

**Report to the Chancellor
on the Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison**

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SUMMARY

The name "Ku Klux Klan," the sign of the fiery cross, and the image of robed and hooded nightriders evoke horrific histories of racist, anti-immigrant, and anti-Semitic violence. It may therefore seem shocking that between 1919 and 1926 two distinct student organizations at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) took this name. In Fall 2017, Chancellor Rebecca Blank asked us to provide a review of this history and advice as to how to acknowledge it "in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain." (See attachments 1 and 2)

This report begins with a brief history of these organizations, placing their creation, activities, and membership in several contexts. These contexts include the history of the Ku Klux Klan itself: its origins during the decade after the Civil War; its power as an image and idea during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; its re-emergence as a national organization during the late 1910s; the twin but historically related pathways that led to the creation of two campus organizations bearing its name; and the relationship of these organizations to the Ku Klux Klan in Wisconsin, including the City of Madison.

As important as this history is, it does not fully capture what the Study Group understands to be the most important context of all: the fact that, on our campus during those years, these organizations formed only part of a pervasive culture of exclusion that pressed non-majority students to the margins of campus life and subjected them to routine and persistent indignity. The climate created by this culture, like the Ku Klux Klan itself, was a defining feature of American national life in this era and was not unique to this campus. This helps explain how campus organizations of the time could so casually or eagerly adopt the name "Ku Klux Klan" and why so few at the UW objected.

We received our charge in the wake of the protests and deadly violence in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017, where white supremacists marched with torches and chanted Nazi slogans. Our conversations this fall and winter took place amid a sharp and renewed national focus on the history and resurgence of white supremacist politics in the United States and in the context of countless local debates, including here in Madison, over Confederate memorials and other reminders of the nation's troubled history of racism. Many people, on campus and beyond, are aware that members of the first Klan group on UW's campus—an interfraternity society founded in 1919—included well-known leaders of the student body. Two of their names, Porter Butts and Fredric March, are prominently displayed on facilities in the Memorial Union, while other facilities on campus (and around Madison) bear the names of other members of this group. The members of the Study Group understood from the outset that many people would expect us

to be guided by the question of whether any or all of these names should be removed from our campus landscape. Indeed, our discussions repeatedly returned to this question.

Public discussions of this and similar histories often produce two diametrically opposed arguments with regard to what we came to call the “names” question. The first position is that no person who ever identified with the Klan should be honored in any way on the campus or elsewhere. This position argues for renaming every campus facility bearing the name of any member of a campus Klan group. The second, quite different, position is that Klan membership reflected the climate of the era—that these were “people of their time,” that they affiliated with a group named “Ku Klux Klan” for a brief period during their youth, and that this self-identification should not overshadow their subsequent contributions to campus, community, and American life.

We acknowledge the power of both of these arguments, but we do not find ourselves in agreement with either one. Put simply, **the history the UW needs to confront was not the aberrant work of a few individuals but a pervasive culture of racial and religious bigotry, casual and unexamined in its prevalence, in which exclusion and indignity were routine, sanctioned in the institution’s daily life, and unchallenged by its leaders.** We therefore suggest that any focus on the renaming of particular campus facilities *follow* rather than *precede* the work of substantial institutional change to acknowledge and address the legacies of that era.

Thus, we urge a reckoning with the history and legacies of that era's campus climate—a reckoning focused on the ways people sought to resist and transform that climate, and on practical steps the UW can now take to give life to “the values the campus currently strives to maintain” and become a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of its community. We understand that this requires a broadly shared commitment by many people, in residence halls, offices, and departments as well as in Bascom Hall. But we advise the Chancellor to undertake the following steps:

- Help the university acknowledge and learn from its past. Long before the UW committed itself to its present values of inclusiveness, respect, and equity, some members of our community embodied those values in the face of hostility and derision. Their history deserves a prominent place on our campus. We propose a project to **recover the voices of campus community members, in the era of the Klan and since, who struggled and endured in a climate of hostility and who sought to change it.** Their efforts to bring change to this campus will provide lessons, contexts, and reminders for our efforts today.
- Honoring this history is necessary, but the present life of our campus demands more. We further advise **a renewed commitment of significant resources to units, programs, and policies that explicitly seek to create a campus where these struggles are no longer so necessary.** We urge the following specific investments. First, we call for a renewed commitment to the Department of Afro-American Studies and the Programs in American Indian Studies, Chican@/Latin@ Studies, and Asian-American Studies. These programs have proven track records of fostering success, community, and a sense of belonging on campus among non-majority students; equally important, their courses and

programs help all members of campus develop what the UW's mission statement describes as "respect for, and commitment to, the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society." Second, we recommend increased investment in the high-impact recruitment programs housed in the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity & Climate, and more generally the close study and commitment of resources to the improved retention of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty of color and from first-generation, economically disadvantaged, and otherwise underrepresented groups. Third, we recommend increased investment in the graduate fellowship program known as AOF.

Recovering the voices and responses of those who experienced exclusion will help the university learn from its past. Investment in proven programs that foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment will help achieve a better campus community for all. Holding true to "the values the campus currently strives to maintain" requires our ongoing commitment to understanding how far we have come, acknowledging how far we still have to go, and taking the steps that move us forward.

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I: CHARGE AND ACTIVITIES

On October 18, 2017, Chancellor Rebecca Blank asked the members of this Study Group to “[r]eview documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities and context of student organizations that operated on campus in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan” and to “[e]valuate the actions and legacies of those organizations and advise how the campus can appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain.” The Study Group began its work during its initial 90-minute session on October 18, 2017. It subsequently met for 90-minute sessions on October 27, November 10, and December 1, 2017, and January 26, February 9, February 23, and March 16, 2018. The first three meetings focused on scholarship and documents relevant to the first part of the charge; these and other works we consulted are listed in the bibliography (Attachment #3). At subsequent meetings, we discussed how to evaluate this history and its legacies, and what advice to provide to Chancellor Blank.

We sought the aid of UW archivist David Null, hired a researcher, consulted scholars at other institutions, and read relevant works of scholarship and studies undertaken by other universities. As news of the Study Group’s existence spread, we received comments, suggestions, and offers of aid from many past and present members of the campus community. We also received many media requests, which we agreed to delay answering until our work was complete. The Study Group’s work could not have been completed without the administrative efforts of Catherine Reiland, to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks.

II: HISTORY Institutions, contexts, and legacies

A Brief History of the Ku Klux Klan

In order to understand how the Ku Klux Klan came to our campus at the end of the 1910s, this section reviews its nineteenth-century origins, the transformation of that legacy by the early twentieth century, and the emergence of the reorganized Klan as a national movement after 1915.

