a toll. For instance, the fact that there is no campus resource or repository for race-related curriculum reduces the likelihood that UF faculty can easily engage with cutting-edge theoretical and pedagogical research on race. As one respondent said, “My department... provides moral support, but I do not have structural support for teaching about race.” Pedagogical preparedness is particularly important for faculty

members who address fraught subject matter in the classroom. Faculty responses make clear that it would be beneficial to students and faculty if UF provided greater curriculum support for those who teach race-related course content.³³

QUESTION 3 DO ANY STRUCTURAL FEATURES AT UF HINDER OR IMPEDE YOUR WORK ON RACE AND/OR ANTI-RACISM?

With notably few exceptions, the thirty respondents stated that there are existing structural features that hinder, impede, or do not support their research. This question drew strong and detailed responses. The answers point to a range of inter-related factors and processes at UF that impose roadblocks to faculty scholarship and courses on race.

“To be free to do something is not the same as being encouraged, supported, and honored for doing particular work.”

A number of respondents raised concerns about the administration’s approach to issues involving race. Several suggested that UF sends clear messages that it does not value race scholarship. One person said UF shows “general neglect” toward race issues, while another described UF as “basically indifferent” to race matters. Respondents detailed the impact of what might be called “institutional malaise” toward race. A few faculty members noted their academic freedom in pursuing race-related research. However, as one person stated, “To be free to do something is not the same as being encouraged, supported, and honored for doing particular work.” Another faculty member said that the university’s climate sets the tone for race scholarship:

As a non-tenured faculty member, I am hesitant to share certain views and perspectives regarding race and structural racism due to prevailing political tendencies that are evident at UF. I do not feel open to share those perspectives... because of fear of retribution during evaluation periods. This dynamic ultimately impedes my work on race and anti-racism because I knowingly hold back out of concern for my job security. In other words, I often feel my freedom of expression and academic inquiry is suppressed.

33 See Race, Education, and Pedagogy (REAP) Guide, compiled by the Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations (2021), <https://guides.law.ufl.edu/reap/positionality#-lg-box-25998174>.

More than one person said that as a group, UF faculty members have limited knowledge about race, anti-racism, or Blackness scholarship. This dearth of knowledge means that those with expertise in these areas pull the laboring oar in terms of educating colleagues and assisting the administration when it must respond to campus race issues. One faculty member commented, “Structurally the lift for those few who have expertise is exhausting.”

Further, assessing the institutional climate includes evaluating how the university treats its current and past race scholars, and its commitment to build a team of race scholars. One respondent, referencing the departure of race scholars Dr. Ibram Kendi and Dr. Faye Harrison, said that UF has “an inability or refusal to hire and maintain faculty [who] can build a critical mass for teaching, research, and publishing in the fields of race and anti-racism.”

“Structurally the lift for those few who have expertise is exhausting.”

Several people noted that external factors also impact the viability of their scholarship and instruction. The attacks on Critical Race Theory were cited by several respondents as having an impact on their academic work. One faculty member commented, “Politics in the state of Florida—and the university’s acquiescence to such politics—may soon make any scholarship and teaching about race and racism impossible if not illegal.” Another said UF has shown “public cowardice” in pushing back against assaults on race scholarship which “impedes our ability to recruit, retain and do this work. Thank goodness for tenure. But not everyone has tenure.”

Many faculty members expressed concern about the vulnerability of faculty who are engaged in race scholarship. One person said, “Scholars conducting work on racism are being heavily surveilled and I do not get the sense that the school will protect them.” Another person stated, “UF does not have the backs of those they rely on to burnish their image.”

“Politics in the state of Florida—and the university’s acquiescence to such politics—may soon make any scholarship and teaching about race and racism impossible if not illegal.”

Overall, the comments strongly suggest that race scholarship is neither celebrated nor protected—simply tolerated. Further, administrative silence mutes race research and curriculum. There is no clear structure within which the university assigns credit to faculty conducting anti-racism work (such as service, scholarship, or curriculum develop-

ment). This is particularly notable in a socio-political climate in which race scholarship is under a national microscope. The comments of race faculty point to the irony of the university being silent about attacks on research that was created within university walls.

