A Consortial Approach to Anti-Racism Initiatives in Liberal Arts Colleges

OVERVIEW

In the context of heightened racial tensions both nationally and locally, the ACM college presidents charged the ACM consortial office to support the member colleges’ collective commitment to antiracism by creating and offering a set of collaborative programs that identify and address institutional and structural racism.

PRINCIPLES

Adhere to the ACM’s founding vision (1958):
• Build community around initiatives that benefit from collaboration and collective impact
• Encourage experimentation and innovation
• Serve as a creative stimulus to the individual colleges in planning for their separate missions
• Assess educational landscape and respond to external challenges

Understand and respond to campus needs - Be attuned to individual contexts and needs across institutions: pursue initiatives colleges wouldn’t be able to do alone.

Ensure timeliness and agility – Quickly launch program that could accommodate evolving campus concerns while also providing infrastructure to build out over time.

Maximize impact – Go beyond statements of concern to meaningful commitments

OUTCOMES

Five-Part Plan (Launched Parts 1–3 during AY2020-21)

1. Professional Development
   • Launch monthly antiracism workshops for faculty and staff on best practices and action steps to improve department/campus environments
   • Engage consortial groups (e.g., Registrars, etc.) for context-specific workshops

2. Data Collection
   • Collect and disseminate information about existing campus antiracism efforts
   • Collect outcomes data on students, faculty, and staff of color to inform solutions

3. Support Institutional Governance
   • Create opportunities for college presidents and their board leadership to share the challenges and opportunities inherent in bringing together leaders from different sectors in which DEI initiatives proceed differently

4. Enhance Cohort Building across Campuses
   • Build greater community among students and faculty of color through cross-consortial convenings

5. Foster Stronger Partnerships between Campuses and Local Communities
   • Launch grant-funded institute on equitable civic engagement

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Ensure timeliness of programs while being mindful of institutional/faculty capacity

Avoid replication of campus-based programs

Evaluation and iteration to sustain and enhance future programs