The Ku Klux Klan was first established in the spring of 1866 as a social, musical, and fraternal association of ex-Confederate men in Tennessee. Over the next two years it evolved into a Southern regional organization whose members—ex-slaveholders, former Confederate soldiers, and their younger male relations—employed disguises as they waged campaigns of terror and intimidation against former slaves’ expressions of social and political autonomy. Masked, collective, violent action under the name “Ku Klux Klan” created a widely known label—in today’s terms, a brand—that identified men with the common project of reconstructing white supremacy for a world without slavery. Masks and robes granted those men at least the fiction of anonymity as they carried out acts of intimidation and violence. As the Klan claimed responsibility for violence against black and white opponents during and after the election of 1868, the name and its associated iconography gained the power to instill fear.¹

The Reconstruction-era Klan committed horrific acts of racially motivated terrorism, including murder, assassination, rape, torture, and intimidation, but it did not survive long as a political and paramilitary force. African Americans, their white allies, and Union forces occupying parts of the South fought the Klan, and a federal legal and military campaign in the early 1870s substantially diminished it. But white supremacist violence and intimidation quickly re-emerged under other names, often with the same personnel. Together, the Klan and its successor organizations played a crucial role in dismantling Reconstruction’s effort to build a non-racial democracy.

Although the Klan faded as an organization, its name and cultural form remained potent. The memory of its terrors featured powerfully in African American culture, and African Americans and many others continued to remember and repudiate its legacy of violent vigilantism.² But by the late nineteenth century, many white Northerners ceased to think of Reconstruction as a necessary sequel to slave emancipation and as an effort to make the promise of democracy real; instead, they focused on its shortcomings and failures. For many Northern and Southern whites of the 1880s and 1890s, the history of anti-Reconstruction violence by the Klan and other groups became evidence not of a deliberate campaign to restore the former slaveholders to power but, instead, of white men’s inborn racial resistance to the idea and practice of equality. At the same time, many white Americans sought and celebrated a “reunion” of former Unionists and Confederates that would finally put to rest the bitterness of the Civil

¹ Elaine Frantz Parsons, *Ku-Klux: The Birth of the Klan during Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

² Kidada E. Williams, *They Left Great Marks on Me: African American Testimonies of Racial Violence from Emancipation to World War I* (New York: NYU Press, 2012).

War. Crucially, this “reunion” was for whites only; it sidelined or ignored the aspirations and activities of African Americans, including their crucial contributions to the war and to Reconstruction.³ In 1901, Princeton professor (and future President of the United States) Woodrow Wilson published an article in *The Atlantic* in which he described Reconstruction as a ruinous alliance of scheming Northern radicals and their black Southern pawns, a dismal period that provoked white Southern men to rebel (including as Klansmen). In Wilson’s telling words, black Southerners “were left to carry the discredit and reap the consequences of ruin, when at last the whites who were real citizens got control again.”⁴ By the time Wilson wrote, his understanding of the Klan and its violence as natural and inevitable responses to the post-Civil War challenge to white supremacy had become a widely held view.

The practical history of the Ku Klux Klan as an instrument of ex-slaveholders’ power might have been lost to most white Americans, but the organization’s reputation for masked, violent, concerted action was not. It was in this spirit that some collegiate organizations of the era adopted its name and iconography. As Nicholas Syrett shows in his history of white college fraternities in the United States, young men of the turn of the twentieth century sought to distinguish themselves from their peers and establish themselves as powerful by adopting violent imagery, violent or mock-violent rituals, and a sinister tone. The memory of the Ku Klux Klan retained precisely these connotations, and the name “Ku Klux Klan”—often in tandem with the now-iconic robe, hood, and cross—appeared repeatedly in the “fraternity” section of college yearbooks across the turn-of-the-century nation, not just in the South, but (among others) at the Universities of Illinois, Michigan, and Maine, as well as eventually at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.⁵

Popular culture returned the image of the Klansman to the national spotlight in the early twentieth century. Popular fiction (especially Thomas W. Dixon’s 1905 novel *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*) represented Klansmen as heroic white vigilantes who faced down villainous African Americans bent on political and sexual domination. The wide national circulation of Klan novels gave rise to stage productions and finally to the 1915 feature film *The Birth of a Nation*. That film was an unprecedented commercial and critical success, attracting large audiences for years to come (including in Madison) and earning an endorsement from then-President Wilson, who screened it in the White House. The film’s depiction of robed, masked, collective white vigilantism as the savior of white womanhood and the white nation returned the image of the Klansman to the center of national consciousness.⁶

³ David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2001).

⁴ Woodrow Wilson, “The Reconstruction of the Southern States,” *The Atlantic* (January, 1901), p. 11.

⁵ Nicholas L. Syrett, *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2009); see also Katherine J. Lennard, “Uniform Threat: Manufacturing the Ku Klux Klan’s Visible Empire, 1866-1931,” Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2017, p. 98. Students at at least one Northern college (Yale University) formed a “Ku Klux” eating club as early as the late 1860s. See Parsons, *Ku-Klux*, p. 125.

⁶ Melvyn Stokes, *D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*: A History of “the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time”* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007).

The second Ku Klux Klan, successor to the by-then-moribund Reconstruction-era organization, was born in this moment. In 1915, Atlanta entrepreneur William Simmons appropriated the iconography of the Klan (as depicted in *Birth of a Nation*) for a new for-profit fraternal organization, which he dubbed the “Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.”

Simmons’ Klan capitalized on the renewed fame of the name to channel the era's powerful currents of nativism and violent white supremacy. In recruiting people to this group, Simmons coupled the anti-black rhetoric of the Reconstruction-era Klan with his own era's pervasive hostility toward non-Protestant immigrants. Like many others, Simmons believed that the millions of recently-arrived immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, many of them Catholic or Jewish, carried with them dangerous foreign "isms" (in his words, "Bolshevism, Socialism, Syndicalism, I.W.W.ism,") which threatened to overwhelm true “Americanism.” Simmons was also inspired by a recent, local episode of vigilante violence against one such “outsider”: the lynching of Jewish factory superintendent Leo Frank. This lynching had been perpetrated in August, 1915 by the "Knights of Mary Phagan," white Georgians claiming to act in the name of a 13-year-old white girl for whose murder Frank had been convicted in a grossly unfair and anti-Semitic proceeding.⁷

Simmons introduced his new organization with a dramatic cross-burning at Georgia's Stone Mountain at Thanksgiving 1915. By 1920, he had recruited a few thousand members, mainly in Georgia and Alabama. In that year two more skilled entrepreneurs took over the organization’s recruitment and finances and quickly transformed the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan into a fast-growing and highly profitable national organization. During the early 1920s, the Klan rapidly grew from a Southern group numbering in the low thousands into a vast organization with a foothold in nearly every part of the country. It reached a membership in the hundreds of thousands by 1921 and continued to grow over the next three years, finally reaching an estimated membership of between one and four million by the middle of the decade.⁸

This second Ku Klux Klan shared some features with the original Klan. Some auxiliaries of the organization committed acts of violence in its name, and the name and iconography were clearly intended to inspire fear and awe among its enemies. At the same time, this Klan did not assert or depict itself as a guerrilla organization waging masked war against the federal government; instead, as historian Felix Harcourt explains, Klan leaders represented their organization as "simply a law-abiding and law-enforcing union of white, native-born, patriotic Protestants."⁹

The time was ripe for this organization and movement. Since World War I and the revolutionary movements in Russia and other parts of Europe, streams of racist, nativist and anti-radical feelings had converged in American political and social life. Immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were frequently depicted as vectors of radicalism and as threats to the United

⁷ Steve Oney, *And the Dead Shall Rise: The Murder of Mary Phagan and the Lynching of Leo Frank* (New York: Pantheon, 2003).