QUESTION 4 IF YOU COULD CREATE A WISH LIST OF THINGS THAT UF COULD DO OR CREATE TO SUPPORT RACE AND/OR ANTI-RACISM SCHOLARSHIP, WHAT WOULD BE ON THE LIST (E.G., SPECIFIC STRUCTURES, INCENTIVES, RESOURCES, ORGANIZATIONS, POLICIES, PROGRAMS, OR OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT)?

Faculty members provided their most extensive responses to this question, and most offered several items for the Wish List, which they often framed as interrelated and cumulative.³⁴ The list as presented on pages 22 and 23 is pared down from more than 125 suggestions and ideas. Many of the items on the list were mentioned by multiple participants. Overall, the Wish List items are a detailed portrait of the labor, time, and energy expended by race scholars. The vast majority appear to be directed toward UF's upper administration and college deans, and they are all framed specifically around race scholars, race scholarship, and anti-racism. Entries that refer to "faculty" should be understood to refer to faculty race scholars.

The Wish List includes a broad range of items, some of which were mentioned multiple times. This includes the need for more support and recognition of race scholarship, the need for UF to demonstrate a clear and unequivocal commitment to race scholarship and anti-racism, and the need for dedicated university physical space to support race scholarship for the entire UF community. The list includes some actions that race scholars themselves can engage in as well as steps UF can take to engage with and bolster race-related scholarship. One of the most unifying threads that faculty expressed in their responses, both in the survey and the interviews, is the need for campus-wide resources and units designed to support faculty and race scholarship across UF colleges.

³⁴ In addition to inclusion on the questionnaire, faculty members who were interviewed were also asked to identify items for the Wish List. The interview responses are incorporated into the Wish List items in Figure 5.

**FIGURE 5:
WISH LIST FOR RACE SCHOLARS AND RACE SCHOLARSHIP****General Institutional Principles and Imperatives**

- ➔ Involve UF faculty of color and race scholars in creating support structures
- ➔ Audit colleges and departments on tenure and promotion statistics regarding race scholars
- ➔ Protect and support faculty and race scholarship vis-à-vis state politics
- ➔ Recognize that investing in diversity deans is not a substitute for investing in faculty race scholars
- ➔ Identify and address race-related structural inequities
- ➔ Allow race experts to guide requisite administrative changes on race
- ➔ Generate a long-term plan emphasizing people (not just their work) and a transformation of institutional culture
- ➔ Create a directory of race scholars, scholarship, and campus resources
- ➔ Staff a centralized hub to highlight new race scholarship by UF faculty and advertise events
- ➔ Use what UF has done with artificial intelligence as a model for supporting race scholarship
- ➔ Redesign policies to be proactive rather than reactive in relation to race and anti-racism
- ➔ Actively review the successes of racial justice projects and identify meaningful next steps

Recruitment and Retention of Race Scholars

- ➔ Prioritize pay equity for UF faculty, do not underpay Black faculty
- ➔ Commit to a recruitment plan to increase faculty lines for race scholars
- ➔ Create an endowed chair on race, which could rotate through different departments
- ➔ Improve access to databases and archives crucial to race-related scholarship
- ➔ Fund research grants, conference travel, and curriculum development

Material Recognition and Support of Race Scholarship

- ➔ Identify incentives for additional mentoring and service work tied to race scholarship (e.g., course releases, leaves, pay increases)
- ➔ Create incentives and operating budgets for faculty who spearhead university-level initiatives
- ➔ Add specific language in tenure/promotion evaluations that credits extra work (e.g., community engagement) required in race scholarship
- ➔ Offer awards for outstanding race-related scholarship (with funding)
- ➔ Support race faculty, especially women of color, against unfair or retaliatory course evaluations
- ➔ Recognize that qualitative research is as valuable as quantitative research

