Executive Summary

Report from Adhoc Committee on the Creation of a Race, Equity, and Inclusion Requirement

The following report presents the rationale for the Adhoc Committee’s recommendation that the College of Charleston begin planning and implementation of a 6 credit hour (two 3-credit hour courses), campus-wide undergraduate Race, Equity, and Inclusion requirement.

The opening introduction segment recounts the genesis of the Committee’s formation and makeup and concludes with the specifics of the recommendation, namely that the Race, Equity, and Inclusion requirement be so articulated that the courses are not part of a GenEd requirement, but rather a requirement analogous to the First Year Experience Program, that 1/3 of each course focus on race/racism in its content and that the courses can be offered in any discipline, and that one of the required courses focuses on Race, Equity and Inclusion in the US and the other explores Race, Equity, and Inclusion in a Global Context.

The second section of the report focuses on the rationale for the recommendation, beginning with a subsection that explains the recommendation for a curricular requirement that focuses explicitly on race, equity, and inclusion. The section first discusses how changing national demographics, workforce needs, and student demands support the need for a requirement, and then explains the reasoning for recommending that 1/3 of each of the two courses focus explicitly on issues of race and racism. In a nutshell, the Committee concludes that for the purposes of a rigorous academic curriculum, diversity is not an explicit enough term to ensure that the requirement addresses the issues of racism that are part of the past and present of Charleston and the College of Charleston. Thus articulated as a requirement that addresses race and its intersections with other issues of equity and inclusion, the requirement will go further towards helping students confront racism effectively and increase their ability and determination to see and intervene in other forms of discrimination.

The next section of the rationale explains the reasoning for a two 3-credit hour course requirement by discussing the Ad Hoc Committee’s research subcommittee’s findings from their analysis of 23 diversity and ethnic studies requirements at universities across the country. Here the Committee discusses different diversity requirement models and their documented shortcomings and finds that a two-course requirement is best suited to promote a rigorous and academic treatment of the topics as well as more likely to reduce implicit bias among students and the frequency of racially charged incidents on campus. This subsection concludes with a discussion of what the courses could look like and a justification for a US and globally focused course.

In the third section, the Committee outlines a recommended timeline for implementation of the REI requirement at the College of Charleston, which is largely based on the First Year Experience’s model. The goal is to run a pilot program in the 2021-22 year and then launch the program as an official requirement for the 2022-23 academic year.
I. Introduction and Recommendation

At the Nov. 5th 2019 senate meeting, the Senate passed a motion proposed by the Committee on General Education that the Faculty Speaker form an ad hoc committee to research and plan a diversity requirement as part of the required curriculum at the College of Charleston. The Committee on General Education formulated the rationale for this charge as follows:

Over the last few years, there have been increasing calls for diversity/racial justice initiatives on campus to include curricular elements. Following the Board of Trustees approval of the College of Charleston Diversity Strategic Plan (DSP) in April 2012, Provost Hynd charged a 10-person ad hoc committee to review the DSP’s Goal #4: “infuse diversity into the curriculum”; and the corresponding benchmark: “[b]y the fifth year of the current plan, all incoming and degree-seeking undergraduate students will be required to complete diversity-related experiences in one or more of their courses.” On March 20, 2013, the committee submitted a 5-page report that included the recommendation that “the Senate create and the Provost and faculty approve a “Committee for Diversity in the Curriculum” and that “all students entering the College after Spring 2017 complete a credit-bearing, diversity-related experience as a requirement of graduation.” Unfortunately, no formal action was taken on the report.

More recently, in spring 2019, following a series of disturbing racial incidents on campus, the student group I-CAN (Intersectional Cougar Action Network) approached the Committee on General Education with a request and some suggestions for a curricular diversity requirement. The current Strategic Planning process may be an ideal context for such an initiative to take place.