⁸ For recent estimates, see Felix Harcourt, *Ku Klux Culture: America and the Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 3, 5 (four million), and Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (New York: Norton/Liveright, 2017), pp. 2, 217 n.4 (at least one million).

⁹ Harcourt, *Ku Klux Culture*, 4.

States' cultural identity as a white Protestant nation. At the same time, the near-total disenfranchisement of black Southerners by state constitutions, state laws, federal acquiescence, and a pervasive climate of intimidation and violence barred most African Americans—the people who had most fiercely resisted the first Ku Klux Klan—from exerting force in the nation's political debates.

Racism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and religious and cultural prejudice converged with more personal and specific agendas and grievances to make the Ku Klux Klan an appealing vehicle for literally millions of white Protestant Americans. Women's and children's auxiliary organizations bore the Klan's name; so did newspapers, radio stations, fairs, and local baseball teams. By the end of 1924, Klan forces were numerous enough to make an unsuccessful bid to select the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party.

The Klan reached Milwaukee in late 1920. A first attempt to organize the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Madison faltered in 1921 in the face of some hostility from newspapers and fraternal organizations. But in the summer of 1922 Klan organizers returned and quietly recruited men into the first local affiliate ("klavern"). That group went public in October, claiming 800 members.¹⁰ Between 1922 and 1924, the years of the Klan's national ascendancy, the state organization also grew.

Norman Weaver's study of the midwestern Klan argues that white protestant Wisconsin men were recruited by propaganda emphasizing "the problem of Catholicism" and "the threat of aliens" to "Americanism," and promising to "'clean up' any community in which it was given a free hand."¹¹ This meant taking part in marches, raids, and other sanctioned and unsanctioned activity against people and neighborhoods that Klan members considered "un-American." In Madison, Klan forces took aim at the Greenbush neighborhood (home to most of Madison's Jews, a large percentage of the city's African American residents, and its Italians of Sicilian origin), claiming that the city's police had proven ineffective at combating the neighborhood's liquor trade, prostitution, and growing number of murders. Their purpose, according to Klan organizer F. S. Webster, was "to make Madison again a fit place in which to live."¹²

The Klan penetrated Madison's institutions, including its police force. In 1922, when Klan organizers formed a paramilitary unit to "fight crime, fires, floods, riots, and strikes," Madison Chief of Police Thomas Shaughnessy publicly turned them away. But this initial rejection was not the end of the story. In October, 1924, after Madison Mayor Isaac Milo Kittelson granted a permit, several thousand Klansmen paraded through the city, around Capitol Square and into the Greenbush. Following the December 3, 1924 shooting death of a Madison police officer in the Greenbush neighborhood, Klansmen in robes attended his funeral en masse. Klansmen subsequently acted as deputies for the mayor's special investigator, helping to conduct

¹⁰ Robert A. Goldberg, "The Ku Klux Klan in Madison, 1922-1927," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 58, no. 1 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 32-34.

¹¹ Norman Weaver, "The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, UW-Madison, 1954, pp. 73-4.

¹² Goldberg, "The Ku Klux Klan in Madison, 1922-1927," pp. 34-36.

anti-bootlegging raids. Decades later, former chief of detectives William McCormick recalled that “pretty near all the men in the department were Klansmen.”¹³

Following or supporting the Klan was not inevitable, and there were voices of protest and dissent. A few Madison institutions openly opposed the Klan, among them *The Capital Times*, the Elks, the Madison Federation of Labor, and Catholic groups. Despite these voices, however, Madison’s mayor made no objection to the Klan’s arrival, and other civic leaders and organizations welcomed its speakers and its message.¹⁴ Ultimately, the Klan was not undone by outside opposition but by scandals and internal struggles. By late 1925, the Madison Klan was all but extinct, and the national organization faded over the next few years. By the late 1920s, it was no longer a powerful political force with national reach. Despite its brief career, historian Linda Gordon argues, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan constituted the largest U.S. social movement of the early twentieth century.¹⁵

The Ku Klux Klan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Between 1919 and 1926 two student organizations on the UW campus took the name “Ku Klux Klan.”¹⁶

The first Ku Klux Klan organization on the UW campus came into being before the emergence of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan as a national organization. This campus group appeared in the spring of 1919—that is, after Dixon’s novels and *Birth of a Nation* had returned the Reconstruction-Era Klan to a prominent place in American popular culture, and after Simmons had formed his Knights, but before that organization had arrived in Wisconsin. Inspired and recruited by members of a society called “Ku Klux Klan” at the University of Illinois (apparently founded as early as 1906)¹⁷, the first UW Klan group was composed of male student-body leaders in the Junior class.

These students established their Ku Klux Klan as an unmasked, above-ground interfraternity society composed of leading students. Its members included (from the 1921-1922 class): senior and sophomore class presidents, “members of the student senate, student court, the *Badger* yearbook board, the alumni committee, the prom and homecoming committees, the university traditions committee, the Campus Religious Council, and nearly all varsity sports squads and theatrical companies.” Members of this Klan group also occupied leadership roles on the Student Union board, the YMCA cabinet, the Memorial Union fund drive committee, the athletic board, and the *Daily Cardinal*.¹⁸ There is no evidence that this group was ever affiliated with the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, nor do we know what these 1919 founders knew or thought about the organization that Simmons founded in 1915. Still, its choice of a name signals an identification—or at the very least, no meaningful discomfort—with the widely known

¹³ Goldberg, “The Ku Klux Klan in Madison, 1922-1927,” pp. 36, 39-41, 34.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-7.

¹⁵ Gordon, *Second Coming of the KKK*, p. 8.

¹⁶ Timothy Messer-Kruse, “The Campus Klan of the University of Wisconsin: Tacit and Active Support for the Ku Klux Klan in a Culture of Intolerance,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 77, no. 1 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 2-38.

¹⁷ See <https://archives.library.illinois.edu/blog/ku-klux-klan/>

¹⁸ Messer-Kruse, “The Campus Klan,” p. 10.

violent actions of the Reconstruction-era Klan as it was remembered, celebrated, and given new cultural and institutional life in the early twentieth century.

The available historical record provides only a few indications of this first group's activities. In the *Badger* yearbooks, membership in this Klan group was represented in photographs of members and individual students' lists of affiliations, as well as in group photographs of an initiation ritual (pushing baby carriages through town) and of their formal dances. The affiliations of the group's members and the numerous references to it in campus publications of the early 1920s suggest its social prominence. Timothy Messer-Kruse also finds some evidence members of this group took part in an extra-legal spring 1921 campaign against liquor sellers in the Greenbush neighborhood. "Student leaders staked out the area, collected the affidavits necessary to obtain warrants, and, bypassing the Madison police, called in federal liquor control officers....In a single night, eight Italian merchants were arrested and 300 gallons of liquor confiscated." He notes that most of the UW's "student leaders" were members of this Klan group, and quotes a note from the same month in *The Daily Cardinal* that "[t]he following are having spring practice: 1. The football team 2. Ku Klux Klan."¹⁹ His inference is that this referred to these students' part in that raid on the Greenbush (which preceded the 1924 raid described above).