Curriculum and Teaching

- ➔ Provide time and resources for instructors to learn anti-racist pedagogies
- ➔ Assess current curriculum and teaching through an anti-racist lens
- ➔ Require specific language on syllabi regarding race and anti-racism
- ➔ Fund ongoing course development grants; encourage team teaching with full funding
- ➔ Require that all students have coursework that addresses race and anti-racism

Funding or Strengthening Support Units—Centers and Departments

- ➔ Increase faculty lines, postdocs, graduate assistantships, fellowships, and undergraduate research support
- ➔ Establish faculty funds for competitive grants for research or travel
- ➔ Make funds available for visiting scholars, conferences, and lecture series with global analysis of race
- ➔ Continue building up African American Studies and other units with race scholars
- ➔ Provide more support for Latinx Studies
- ➔ Create a center for race scholarship, with a dedicated building and campus-wide mission
- ➔ Support organizations or resources that help UF race scholars network and collaborate
- ➔ Create an organization for anti-racist faculty
- ➔ Support faculty colloquia, forums, dialogues, or other gatherings that rotate among colleges

Professional Development

- ➔ Provide mentors from outside race scholars' department
- ➔ Establish more programs that build on the success of “Academics for Black Lives”³⁵
- ➔ Have annual workshop series on race and racism with campus-wide call for proposals
- ➔ Mandate anti-racist workshops for all instructors
- ➔ Make more counseling and related support programs available for instructors of color
- ➔ Support programs on contemporary race topics, such as state-sponsored education bills
- ➔ Acknowledge mental health toll of engaging in race scholarship
- ➔ Support annual retreats that allow faculty to share and evaluate ongoing work and plan collaborations

Addressing UF’s Ongoing Legacies of Racism and Inequity

- ➔ Have serious deliberation on renaming buildings
- ➔ Investigate UF’s historic ties to slavery and prisons
- ➔ Abolish campus police
- ➔ Join the Universities Studying Slavery Initiative³⁶

Campus and Community Engagement

- ➔ Support research projects in Gainesville designed to benefit communities of color
- ➔ Fund studies of Black and Indigenous histories in Gainesville
- ➔ Improve town-gown relations, via off-campus presentations and dialogues
- ➔ Support outreach to area high schools
- ➔ Establish funds to compensate community experts for speaking on campus (in classes or at events)

35 See Academics for Black Survival and Wellness Program, co-founded by Dr. Della Mosley, former UF faculty member, and Pearis Bellamy, UF graduate student. <https://www.academics4blacklives.com/>.

36 <https://slavery.virginia.edu/universities-studying-slavery/>.

QUESTION 5 HAVE YOU INTERACTED OR COLLABORATED WITH OTHER RACE AND/OR ANTI-RACISM SCHOLAR(S) AT UF? IF SO, WHICH DEPARTMENT(S) OR COLLEGE(S) WERE THEY FROM?

Almost all respondents indicated that they had communicated or collaborated with scholars outside of their department or college. One faculty member observed that opportunities for collaboration are “difficult to find, establish and maintain.” In total, faculty members referenced seven of UF’s sixteen colleges as academic spaces for interaction or collaboration with peers. The colleges named were Agricultural and Life Sciences, Arts, Education, Engineering, Journalism and Communication, Law, and Liberal Arts and Sciences. Respondents also referenced their collaborations with the Smathers Libraries and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. In some instances, faculty indicated that they worked with colleagues from more than one college or department on campus.

EMERGENT THEMES

This section identifies the five key themes that emerged from the faculty interviews and survey responses. These topics demonstrate the connect- edness of university structures, priorities, and practices and how they affect UF race scholars. Unpacking the themes provides a skeletal outline for next steps the race scholars and the UF administration might under- take to advance race scholarship.