The Speaker of the Faculty Simon Lewis subsequently reached out to faculty members from across campus to form an Ad Hoc Committee tasked with creating a report and recommendation for the Senate. The initial committee consisted of Anthony Greene (AAST), Morgan Koerner (German), Julia McReynolds-Perez (Sociology). The Ad Hoc Committee first convened on December 6th, 2019, elected Anthony Greene and Morgan Koerner as Co-chairs of the Committee, and split into two subcommittees: a research subcommittee chaired by Julia

2 http://facultysenate.cofc.edu/archives/2019-2020/November%202019/Gen%20Ed%20Motion%20for%20an%20ad%20hoc%20Diversity%20cmte.pdf
McReynolds-Perez (together with Judy Milleson, Nenad Radokovic, Kristi Brian, and Anthony Greene) to explore diversity curricular requirements in higher education in North America as well as research on the efficacy of diversity requirements; and, a strategic subcommittee tasked with looking at existing models at the College of Charleston (Morgan Koerner, Charissa Owens, Jason Vance). The Committee then reconvened on January 24th, 2020 and February 21st, 2020, to discuss the subcommittee’s findings; based on those findings and our discussion, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends that the College of Charleston:

- introduce a 6 credit hour (two 3-credit hour courses), campus-wide undergraduate Race, Equity, and Inclusion (REI) Requirement for all undergraduate students, with one course focusing on Race, Equity, and Inclusion in the United States and one focusing on Race, Equity, and Inclusion in a global context.
- articulate the requirement so that 1/3rd of each course covers race/racism in its content and that the courses can be offered in any discipline.
- implement the REI requirement not as a GenEd requirement, but rather as a requirement as analogous to the First Year Experience: a curricular requirement that might be satisfied by courses inside or outside of the General Education program and tagged for audit by degree works.
- determine and provide the necessary funding to implement the REI requirement.
- take immediate steps to implement an REI requirement, with the goal of piloting REI courses in the 2021/22 academic year and instituting the requirement for incoming freshmen in the 2022/23 academic year.

The following report lays out the rationale for these suggestions and then presents a model timeline for implementation.

II. Rationale

A. The Rationale for a Race, Equity and Inclusion requirement

There has never been a more relevant time for making the case to include a race, equity, and inclusion requirement in the undergraduate curriculum at the College of Charleston. The requirement will play a critical role in the College of Charleston’s implementation of its new strategic plan, which includes diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as sustainability as two of its key components. The following narrative discusses national factors that justify the need for an undergraduate Race, Equity, and Inclusion requirement—changing demographics, workforce demands, and student expectations—and then discusses the rationale for recommending that the curricular requirement explicitly address issues of race in 1/3rd of its content.
**Changing Demographics**

Findings from a Pew Research Center survey indicate Generation Z (those born after 1996) is “the country's most racially and ethnically diverse generation and is on its way to becoming the best-educated generation yet.” By the year 2025, 75% of the global workforce will be made up of millennials and those from GenZ. This group will occupy the majority of leadership roles over the coming decade and they will be responsible for making important decisions that affect workplace cultures and people's lives. While it is true that this group already has a unique perspective on diversity, viewing “diversity as a melding of varying experiences, different backgrounds, and individual perspectives,” college campuses have an opportunity to cultivate and grow these perspectives in ways that have been unprecedented in the past. This generation of students is more interested, willing, and receptive to conversations about race, equity, and inclusion as well as how to create an ideal workplace with a supportive environment that gives space to varying perspectives on issues that affect people’s lives.

**Workplace Demands**

We live in a complex, interconnected world where diversity, shaped by changing national demographics, globalization, and technological innovation. Notwithstanding this interconnectedness, there is also growing polarization fueled by identity politics and the resurgence of nationalist ideals. Significant demographic shifts in the U.S. workforce, involving age, race, gender, religion, and other individual identity characteristics are giving public, private, and nonprofit organizations unprecedented opportunities to bring new ideas and perspectives to their staff teams, encourage organizational innovation, and engage community in new ways.