The second Klan group on the UW campus was, by contrast, a direct product of Simmons' Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. In the fall of 1922, the Knights began recruiting on the UW campus, finding some success among the faculty and student body, though apparently not among the members of the first Klan group. The UW's administration took no action against the group, and in 1924 a Klan-controlled housing fraternity, Kappa Beta Lambda (KBL, for "Klansmen Be Loyal") was established at UW. A Milwaukee Klan newspaper praised this group's commitment to the Klan principles of "White Supremacy, Restricted Foreign Immigration, Law and Order."²⁰ Like the first group, this Klan's members proudly and publicly acknowledged their affiliation.

The difference in social status between the first and second Klan groups on campus seems to have been marked. Both were composed of native-born Protestant men, but Messer-Kruse argues that the first group was higher status, composed disproportionately of liberal arts majors from outside Wisconsin, and included some of the most socially prominent and influential students on campus. The second group, by contrast, was chiefly composed of engineering and agricultural students from Madison as well as rural and small-town Wisconsin. In any event, the emergence of the second group quickly inspired the first group to change its name to the cryptic "Tumas." That organization persisted for a few more years. Kappa Beta Lambda expired in 1926, following the downward course of the local and national Knights.²¹

A Culture of Intolerance

The Ku Klux Klan of the 1910s and 1920s was not by itself the source of nativism, racism, and bigotry in the United States. President Wilson did not rely on the Klan to introduce

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²⁰ See *Ibid.* and Weaver, "The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan," pp. 87-88.

²¹ Messer-Kruse, "The Campus Klan."

Jim Crow segregation into the federal workforce in 1913, and his endorsement of *The Birth of a Nation* two years later simply recapitulated his view that the United States was essentially a white republic.²² The white citizens of Tulsa, Oklahoma did not don robes and hoods to make literal war on their city's African American community in 1921.²³ The Immigration Act of 1924, intended to dramatically shrink the immigration and naturalization of European Catholics and Jews, did not depend on the Klan for its passage through Congress.²⁴ We could offer many more examples of discriminatory policies and organized racist violence from this era. The point is that such policies, programs, and pogroms were part of the same culture that produced the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, one in which non-whites and non-Protestants were at best second-class citizens. The fact that the promoters of these policies often described their purposes as "Americanism" and "Americanization" should not distract us from their fundamental commitment to a racial and religious hierarchy in our national life.

That broader vision of the United States as a republic of, by, and for white Protestants shaped our campus in the 1920s much more than did the Klan groups themselves. The expression of that vision on this campus was what Messer-Kruse calls "a culture of intolerance," in which although some (but not all) groups of non-Protestants and non-whites could gain admission to the university, they were routinely reminded, by the action and inaction of students, faculty, and administrators, that they were not equal members of its community. That culture of intolerance took form here before the Klan groups arrived; it did not require them in order to persist during the 1920s; and it continued to exist after their disappearance. In our view, what is most striking about the history of the Klan at the UW is how easily its assertion of a native-born, Protestant, anti-radical "Americanism" meshed with a campus culture that was pervasively hostile and demeaning toward non-majority students.

Messer-Kruse's article on the "campus Klan" documents in excruciating detail the many forms of social and cultural exclusion practiced against both the small number of African American students and staff of that era and against the larger population of Jewish students. Our own research confirms his argument that the tenor of campus life, as reflected in campus publications and the experiences of non-majority students, was grossly inhospitable for non-whites and non-Protestants. To immerse oneself in the *Badger* yearbooks for the 1920s is to understand how unselfconsciously many students seem to have accepted the exclusion or degradation of non-majority members of the campus community. To delve into the social experiences of those groups who did not meet Klan-like definitions of "Americanism," is to understand that for such students, life on this campus in the early twentieth century was something to be endured.

Exclusion took both practical and symbolic forms. The handful of African American students on campus in this era faced exclusion from campus organizations. When they sought housing, they confronted *de facto* segregation. Blackface minstrelsy and other degrading

²² Eric Yellin, *Racism in the Nation's Service: Government Workers and the Color Line in Woodrow Wilson's America* (Chapel Hill: U.N.C. Press, 2013).

²³ Alfred L. Brophy, *Reconstructing the Dreamland: The Tulsa Riot of 1921—Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002).

²⁴ Mae Ngai, "The Architecture of Race in American Immigration Law: A Reexamination of the Immigration Act of 1924," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 1 (Jun., 1999), 67-92.

depictions of African Americans were omnipresent in campus societies, performances, parades, and publications. These were sanctioned at the highest level: in 1924, when the “Southern club” threw a spring “revue” including “several banjo numbers by negro impersonators,” *The Capital Times* reported that the event’s patrons included Dean of Men S. H. Goodnight as well as several members of the faculty.²⁵

Black students mounted some vocal and legal resistance. In 1916, three black students took part in a community protest against a return performance of *The Birth of a Nation*. José Escabi, a student of Afro-Puerto Rican descent, successfully brought charges against a local restaurant owner for violating Madison's anti-discrimination ordinance.²⁶ But these students could do little to challenge pervasive housing discrimination and their belittlement at the hands of some of their professors and colleagues. H. S. Murphy, one of the students who protested *The Birth of a Nation*, wrote to N.A.A.C.P. founder and scholar W. E. B. Du Bois to complain about the style sheet presented by a UW journalism professor. The sheet instructed students to capitalize all nationalities, but not “negro.” “When the instructor read that special item to the class on the morning it was issued and discussed,” Murphy told Du Bois, “there was great occasion for a coarse guffaw, showing how men at this great modern university are learning to think of the rights of the other fellow—EXCEPT when the other fellow happens to be a Negro.” He pointedly asked Du Bois not to use his name when publishing this information, as “prejudice here is already uncomfortable enough.”²⁷

Jewish students on campus in this era also faced housing discrimination and demeaning representations. Private rooming houses were certified by the university even if they practiced exclusionary renting. Above the yearbook entry for the one Jewish student organization, the yearbook's editors appended a drawing of hook-nosed men gesturing at bags of money. Non-Jewish fraternities formed secret dancing societies and held events off-campus in order to avoid having to attend dances with Jewish students at the newly established Memorial Union, where exclusion was not permitted.²⁸

Native Americans in this era were fully excluded from the student body, but they were omnipresent on campus in the form of demeaning stereotypes and ersatz ceremonies. In the early twentieth century, students gathered in huge numbers to pass the “Pipe of Peace,” a well-attended annual ceremony on Library Mall replete with mock-Indian dialect, regalia, and ritual. This ceremony and its iconography were so popular that they formed part of the original decorative features of the Memorial Union itself. But it would not be until 1946 that the first Native American student received a degree from the UW.²⁹

²⁵ “Dixie Punch and Southern Moss Are Features of Revue,” *Madison Capital Times*, May 10, 1924, p. 1.