5 KEY THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE FACULTY INTERVIEWS AND SURVEY RESPONSES

1 Insufficient Engagement with Race

One of the most salient themes to emerge from the research is the concern that UF is neither interested in nor concerned with race scholarship. As an example, some respondents noted that research on race, anti-racism, or Blackness has not been the focus of high-level fundraising at the uni- versity. Further, while the topic of race intersects with a vast number of other subject areas, it has not been chosen as the focal point of a well- funded campus-wide project, such as UF’s 2020 initiative on artificial intelligence.³⁷ The concern is that race scholars (and their work) are more

³⁷ <https://ai.ufl.edu/>.

likely to receive attention in response to external events, rather than being viewed as part of the university's core research mission. One interpretation of how this reality impacts race scholars is that it creates a largely sub rosa existence for their research. This is ironic given that race-related matters command a sizeable share of the public discourse—including policing, eviction moratoriums, incarceration, and access to healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. As well, UF often relies on faculty race scholars for the university's ongoing work on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Faculty members were surprised to learn that more than fifty scholars are engaged in race research at UF.

2 Absence of Connectedness

Respondents consistently brought up the need for academic connection. A few people said they do not have direct contact with other researchers engaged in race or anti-racism work. In the interviews, several faculty members were surprised to learn that more than fifty scholars are engaged in race research at UF.

Responses also emphasized a need for greater institutional emphasis on collaboration between units and across colleges, in place of what can seem like competition between them. Several study participants brought up policies and other structural impediments that disincentivize or otherwise make it difficult to team-teach, cross-list courses, or develop new courses. This concern is heightened when funding structures encourage departments or other units to be territorial about subject areas in curriculum. Faculty members would like to move beyond silos and develop a larger intellectual community. Some are interested in more opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaborations, such as an annual symposium on race scholarship at UF, a retreat for race scholars, and informal gatherings. The comments make clear that race scholars would welcome greater administrative aid in connecting with other race scholars and their work.

"I am wondering what institutional capacities we have to respond to the recent attacks on academic freedom but also on our very identities as educators."

3 Lack of Institutional Protection

Many faculty members said they are concerned about the heightened tensions around race-related scholarship in the academy. One person commented:

This is a very difficult time to be an educator in the state of Florida. I am wondering what institutional capacities we have to respond to the recent attacks on academic freedom but also on

our very identities as educators. If we cannot teach about race in relation to American and global politics, what can we teach?

Several people noted that faculty who focus on race have become increasingly vulnerable. There was general agreement that UF should do more to provide active and vocal support for race scholarship. More pointedly, several of the comments centered on the need for protection. There is a general sense that UF faculty members who study race do so at their own peril. UF's silence in the face of attacks on race scholarship has caused many of the faculty members who took part in the study to question the university's commitment to this work. For instance, some said, the university has not provided any public or private assurances to race scholars—either that their jobs are safe or that the university will stand up for them if their scholarship is subject to a challenge. This issue poses acute concerns for untenured faculty members.

4 Need for Greater Institutional Supports

Numerous participants indicated that UF should do more to support and bolster race-focused research. Faculty feedback included a range of ways that the administration could signal that research on race, anti-racism, and Blackness matters. Some referenced making more funds available for conducting research, hosting an annual race symposium, and bringing renowned race scholars to campus.

Others identified structural changes, such as fostering and embedding lines of communication between campus race scholars. One suggestion made by several faculty members is that UF should have an upper-level administration point person who is knowledgeable about race scholarship and who would be charged with addressing the concerns identified by race scholars. Another shared idea is to establish substantial dedicated physical space to foster collaborations across departments and colleges, such as publications, workshops, and lectures. This work would enhance and amplify ongoing race scholarship. The conversations on this topic again raised the issue of ephemerality. As noted earlier, one faculty member expressed worry that once race scholarship is completed, it disappears. Based on the comments, the ideal forms of institutional support would allow UF race scholarship to “live”—by ensuring that support is long term and baked into UF's academic structure.

Respondents referenced several successful programs at UF that have enhanced race scholarship and teaching. This includes the Samuel Proctor

Oral History Program’s annual trips to the Mississippi Delta and the Course Development Grants, sponsored by the Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations. A faculty respondent observed that amplifying research and teaching on race could be a powerful recruiting tool for attracting students and faculty to UF.

Ideally, UF will invest in more programs that support race scholarship so that it becomes a recognized strength—not a problem—at the university.