Employers from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors intuitively recognize that diversity is good for the bottom line; whether that bottom line is related to profit, public value, or mission-related goals and objectives. And, there are a number of initiatives across all three sectors that indicate diversity is becoming (if it is not already) a key part of organization culture. Consistent with these ideas, findings from a research study conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers identified eight competencies associated with career readiness (which interestingly correspond to the documented benefits of diversity). The report notes that employers are looking for employees who can not only work collaboratively in teams and exhibit critical thinking and problem-solving skills, they also want employees who have the capacity to “value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions...[and who can] demonstrate, openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals’ differences.”
Given these findings along with increased activity in the workplace focused on how to create more open, diverse, and inclusive work environments, college campuses have a moral imperative to consider how the curricular content offered to students prepares them for professional success.

**Student Expectations**

On January 16, 2016, Higher Education Today, a blog published by the American Council on Education, categorized and summarized a list of demands from students across the continent expressing a desire to “end systemic and structural racism on campus[es].” The report clearly indicated that over two-thirds of the demands call for curricular revisions or additions. “These demands range from charging the university to revise the entire campus curriculum to include diverse perspectives and inclusive pedagogies, to curriculum development in specific areas of study. Student groups that presented the demands also want to incorporate diversity or cultural competency courses into the required curriculum.” At a time when the nation’s young people are more aware of and sensitive to the systemic issues that have privileged some groups over others, it seems not only prudent, but responsible to provide students with the tools they need to engage in difficult conversations, value alternative perspectives, and cultivate a trusting environment where all ideas are welcomed and employees feel comfortable and empowered to be their authentic selves.

**The Case for the 1/3 Race Emphasis in the Curriculum Requirement**

The Committee recommends that the REI course requirement be articulated so that at least 1/3 of each course focus on issues of race. This recommendation follows trends in higher education pedagogy and scholarship that stress the need for increased racial literacy among college students (DiAngelo 2018, Sept 18; Verduzco 2019, March 18). While most colleges and universities nationwide have used the language of *diversity and inclusion* for recruiting and retention purposes, educators have a responsibility to offer a specifically *anti-racist* curriculum to inform students on how racism produces systemic inequities (Lynch et al, 2017). The Committee recommends the *Race, Equity and Inclusion* requirement as a means of deepening our students’ understanding of processes of racialization; providing a rigorous examination of racism at the intersections of other forms of inequity (such as gender, economic class, ability, sexuality, citizenship status, etc.); and, supporting students in developing practices of inclusion in their academic analysis and interpersonal actions. In short, the requirement will equip students to develop a racial equity lens which will empower them to assess the impact of other forms of injustice as well.

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3 Respondents represented 73 U.S. colleges and universities, three Canadian universities, one coalition of universities, and one consortium of Atlanta HBCUs.
As a Committee we are morally and professionally compelled to lead the charge for a curricular enhancement to advance the racial literacy of our graduates and our institution. This renewed initiative comes as a response to several local, racially-charged incidents. The Halloween incident of 2017 involved CofC students making light of the death of Freddy Gray, an African American man who died in police custody. The following year, members of our softball team mocked Latin American immigrants in their Halloween costumes. The spring of 2019 saw another campus protest as students became aware of their white peers depicting themselves as slave masters while on a College of Charleston field trip. Photographs and videos from all three bias-incidents made headlines.

As a historically white institution, the College of Charleston has a troubled past involving college presidents who were slave owners, endowments involving profits from slave auctions, a campus built using enslaved labor, and a deliberate strategy of privatization to avoid racial integration until 1967. The violence and tensions of our recent past make examining this institutional history unavoidable. The Mother Emanuel massacre of 2015 was carried out by a self-avowed white supremacist just blocks away from campus. The year before, the College made national headlines for the controversial appointment of Glen McConnell as president, which highlighted McConnell’s outspoken support and enthusiasm for South Carolina’s Confederate history.

The College of Charleston is embedded in a city that has never sufficiently addressed its need for racial healing and racial justice. The State of Racial Disparities in Charleston County, South Carolina 2000–2015 report “specifically identifies policies, practices, and structural arrangements of power that maintain a social environment where black residents are overwhelmingly impacted by pervasive inequities in education, employment, housing and gentrification, public health, policing, and racialized violence” (2017, 1). This report commissioned by the Race and Social Justice Initiative, a College of Charleston collaborative effort led by the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture, should serve as a directive for us as an institution to develop concrete actions to address these local racial disparities. The REI requirement is one such action, and the report itself could be incorporated as part of the curriculum in some of the REI courses.