²⁶ “Negroes in New Protest on ‘The Birth of a Nation,’” *Wisconsin State Journal*, Jan. 27, 1916; “Superior Court,” *Madison Capital Times*, Aug. 7, 1918. The Study Group is grateful to Harvey Long for this and other research.

²⁷ Letter, Harry Murphy to W.E.B. Du Bois, May 1, 1914, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers, University of Massachusetts-Amherst Archives.

²⁸ Messer-Kruse, “The Campus Klan”; Jonathan Z. S. Pollack, “Jewish Problems: Eastern and Western Jewish Identities in Conflict at the University of Wisconsin, 1919-1941,” *American Jewish History* 89, no. 2 (June 2001).

²⁹ Thanks to Aaron Bird Bear (School of Education) and Daniel Einstein (Facilities Planning & Management) for sharing their research into this history.

At the same time, the Memorial Union's refusal to sanction exclusion, like the campus movements in subsequent decades to challenge exclusionary renting, demonstrates that the "culture of intolerance" could be confronted, and that it did not govern every person's outlook or every corner of campus life. But exclusion was the inegalitarian will of the day's majority, and so far as we can tell, the university community, including the administration, faculty, and student leadership, did nothing to resist it. That is to say, exclusion does not seem to have been contrary to campus values in this era. In a bleak confirmation of this reality, one of the rare campus voices to speak out against the campus Klan (in the *Wisconsin Engineer* in 1923) conceded at the outset that "no one will quarrel seriously with any restrictions of race or creed that may be placed upon membership."³⁰ In this climate, the major challenge facing non-majority students was, to quote historian Jonathan Pollack, how to "endure."³¹

It might be comforting to think that the presence of Klan groups fostered such a culture, and that it disappeared with them, but our conclusion is that the presence of groups denominated "Ku Klux Klan" on campus constituted a symptom of this culture, not a cause. The Klan's ethos—that the United States was a nation of, by, and for white Protestants and that all others should accept their subordination or exclusion—found few open dissenters beyond those groups it sought to exclude or demean.

The Values We Strive to Maintain

We have been asked for advice as to how to acknowledge this history "in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain." We understand those values to begin with thoughtful inquiry guided by the university's commitment to "that fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found." We also understand those values to embrace equity and inclusion. The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Mission, as articulated by the Board of Regents in 1988, is to provide a learning environment that enables students "to realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical and human development." That statement explicitly and specifically includes "students from diverse social, economic and ethnic backgrounds." That Mission Statement concludes with the charge that the university "[e]mbody through its policies and programs, respect for, and commitment to, the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society." These values have recently been reiterated in the Institutional Statement on Diversity: "Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background - people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world."

How Other Institutions Have Acknowledged and Addressed Their Histories

³⁰ "The Klan," *Wisconsin Engineer* vol. 27, no. 5 (Feb., 1923), p. 88.

³¹ Pollack, "Jewish Problems," p. 163.

The UW is not the first institution to confront a painful history and to wrestle with how to acknowledge its legacies in light of present values. Over the past several decades, many universities have begun to explore the troubling aspects of their institutional pasts, sometimes at the behest of campus leadership and sometimes as a result of student campaigns. These investigations have sometimes produced heated and polarized responses, but this does not have to be the case. As President George W. Bush acknowledged in a 2003 speech on Senegal's Gorée Island, home to the infamous "door of no return" for African captives of the Atlantic slave trade, "My nation's journey toward justice has not been easy, and it is not over. The racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation. And many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times."³² Acknowledging the past is not in itself the answer to present troubles, but it is a necessary starting point for an understanding of how we reached our present circumstances and how we might transcend them.

At some universities, debate has centered on how to acknowledge and address institutional complicity in slavery and the slave trade. In 2003, a Brown University committee convened by President Ruth Simmons began exploring the institution's deep, early relationship to the Atlantic slave trade. That investigation included extensive historical investigation and opportunities for public comment; it yielded an detailed set of recommendations for acknowledging and studying this history, as well as a call for "high ethical standards in regard to investments and gifts," expanding opportunities at Brown for those disadvantaged by slavery and the slave trade, and the appointment of a committee to monitor implementation of the report's recommendations.³³ More recently, a Georgetown University body spent several years investigating and discussing that institution's historical relationship to slavery and the domestic slave trade, in particular the crucial role that the sale of several hundred slaves played in keeping the university afloat in the early nineteenth century. Here, the university sought out and engaged the descendants of those people the university sold, created memorials, and (as at Brown) committed itself to "invest in diversity" by creating or bolstering academic, outreach, and scholarship programs.³⁴ At both universities, the work of these projects continues.

These and other universities have confronted the related issue of campus facilities named after figures whose legacies have been called into question. The Yale University community struggled for many years over a residential college named after proslavery statesman and ideologue John C. Calhoun. Many western universities (as well as Northwestern University) have investigated the roles of their buildings' namesakes in massacres of Native Americans. In these cases, universities have established committees (including faculty with historical expertise, students, and sometimes other members of their campus community) to investigate and advise. Their reports often present a careful narrative of the history under discussion and seek to establish standards of proportionality. That is, they explore the individual's actions and words and assess how seriously these violated values now deemed central to the life of the university; they then assess these in relation to the positive contributions the subject made to the university

³² Quoted in *Report of the Working Group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation to the President of Georgetown University* (Washington, D.C., 2016), pp. 29-30.

³³ For the report and context, see <https://www.brown.edu/initiatives/slavery-and-justice/about/history>

³⁴ For the report and context, see <http://slavery.georgetown.edu/working-group/>

or to society. Princeton University, for example, debated whether Woodrow Wilson’s legacies with respect to the status and role of African Americans should prompt a renaming of its Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.³⁵ In these cases, the underlying question is often “what do we say about our values, to ourselves and to the wider world, when we honor (or continue to honor) this person in this way?”

In most of the institutional self-studies we have considered, the history under review concerns the actions of the university, or those it has chosen to honor, in the wider world. Our situation, we conclude, is rather different. Our review of the history suggests to us that the campus Klans were accepted (or at any rate broadly uncontroversial) in their era, and that their existence was not a cause of the university’s culture of exclusion and intolerance but rather a symptom of it. From this perspective, we are not facing precisely the same questions as the institutions described above. The central question facing us is not what the institution or its honored names did in the wider world, but how to acknowledge what the community did to its own members, and what implications that acknowledgement should have for campus life and priorities today.

Legacies: The Question of Names

As noted in our summary, this group received its charge in the wake of the protests and deadly violence in Charlottesville, Virginia in August, 2017, and at a time when many institutions were engaged in a reexamination of their own histories of institutional racism and exclusion. Specifically, the group was asked to ‘review documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities, and context of organizations that operated in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan.

We understand—indeed, we feel, deeply and personally—the shock and discomfort of learning that familiar campus spaces were in any way associated with the heinous name and history of the Ku Klux Klan. We insist that the history this connection represents must not be obscured or ignored but instead confronted and addressed. At the same time, we resist the impulse to resolve this sense of shock by purging the names from our campus. It may be that, after thoughtful community deliberation, the campus will find it desirable or necessary to change the names of some facilities. But our advice is that the university focus first on the broader, deeper lessons and legacies of the era of the Ku Klux Klan, and that we seize this moment to confront the legacies of the “culture of intolerance” in campus life today.