5 Reactive Responses to Race Issues

This theme cuts across the others discussed earlier. It is listed separately to underscore its importance. The faculty comments suggest that UF’s lack of rigorous engagement with race, its largely non-vocal support of race-related scholarship, and the lack of sufficient structural supports for race and anti-racism work indicate that UF mostly reacts to race issues and problems (such as the reactions after the killing of George Floyd). Ideally, one commenter notes, UF will invest in more programs that support race scholarship so that it becomes a recognized strength—not a problem—at the university.

The next chart offers a visual synopsis of the interview comments, questionnaire responses, and emergent themes. The graphic shows the interplay between the suggestions and observations that UF faculty shared in this study. The center of the graphic highlights three key institutional investments. The outer edges of the circle describe the mutual benefits—for race scholars and UF at large—that may result from these investments.

FIGURE 6: POTENTIAL IMPACT OF WISH LIST ITEMS ON UF COMMUNITY



Now that the faculty responses have been described and assessed, the next section addresses what should be done. The answer is presented in the form of recommendations. These recommendations engage both UF faculty and the UF administration in addressing the identified concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are drawn from the comments, insights, requests, and realities described by 39 UF race scholars who participated in this study. These items incorporate and highlight the recurring themes that emerged from the interview discussions and questionnaire responses. There was broad overlap and convergence among the faculty members regarding the steps UF should take to support race scholars and scholarship. Notably, the suggestions cohere with UF's mission "to welcome the full exploration of its intellectual boundaries,"³⁸ and in doing so, may enhance both faculty and student recruitment efforts. The recommendations offer nascent blueprints for UF to build a powerhouse of race scholars and scholarship. Implementing these suggestions could position UF as a strong academic leader in race and anti-racism scholarship and instruction. This would be a powerful mantle for UF, a flagship university in the American South.

Implementing these suggestions could position UF as a strong academic leader in race and anti-racism scholarship and instruction.

Two lists of recommendations appear here. The first offers action items for UF faculty whose scholarship or teaching focuses on race. The second list offers concrete steps that UF can take as an institution to facilitate, embed, and protect race scholarship. These dual and complementary lists acknowledge that the work required to enhance and amplify race scholars and scholarship involves the faculty members themselves and a greater investment by the university. Developing and sustaining synergy between the faculty and the university are essential to achieve these transformative changes.

³⁸ <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/administration/#missionstatementtext>.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UF RACE SCHOLARS

1 Form a Working Group of Race Scholars

The group would be open to all UF faculty who engage in research or teaching on race-related subjects. The group would include scholars whose work examines one or more racial groups; the impact of systems and practices on particular racial groups; race-related theories; those who use varied methods of inquiry, such as qualitative, quantitative, or legal analysis; and those focused on pedagogical issues. The objective of a working group would be to create a forum for race scholars interested in discussion, collaboration, and research. Through this collaborative process, the group might also develop a network, directory, and e-mail list of race scholars, or another well-considered and appropriate means of facilitating networking and collaboration.

2 Identify Race-Related Courses

A list of UF courses that focus on race, by department and frequency of course offering, would provide insight into how race is utilized and embedded across the UF curriculum. This information would provide a baseline and guidance on how and where race issues and race-related subjects could be integrated in courses.

3 Identify Potential Race-Related Courses

Once information is gathered on existing race-focused courses, race scholars and others can determine other courses that UF can offer to strengthen its curricular base on race-related subjects. A useful list would specify which college(s) would offer the course, the course level (e.g., undergraduate or graduate), and how often the course should be offered. Discussions about this list might also address whether UF should either mandate a course on race or propose an optional race curriculum for students.³⁹

³⁹ See CSRRR webinar, June 25, 2020, “Should Colleges Mandate a Race/ Anti-Racism Course?” <https://www.law.ufl.edu/csrrr-events/should-colleges-mandate-a-course-on-race-anti-racism>.