In recognition of the historical reality that 40% of all enslaved people in the U.S. passed through Charleston ports, we have an obligation to educate our students through a racial equity lens that helps them understand how slavery, white supremacy, and well documented racial
disparities shape our experiences in the Low Country and beyond. This recommended REI requirement aligns with the College’s recent association with the Universities Studying Slavery (USS) consortium and the efforts of our own Center for the Study of Slavery in Charleston. These initiatives put the College of Charleston in good company with other universities including Brown, Harvard, Georgetown, the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary, and the Citadel who understand that institutional histories ought to serve as learning opportunities not hidden secrets. Fortunately, we will also soon have the International African American Museum to assist us in educating our students and the public on Charleston’s history that must become a future of racial reconciliation. The Race, Equity and Inclusion requirement will prepare students and faculty to make a meaningful contribution toward that future.

Extensive research indicates that students of color and white students all benefit from courses that incorporate historical analysis and intentional dialogue aimed at reducing bias and increasing empathy for multiple forms of oppression (Parker, et al 2016). When students are able to confront racism effectively, they increase their ability and determination to see and intervene in other forms of discrimination. The overall objective of the Race, Equity and Inclusion requirement is to create communities of practice where students become confident and fluent in recognizing and disrupting the status quo of inequity in the U.S. and globally.

B. Rationale for requiring two 3-credit courses

The research subcommittee compiled a list of 23 institutions of higher learning that have some form of Diversity or Ethnic Studies requirement in their undergraduate curriculum. This list is by no means exhaustive. Two dominant models emerge as we reviewed the evidence on different ways in which this requirement has been implemented at other campuses. (For additional details, see the links to our complete spreadsheet of programs reviewed, and our working document at the end of this document.)

Five of these institutions have two-course (or, in one case, three-course) diversity requirements. These are West Virginia University, Florida State University, Georgetown, University of Vermont, and the University of Colorado at Boulder. The most common model among these five institutions is one course with a US-focus and a second course with an international focus. Georgetown has a particularly interesting model in that their two-course diversity requirement is part of a broader campus reckoning with a past history of institutional support of slavery and other campus initiatives to support racial justice. Beloit College, although it does not have a diversity requirement per se, also came to our attention as having an Andrew Mellon-funded project on Decolonizing Pedagogies that may be relevant to efforts to better train and support faculty who teach and engage with issues of race and justice.
The more common model we found was the one-course diversity/ethnic studies requirement. Some version of this model was in place at the other 18 institutions that we documented. The description and implementation of this model varied quite a bit, and in ways that raised concerns that we would do well to be aware of. On some campuses, the concept of diversity was so broadly defined that it resulted in problems for course assessment and implementation. This created problems for defining good course inclusion criteria. There were also issues when the course inclusion criteria were unclear as to the amount of class time that must be dedicated to issues of diversity or race in order for course inclusion. The University of Wisconsin at Madison was illustrative. Their Ethnic Studies requirement is intended to focus on issues of marginalized racial and ethnic minorities and/or indigenous peoples in the United States. Yet more than 20 years after its implementation, an assessment effort discovered that Anthropology 101, the course that a plurality of students took to fulfill the requirement, often included no more than 1-2 weeks of course content specifically related to race or ethnicity.

The one-course diversity/ethnic studies requirement is the more common model. But as we detail below, evidence on the success of this model is mixed, and several of the institutions where this requirement has been in place for some time are now debating the merits of this system with student and/or faculty pressure to expand to a two-course model or add other components in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the diversity/ethnic studies requirement.