As we have argued, the history that the UW needs to acknowledge and address was not the aberrant work of a few bigots but a pervasive climate of racial and religious bigotry, casual and unexamined in its prevalence, in which exclusion and indignity were routine in the university’s daily life and unchallenged by the institution’s leaders. “Racism,” education researchers Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo explain, is often used as a shorthand for “individual acts of meanness committed by a few bad people.” That is, if we can point to the actions of a “few bad people,” we do not have to do the hard work of questioning and dismantling the “economic, political, social and institutional actions that perpetuate an unequal

³⁵ <https://www.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/documents/2017/08/Wilson-Committee-Report-Final.pdf>

distribution of privileges, resources and power” within our own institution.³⁶ Taking this caution to heart, we question whether renaming facilities alone, absent the systematic redirection of resources to effect long-term change, will address the history under review in any consequential way. We believe that to focus only on those within that culture of intolerance who identified themselves as Klansmen would be to sidestep the broad complicity of many of the era's students, faculty, and administrators in sustaining a hostile and demeaning campus environment. Were there evidence that these individuals in their roles as Klansmen were central to creating or maintaining this campus climate, and even more so were there any evidence they participated in acts of violence, our conclusions might have been different. Our review of this history has not produced any such evidence.

The legacies of the students who were campus Klansmen are sometimes complicated and mixed. As an example, at nineteen, Porter Butts was inducted into the first campus Klan. At twenty-three, he became the first Director of the Wisconsin Union. Under his direction the Wisconsin Union became a place where all members of the community were welcome, to the point where those who wanted to practice exclusion had to host their events elsewhere. In his long career in Madison and as a national leader in the organization of student unions, he promoted policies of non-discrimination, mutual understanding, and openness to debate and protest. That later work need not close the door on the question of whether the gallery in the Union should continue to bear his name, but it suggests the complexity of at least some of this history.

However the campus responds to this or other particular questions of names, we want our collective reckoning with this history to consist of a great deal more than the purging of unpleasant reminders. In our view, advice focused on the names of these facilities would provide a limited and unproductive form of healing for the wound this history represents. We are not therefore advising the renaming of any particular campus facilities, and we suggest that any focus on these questions follow rather than precede the work of substantial institutional change to address the legacies of this era.

This view guides our response to the argument that these were simply “people of their time.” It seems to us that to “appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain” requires something more than a pained expression and a shrug of the shoulders at the moral failings of a long-gone era. As our work proceeded, we turned our attention away from questions of individual culpability on the part of student Klan members and toward more troubling questions: why “Ku Klux Klan” was for the most part an uncontroversial or even prestigious name for an undergraduate organization; how exclusionary and demeaning behavior and representations persisted on the campus; how non-majority (that is, non-white and non-Protestant) students experienced and endured this climate; and finally, following the language of the Chancellor’s charge to us, what “legacies” of those organizations and their context have persisted.

We understand that some people may quarrel with our assessment and advice, feeling that we are taking inadequate account of these young men’s willful association with the Ku Klux

³⁶ Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo, *Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education*, second edition (New York: Teachers College Press, 2017)

Klan or even that we are whitewashing the university's history. This is not our purpose. Rather, we want the campus to acknowledge and respond to this history with a renewed awareness for the historic and contemporary challenges faced by underrepresented and minority students on our campus and with a renewed commitment of resources and energy to build a more equitable and inclusive campus community.

Legacies: The Challenges We Continue to Face

We recognize the many efforts, especially over the past 50 years, to transform the campus into one where all are welcome, where all members may (to quote the university's Mission Statement) "realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical and human development," and where the institution itself embodies "the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society." These changes have been driven by student demands and by the less visible but equally crucial work by students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Important milestones include the student activism of the 1960s and 1970s that led administrators to create the Department of Afro-American Studies and the units that became the programs in American Indian Studies, Chican@/Latin@ Studies, and more recently Asian-American Studies. The campus has undertaken a series of long-term plans to create a more representative and inclusive campus, including most recently "Affecting R.E.E.L. [Retain, Equip, Engage, Lead] Change." Through the Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement, it supports crucially important programs that directly address the challenges faced by students from underrepresented and historically disadvantaged groups. The 2016 Campus Climate Survey, and the recommendations offered by its Task Force, offer substantial and important data and recommendations for further improving equity and inclusion at UW.³⁷ We applaud these efforts and the energy and sincerity that have animated them.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that the legacy of previous efforts has been mixed and uneven. Incremental progress has been made in diversity and inclusion, but the campus lags stubbornly behind its peers in the recruitment and retention of students and faculty from underrepresented groups. Enrollment of students from underrepresented groups rose slightly over the last decade but stands at less than 10% of the campus population. The make-up of the student body also poorly reflects the state of Wisconsin's diversity. American Indians compose 1.1% of the state's population, but as of Fall, 2016 only 95 students identified themselves as members of one of Wisconsin's twelve Indian nations. Wisconsin ranks dead last in the Big Ten in the percentage of African American students; although African Americans constitute 6.6% of the state's residents, only 3% of the student body identifying as African American.³⁸ Comparisons over time are complicated by changing guidelines for self-identification, but enrollment of African American undergraduates does not appear to have grown substantially from 2008 to 2015, though overall minority enrollment rose slightly (from

³⁷ The survey report, including analysis and recommendations, is available at http://diversity.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/CCSTF_FullReport_2017_11_01-3.pdf

³⁸ In 2008, federal guidelines allowed students to indicate multiple race/ethnic identities. The figure of 3% includes both students who self-identified as African American and those who included that as one element of a multi-racial self-identification.

14.2% to 16.1%) over the period 2006-2015. Just over 2% of faculty—55 in 2016—identify as African American.³⁹ Among peers, Wisconsin also ranks in the bottom half for the percentage of students identifying as Asian, Hispanic, and International.⁴⁰

The Campus Climate Survey also suggests that students from underrepresented and non-majority groups continue to feel less welcome and are less likely to feel that this is also their campus. The breakdown of responses to the survey's questions on how often students feel welcome or respected, or how often they feel like they belong, show troubling disparities between white students and students of color. Three quarters of white students generally feel they belong here, while only half of students of color do; for African American students that proportion drops to one-third. Eighty-three percent of white students (and 80% of all students) report feeling generally respected; only about half of African American students and U.S. students of Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern descent generally feel this way.⁴¹ There are many other troubling aspects of the survey results, particularly with regard to the campus experience of students identifying as Trans/Non-binary, as first-generation college students, and as Muslims or Buddhists. The aggregate disparities in responses by other groupings are less dramatic but still statistically significant. Overall, students intuit a gap between the UW's values and its climate: while nearly three quarters of students surveyed felt it was important the university have a strong commitment to diversity, only 50% felt that it actually did; among students of color, that number fell to one-third. UW-Madison still has much work to do to create an atmosphere that genuinely welcomes and nurtures a diverse array of students.⁴² These findings should trouble anyone who values diversity and inclusion as core elements of the UW's mission and work.