- 4 Draft Model Syllabus Language on Race**

Recommendations for syllabus language would help faculty members set ground rules in anticipation of potentially charged classroom conversations on race and anti-racism. Adding language to course syllabi that addresses race and classroom dynamics sends a strong message that even though talking about race may be difficult, it is important and encouraged in academic settings.
- 5 Create a Faculty Mentoring Program**

This program would match junior faculty with senior faculty. A peer mentoring program would create another opportunity for collaboration and connection. Faculty pairings could be made within and across departments and colleges.
- 6 Create an Anti-Racism Faculty Organization**

Some faculty members expressed interest in meeting and working with other faculty members interested in anti-racism teaching and scholarship. Faculty members who do not conduct research or teach about race might also be interested in such an organization.
- 7 Host an Annual Conference on Race Scholarship**

An annual symposium on UF race scholarship would encourage cross-campus collaborations. It would also amplify the research of UF race scholars.

16 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UF ADMINISTRATION

- 1 Enhance the Sustainability of Race Scholarship**

Identify strategies to bolster and support race-related scholarship and teaching. This can be done by developing a multi-year strategic plan that addresses the specifics of how UF will encourage, promote, and advance race scholarship. Ideally this would include a timeline for goals, intermittent review, and assessment of strategies.
- 2 Use the Expertise of UF Race Scholars**

UF has more than fifty faculty members who research or teach on race-related subjects. These faculty members have a wealth of knowledge and expertise on race-related subject matter and curriculum. The university is encouraged to partner with these faculty members as decisions are made that impact the growth and development of race scholarship on campus, including faculty recruitment and retention.
- 3 Offer More Resources to Race Scholars**

The specific demands of race scholarship are sometimes difficult to meet under existing funding structures at UF. This is particularly true for qualitative research methods, and community-engaged research. Types of support the university could offer include competitive grant funding, stipends, research assistance, conference travel funds, and course releases. Faculty who are asked to lead large-scale committees, projects, or initiatives about race at UF should receive compensation of some kind.
- 4 Revive the Course Development Grants**

Provide incentives for faculty and graduate students to develop new (or revitalize) upper-division undergraduate race-focused courses. Encourage departments to regularly offer courses on race at graduate and undergraduate level.

5 Continue the UF Racial Justice Research Fund

Allotting university funding for race-related scholarship sends a message that UF values this research. Further, such funding amplifies the research of UF race scholars and encourages synergies across departments and colleges.

6 Incentivize Faculty Incorporation of Race in Course Curriculum

UF can implement incentives that will encourage faculty members who do not have race-related expertise to incorporate race issues into their curriculum. Stipends, service credit, and academic recognition are some examples. Ideally, campus resources, such as the Center for Teaching Excellence, would have staff members with expertise on race and pedagogy who can advise and work with faculty as they design and redesign courses.

7 Increase Racial Diversity in UF Administration

Faculty respondents consistently noted that few people of color hold top positions at UF. There is a concern that the racial homogeneity in UF's upper administration reflects a lack of diverse viewpoints about the types of scholarship that are important. Ideally UF would always have at least one top-level administrator (e.g., associate provost, vice provost, or above) who is a race scholar.⁴⁰ To be effective, this person should have administrative and financial authority to institute needed changes.

8 Implement Targeted Resources for Race Scholars and Scholarship

In some instances, discussions about race-related scholarship overlap with conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). While there are some areas of convergence, funding and supporting scholarship on race are distinct from programs and initiatives designed to address DEI issues. Faculty comments make clear that UF's investment in diversity deans, for instance, is not a substitute for investment in faculty race scholars.

⁴⁰ This is different from the chief diversity officer position.