**Evidence of Success of Programs**

For the last couple of decades, many universities in the US have implemented the diversity requirement. Consequently, there have been studies and reports on the effectiveness and impact of these programs. Many studies support the claim that diversity requirements have a positive impact on student learning. For example, Chang (2002) found that a diversity requirement at a public school in the Northeast had significantly diminished racial prejudice towards African Americans even when students were not taking classes related to Black history and culture. Case (2007) showed that enrolling in a single course in psychology about racial bias can increase student awareness of White privilege and racism as well as increase their support for diversity and inclusion. Some research goes beyond racial biases to document other positive effects on students who have completed the diversity requirement. For example, Parker et al. (2016) showed that diversity and social justice courses contribute positively to college students’ moral development.

The limitations of one-course diversity requirements are well documented. For example, students at Boston College expressed that a one-course diversity requirement is not enough to improve racial justice and the climate at the school, and suggested increasing the diversity
requirement to two courses (Bockus, 2017, October 31). Similarly, following the assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of a 20-year-old diversity requirement at University of Wisconsin at Madison, it has been suggested that the requirements should be expanded to two 3-credit courses in order to address the pitfalls of the program. The purpose of the expansion is to make the requirement more rigorous and also to serve as a vehicle for recruiting more diverse faculty who can teach these courses (Editorial, 2019, March 7). The assessment of the diversity requirement for some students at University of Michigan suggests that the 3-credit requirement is not enough to improve racial justice on campus and reduce the frequency of racist incidents. It has been suggested that the university should introduce courses for all undergraduates that have clear student learning outcomes connected to an understanding of race and ethnicity (Editorial, 2018, April 10).

Based on the above findings, the recommendation of the Committee is that the College of Charleston introduces a two 3-credit course diversity requirement for all undergraduates. The courses should have a clear set of student learning outcomes connected to race and justice. The Committee recommends that one of the courses focus on Race, Equity, and Inclusion in the United States and the other focus on Race, Equity, and Inclusion in a global context. The courses could appear as follows:

- **Race, Equity, and Inclusion 1: Race, Equity, and Inclusion in the US**
  
  One 3-credit course whose focus is on Race, Equity, and Inclusion in the US. It is recommended that students take this course as early as possible after matriculation at CofC. Courses must spend at least 1/3 of course time on issues of race and racism as they relate to Equity and Inclusion. In other words, courses that treat issues related to equity and inclusion in the US, including but not limited to courses on gender, sexuality, religion, ability, and marginalized populations, would count towards the requirement provided that 1/3 of the course content focuses on race in the US. This course may include a graded assignment related to an experiential component outside the classroom over the course of the semester. This experiential requirement would present an opportunity for campus and community engagement, such as student group visits to the International African American Museum, small projects using resources at the Avery Research Center, and others.

- **Race, Equity, and Inclusion 2: Race, Equity and Inclusion in a Global Perspective**
  
  A second 3-credit course whose focus is on Race, Equity and Inclusion in a global perspective. Courses must spend at least 1/3 of course time on issues of race and racism. In other words, courses that cover issues related to equity and inclusion in a global context, including but not limited to courses on gender, sexuality, religion, ability, and marginalized populations, would count towards the requirement provided that 1/3rd of the course content focuses on race and racism in a global context.
The Committee recommends this two-part sequence with the goal of providing students with a holistic understanding of the impact of European colonialism and its intersections with other issues involving equity and inclusion. Racism, and its effects, are not exclusively situated in the United States. Yet, the fundamental role and consequences of racism in the U.S. are particularly unique. However, there are significant intersecting experiences with the U.S. and the rest of the world who are by-products of colonialism and imperialism. Charleston is situated as a great example of both unique racial histories, but remains distinctively connected abroad, specifically to the Caribbean (Barbados) and Africa (Liberia). These overlaps can be seen in Charleston’s food culture, architecture, and language.

III. Recommendations for Implementation

To optimize the amount of work and planning required to initiate the REI Curriculum, the implementation process consists of multiple phases. The phases are manageable steps where the expertise and workload of faculty and staff stakeholders are taken into careful consideration in order to initiate a high-quality REI Curriculum for the College. These phases include the development of the pilot REI Curriculum Program for the two next academic years (2020/21 and 2021/22) with the goal of implementing the full REI Curriculum requirement for all students for the 2022/23 academic year. A proposed initiation budget and annual budget is included at the appendix of this report.