Recent incidents of hate and bias have shown just how unwelcoming campus can be, with serious effects both on the campus community and on its reputation in the wider world. In the Fall of 2016, for instance, an individual attending a football game at Camp Randall Stadium wore a costume depicting then President Barack Obama that featured a noose wrapped around his neck. The Campus Climate Survey suggests that in general Jewish students (13% of the undergraduate population, by one count) no longer feel marginal to campus life, but anti-Semitism persists on campus. For example, in March of 2016, racist and anti-Semitic notes were posted on and slipped under a student resident's door. For Native American students, the establishment of the American Indian Student & Cultural Center has been an important step forward, but overall enrollment has shrunk, and the legacies of earlier eras are painfully present. The fire circle outside the DeJope Residence Hall has been the site of two separate acts of bigotry: in March of 2016, residents yelled mock "war cries" at a Ho-Chunk elder who was performing a healing ceremony at the fire circle, and vandals defaced the site with spray paint in October of 2017. Few non-Native members of our community even know on whose ancestral lands the campus now stands.

³⁹ Data: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/WI>; <https://apir.wisc.edu/data-digest/>

⁴⁰ Data: http://www.studentsreview.com/big_ten_compare.html

⁴¹ By "generally," we mean the sum of the responses "extremely" and "very."

⁴² Campus Climate Survey, data tables C1B, C1C.

Although campus officials denounced these events, including in a notably frank address via YouTube from Chief Diversity Officer Patrick J. Sims, such grotesque incidents have a profoundly negative impact for students who already feel marginalized and unwelcome.⁴³ Furthermore, the cumulative significance of these incidents to students and faculty of color who might consider making the UW Madison their home should not be underestimated.

One could argue that, as in the 1920s, we face a pervasive national culture of intolerance. The FBI reported that 2016 saw the highest number of reported hate and bias crimes nationwide over a 5-year period. The Anti-Defamation League reports that during the first nine months of 2017, anti-Semitic assaults and vandalism increased by 67 percent nationally (1299 recorded incidents) over all of 2016 (779 recorded incidents). The Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks the activities of groups “that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics,” reports nine different “hate” groups operating in Wisconsin. The campus is in no way responsible for creating this dire situation. But the fact that events on campus mirror developments in the broader society does not mean that they are not also our problem.

⁴³ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMBQUzwnCL0&feature=youtu.be>

III: ADVICE

Upholding “the values we strive to maintain”

Whose campus is this? Our values and our hopes say “all of ours,” but both historical and present experience provoke a variety of responses, many of them less reassuring. We aspire to share a campus where all can flourish and contribute to the community. We understand that this requires a broadly shared commitment by many people, in residence halls, offices, and departments as well as in Bascom Hall, and we applaud those groups now actively working to undo the persistent legacies of the culture of intolerance.

We advise the Chancellor to help the university acknowledge and learn from its past; we also advise her to look to the future with the lessons and legacies of that past in mind. We advise a searching examination of the struggles many communities have faced in becoming full and equal members of this community, and the efforts they and their allies have undertaken to make UW a place where everyone can truly belong. We advise commitments to units, programs, and policies that explicitly seek to create a campus where these struggles are no longer so necessary. **To be the community we aspire to be, to embody the values we strive to maintain, we must match our rhetoric with resources.** Resources will not solve all of the problems of disparity and disparagement that plague our community, but they will create possibilities. They also signal the campus’s commitments and values, both to students who already feel the campus to be their place and to those who do not. In that spirit, we respond to the Chancellor’s request for advice with the following specific recommendations.

1. Recover and acknowledge the history of exclusion on this campus, especially through the voices of those who experienced and resisted it.

While it is important to understand and confront the history represented by this “culture of intolerance,” it is crucial to remember that UW has other histories as well. Among the least understood of these, our review suggests, is the history of those who, though pressed to the margins of campus life, demanded a full and equal place in it. Long before the university committed itself to its present values of inclusiveness, respect, and equity, members of our community embodied those values in the face of hostility and derision. Their history deserves a prominent place in our present.

We propose a project to recover the voices of campus community members, in the era of the Klan and since, who struggled and endured in a climate of hostility, and who sought to change it. Their stories will bring to light moments in the university’s past that will dismay us, but their efforts, successful or not, will provide lessons, contexts, and reminders for our efforts today. Some of those voices have begun to be recovered already, in scholarship cited here and in research underway in various quarters of the campus.⁴⁴ Much remains to be done. The fruits of this research should occupy a prominent place in the campus’s self-understanding and self-representation and be acknowledged on its physical landscape.

⁴⁴ For example, see the published work of Jonathan Pollack, cited above, and the work of researchers named elsewhere in this document.

We would not be the first university to undertake such a project. While most of the other universities whose self-studies we considered fit the models described above, two of our peers have engaged in more sustained recovery and discussion of their communities' difficult pasts. At the University of Michigan, the chancellor convened a colloquium on The Future University Community and underwrote a related art exhibit.⁴⁵ These projects asked how groups had been excluded or marginalized in the university's past, and what role diversity would play in the university's future. In a related undertaking, Rutgers–New Brunswick commissioned the Scarlet and Black Project on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Populations in Rutgers History.⁴⁶ This committee was “charged with seeking out the untold story of disadvantaged populations in the university's history and recommending how Rutgers can best acknowledge their influence.” Through research in university and other archives, that project has produced a volume on the institution's early decades and recovered rich histories of the role slave labor and Indian dispossession played in its founding and development. The project's work continues. These models might not precisely fit our needs, but they represent two rich and thoughtful approaches to histories similar to ours.

However the University of Wisconsin-Madison proceeds in this area, however it chooses to research and publicly present its history, we feel strongly that any marker or display related to the history under review would be incomplete if it focused primarily on the activities of the campus Klans or other perpetrators of campus intolerance. Instead, any such exhibit or display should focus on the experiences, words, and achievements of those who were marginalized or excluded, and those who struggled to create a more just and inclusive university, whether or not their efforts immediately bore fruit. They represent a past very much worth recovering and remembering, and one that can help show us the way forward.

2. Recommit the university's resources to a more inclusive present.

Our advice in this area speaks specifically to pressing campus needs—areas in which our practice is not fully aligned with our values, and in which thoughtful, sustained commitment of resources may yield powerful, positive results.

A: Reinvigorate Academic Programs

In 2006, Brown University's Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice concluded that “[u]niversities express their priorities first and foremost in their selection of fields of study. We believe that Brown, by virtue of its history, has a special opportunity and obligation to foster research and teaching on the issues broached in this report.”⁴⁷ We echo this conclusion and recommendation. Since the founding of the Department of Afro-American Studies in 1970, departments and programs focusing on the experiences of many groups have broadened and enriched the academic and cultural life of the university. These programs have proven track records of mentoring and supporting students from underrepresented groups, while simultaneously exploring a wide array of experiences and cultures for the benefit of all members

⁴⁵ <https://futureuniversitycommunity.umichsites.org/stumbling-blocks/>

⁴⁶ <https://scarletandblack.rutgers.edu/>

⁴⁷ *Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice*, pp. 83-87. <https://www.brown.edu/initiatives/slavery-and-justice/about/history>

of the campus community, across its schools and colleges. Indeed, these four units shoulder much of the burden of the campus's Ethnic Studies Requirement.