- 9 Increase the Pipeline for Race Scholars and Scholarship**
The university can take additional steps to integrate race scholars and scholarship. More can be done to facilitate, support, and highlight race scholarship across UF's colleges, departments, and units. For instance, creating more race-related post-doctorates, graduate assistantships, and fellowships will increase the number of campus scholars engaged in race-related studies and bolster their work.
- 10 Broaden Access to Race-Related Databases**
Faculty members discussed a range of ways the university could provide stronger support for their scholarship. One idea is to have the university subscribe to more digital archival databases that would be useful to race scholars. Faculty members and administrators can work together to identify a list.
- 11 Create Webspace for UF Race-Based Scholarship**
Expand and prioritize university webspace and social media promotion for race-related scholarship and activities on campus. One option is to expand UF's anti-racism webpages to include this material. Ideally this information, including upcoming events (e.g., lectures and symposia) and recently published research would be accessible from the UF homepage.
- 12 Dedicate a Building for Race Research and Collaboration**
There was wide-ranging support for establishing a campus hub for race research. Primarily this space is envisioned as a set location for race scholars to gather, share, collaborate, discuss, and critique works in progress.
- 13 Establish an Endowed Chair on Race**
One idea is to institute an endowed chair on race, racism, and anti-racism. This would be the first of its kind at UF and would signal that race scholarship is an essential area of research expertise for a top-five U.S. public university. Establishing this position would present a major fundraising opportunity for the university.

14 Protect Race Scholars

Numerous faculty members said their race-related research and teaching are under attack. As a result, many are concerned about the viability of their work in the current academic climate. For instance, statements of public support that the university recognizes race as an area of serious academic inquiry would send a strong message to UF race scholars, the campus community, and beyond. Further, the university should ensure that researchers who examine race are not penalized (e.g., during the promotion and tenure process or annual reviews) for their research and teaching. This includes offering protection against retaliatory or unfair course evaluations.

15 Initiate an Annual Award for Race Scholarship

An annual award for race scholarship would underscore the importance of this area of academic research. For instance, the award could honor a publication, project, or other initiative. Ideally the award would include a stipend or other resource to aid further research.

16 Enhance Town-Gown Relationships

Many faculty members support an expanded investment in town-gown relationships. This includes support for research that encourages campus engagement with local communities, particularly communities that have historically been denied access to UF. Community experts should be invited to campus to share their knowledge directly with the UF community—and they should be fairly compensated for their time and energy. Additionally, addressing UF's contemporary and historical relationships to the surrounding community should be a significant ongoing priority for research, teaching, and community engagement.

CONCLUSION

This report highlights the experiences, perceptions, and insights of UF faculty members whose research or teaching focuses on race. The faculty respondents detail why UF should make a targeted, foundational investment in race scholarship. Most strikingly, members of this group spoke with one voice, offering variations on the themes of collaboration, support, and protection. The researchers have distilled these findings into twenty-three recommendations that set forth the necessary steps for UF to take to meet this moment. UF has a strong, committed, and enviable core of faculty who have wide and deep expertise on race-related subject matters. A renewed investment in race scholarship by UF has the potential to bear rich academic fruit for the UF community—including increased scholarly production, greater success with student and faculty recruitment, and an improved campus climate. In the words of one faculty member, “Hopefully UF will find ways to bring together an intellectual community so that [race] scholars who have allied interests don’t feel a sense of isolation but rather connection.” UF is one of the nation’s top public universities. It has the talent and the resources, and with this report, a roadmap for change. Hopefully UF will demonstrate that it has the will to make a way forward.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of people were instrumental in getting this grant and report across the finish line. We thank Dr. Diedre Houchen, who had the initial research idea for this grant and helped to write the proposal that resulted in funding; Dr. Henry Frierson, Dr. Clarence Gravlee, and Dr. Paul Ortiz, for guidance and insights; Professor Gail Mathapo, UF Law Librarian, who helped tremendously with locating hard-to-find articles and documents; UF Law students Madison Pinkney and Kyla George for their research assistance; Sherrice Smith, UF Law Director of Faculty and Academic Support, who was instrumental in helping to create a seamless plan for data collection, meeting schedules, and keeping track of numerous documents and emails; Dianna Brook, UF Accounting Coordinator, for her assistance; Lynn Stuart, for her expert graphic design work; Whitney Smith, UF Law Assistant Dean for Messaging and Outreach, for her guidance; and finally we thank the UF Office of Research, with a special nod to Dr. Sobha Jaishankar, Assistant Vice President for Research, for her patience in responding to our many questions.

A WAY FORWARD

UF Race Scholars on Support, Obstacles, and the Need for Institutional Engagement

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Fall 2021