Planning & Development

Phase 1: Planning & Development (Tentative Time Frame: August 2020 - December 2020)

Designated as the planning and development phase, the REI Implementation Committee will be defined and established. The REI Implementation Committee will fulfill the following responsibilities during the Summer 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters.

1. Oversee an internal CofC search for an REI Director
2. Oversee an internal CofC search for an REI Assistant
3. The transition from an REI Implementation Committee to the REI Oversight Committee, which will be composed of the following:
   a. Nine faculty members from each academic school (9 schools)
   b. Two staff members (Registrar's Office and Office of Diversity)
   c. Two student members (one selected by the Student Government Association and one selected by Multicultural Student Programs and Services)

The REI Oversight Committee will be chaired by the REI Director and will report to the Faculty Senate.
Once the REI Oversight Committee is established, the committee is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Set goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-phased (SMART) or Collaborative, Limited, Emotional, Appreciable and Refinable (CLEAR) for the REI Curriculum Requirement.
2. Define student learning outcomes required of REI courses.
3. Define approval criteria for REI Curriculum coursework that take into consideration The First-Year Experience of Diversity EDU’s SLO’s, transfer credits, and other degree requirements.
4. Conduct a curriculum audit to identify existing courses that meet the REI Curriculum criteria.
5. Conduct an audit to identify existing courses that need minor revision to meet the REI Curriculum Criteria.

**Phase 2: Forecasting** (Tentative Time Frame: January 2021 - June 2021)
The next phase is designated as the forecasting phase portion of the pilot years where the REI Oversight Committee will work closely with respective divisions and offices to complete the following responsibilities.

1. Identify the number of courses needed to meet the demand of freshmen student enrollment during the REI Curriculum initiation year.
2. Collaborate with the Office of the Registrar to develop an application process that designates eligible courses (existing or new) as REI Curriculum courses.
3. Develop a repository of eligible REI Curriculum coursework and schedule for updates (the additions, revisions, deletions of courses).
4. Prepare and promote an introductory roll out of eligible REI courses for registration during the pilot 2021/22 academic year.
5. Collaborate with the Office of Institutional Diversity to create a scope and sequence for a multiday faculty training on creating inclusive classroom environments and using culturally responsive pedagogy, to be offered annually in May along with the model of the FYE training.

**Pilot Year (AY 2021/2022)**

**Phase 3: Performance and Execution** (Tentative Time Frame: June 2021 - June 2022)
The final phase will be the Performance and Execution phase. Incoming freshmen will be expected to fulfill the REI Curriculum as a degree requirement starting this academic year. The REI Oversight Committee is charged with collaborating with key divisions and offices to roll out the new degree requirement.
During this phase, the REI Oversight Committee will also oversee and monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the REI Curriculum Program. The regular collection and review of data will ensure the quality of the REI Curriculum. The committee will use data collected from the performance indicators and REI Curriculum SLO’s to:

1. Determine the program’s progress towards the SMART or CLEAR goals.
2. Determine whether courses are meeting the learning objectives of the REI Curriculum.

Based on the progress towards the program goals, the Committee can target their efforts to improve the program each year. Data from the performance indicators will inform the committee whether courses may continue as designated REI Curriculum coursework or be removed as a designated REI Curriculum course. The evaluation of the REI Curriculum Program and REI Curriculum courses should be done on a rotating schedule with reports prepared on a regular basis for reporting to appropriate campus leaders.

**Continuation Years (AY 2022/2023 and onward)**

**Phase 4: Continuation** (Tentative Time Frame: June 2022 and onward)

Evidence-based improvements during the performance and execution phase will produce the formal REI Curriculum Program and REI Curriculum coursework as a standing requirement for all students. Regular program assessment and course evaluation based on REI Curriculum data will support the program’s effectiveness and sustain high quality.

**Bibliography/References**


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