Today, however, these units—the Department of Afro-American Studies and the Programs in American Indian Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chican@ and Latin@ Studies—face challenging futures. Several lack adequate faculty staffing, which limits students' ability to learn about these crucial aspects of American society, culture, and history. Support for these departments and programs should be increased rather than diminished, in particular through faculty lines and funding for partner hires as well as additional funds for teaching and research assistants and short-term staffing. The UW should support these units by authorizing each one to search for and hire a faculty member in its area of most pressing need.

B: Study and Improve Recruitment and Retention

Beyond these units, we want to see measurable improvements, compared to our public peer institutions, in the enrollment and graduation rates for students of color, and in our recruitment and retention of faculty from underrepresented groups. To that end, this committee underscores the recommendations of the 2016 Campus Climate Survey Task Force and specifically urges increased funding for the high-impact programs housed in the office of the Vice Provost for Diversity and Climate.⁴⁸ We also urge the creation of a study group to investigate successful retention strategies. For example, exit interviews with faculty of color who leave the institution in conjunction with interviews of tenured faculty of color could shed light on reasons why some stay and others leave. It is not enough to say we will recruit and retain students and faculty of color; we must have specific, well-formulated, and adequately funded mechanisms for doing so.

C: Increase Fellowship Opportunities

The program generally known as Advanced Opportunity Fellows (AOF) has played an important role in recruiting students from underrepresented groups, including first-generation college students, into graduate programs. Despite its importance, this program is underfunded. The university should substantially increase the resources available to this program, with particular attention to units (including but not limited to those named above) with significant numbers of eligible applicants and with track records of success in recruitment and retention. Increasing the number of AOF offers could immediately increase the recruitment and retention of students of color, first-generation students, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, increasing their presence in classrooms and laboratories across the campus, and ultimately in the broadest array of fields and professions.

The UW was an unfriendly place for many members of its community not even a century ago. We still have a long way to go. It is up to us as a community to confront the legacies of that era, to remember the people who stood against it, and to commit ourselves to a different future—one that consciously strives to make real “the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society.” We believe that these recommendations, pursued vigorously from the

⁴⁸ For more information, see <https://diversity.wisc.edu/about-3/pipeline-programs-services/>

Chancellor's office and embraced by the campus as a whole, can help move us toward the university we aspire to be.

Attachment #1: Chancellor's Charge



CHANCELLOR'S CHARGE TO AD-HOC STUDY GROUP

EACH MEMBER OF THE AD-HOC STUDY GROUP IS ASKED TO:

- Review documents and other historical information related to the creation, activities and context of student organizations that operated on campus in and around the 1920s and that were named after or otherwise affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan;
- Evaluate the actions and legacies of those organizations and advise how the campus can appropriately acknowledge this history in light of the values the campus currently strives to maintain.

Attachment #2: Study Group Members

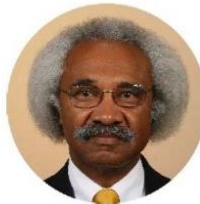


AD-HOC STUDY GROUP MEMBERS



CO-CHAIR

Stephen Kantrowitz is Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor of History. He has taught at UW-Madison since 1995. His publications include *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* and *More Than Freedom: Fighting for Black Citizenship in a White Republic, 1829-1889*.



CO-CHAIR

Floyd Rose founded and operates the Framework for Opportunity Convergence and the Utilization of Sustainable Solutions (FOCUSS), Supplier Information Data Assistant Tool Processes (SIDAT) and CCF Properties. In addition, he serves as the President of the nonprofits, the 100 Black Men of Madison and the Consortium for the Educational Development of Economically Disadvantaged Students (CEDEDS). Dr. Rose earned an AA from Black Hawk College, a B.S. from Illinois State University, a M.S. from the Western Illinois University and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa.



Sam Alhadeff is a Master's Candidate in International Public Affairs. Sam is the Founder of the Alexander Hamilton Society, where he still serves as President Emeritus, and Founder and Editor-in-Chief of the Wisconsin International Review, a student-run magazine focused on foreign policy and international relations. Sam volunteers at multiple places on campus and hopes to run for elected office one day.



Christy Clark-Pujara is an Associate Professor of History in the Department of Afro-American Studies. Her research focuses on the experiences of black people in small towns and cities in northern and Midwestern colonies and states in British and French North America from the late 17th century through the American Civil War. She is the author of *Dark Work: The Business of Slavery in Rhode Island* (NYU Press, 2016); her current book project *Black on the Wisconsin Frontier: From Slavery to Suffrage, 1725-1868* examines how the practice of race-based slavery, black settlement, and debates over abolition and black rights shaped white-black race relations in the Midwest.



Roberta Gassman is a Senior Fellow teaching macro practice to advanced graduate students at the UW-Madison School of Social Work and has lived in Madison since coming to UW-Madison from Evanston, Illinois in 1966. Previously she served in President Obama's administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training in the U.S. Department of Labor and as Wisconsin's longest serving Secretary of Workforce Development in the cabinet of Governor Jim Doyle. She earned her B.A with distinction in social work and her M.S.S.W. from the UW and is active in the community serving on the boards of the Madison Community Foundation, United Way of Dane County, Edgewood College, Overture Center for the Arts, and the School of Social Work Board of Visitors.



Heidi Lang is the Assistant Director for the Program and Leadership Development Department at the Wisconsin Union. She has served in the role since Fall of 2016 but has been a member of the department since 2003. Heidi currently serves as an ex-officio board member of Union Council, Wisconsin Union's governing board. Heidi received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Interpersonal Communications from Western Michigan University, her Master's degree in Higher Education Administration from North Carolina State, and is currently pursuing an Educational Doctorate degree with the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse in Student Affairs Administration.



Shawn Peters is a Senior Lecturer in the Integrated Liberal Studies (ILS) Program as well as an Instructional Specialist in the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Educational Achievement (DDEEA). He is an American historian by training, and his fifth book will be published in spring, 2018, by the University of Minnesota Press.



Nathan Royko Maurer is a life-long Madison resident and has worked at the University of Wisconsin- Madison since 1998 in a variety of different Information Technology roles. He currently manages enterprise campus data centers at the Division of Information Technology. He also volunteers as a co-facilitator with the UW Leadership Institute and is a community activist involving himself with issues of police accountability and social justice.



Margaret Tennesen is the Deputy Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning and Management (FP&M) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Since 2014 she has worked closely with the Associate Vice Chancellor to lead and manage a full-spectrum facilities management division in support of the academic mission of a Big 10 research university. Margaret previously served as the Assistant Director for Administration at the Wisconsin Union where she was responsible for budget development and reporting, financial services, human resources and marketing and communications for a major campus auxiliary. Margaret began her UW career as a program advisor to the Wisconsin Union Directorate student programming board.

Catherine Reiland from the Office of the Provost is coordinating logistics and other support for the Ad-Hoc Study Group. Contact info: creiland@wisc.edu / 608-262-0380

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