



## **Graduate Student Government Executive Board Proposal for the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council**

As the Graduate Student Government (GSG) Executive Board, we propose the following new goal for the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council: to investigate and subsequently address the history of race and racism, white supremacy, civil rights violations, and contributions to society at the University of Southern California. When the task force was initially created in 2015, it was created with hopes of strengthening USC's "bold commitment to diversity and inclusion" and to "re-commit to awareness and action."<sup>1</sup> In the last couple of years the task force has worked with nineteen different units to provide multiple rounds of feedback on twenty three diversity plans, an ambitious task that was completed in Spring of 2018. At this juncture it seems appropriate to reimagine future directions for this working group. The proposed new focus for the task force, grappling with and addressing the history of USC, is an integral part of the task force's original goal to foster a more inclusive and diverse campus environment.

We believe that it is of the utmost importance for USC to convene a task force to address historical issues of race and inequality because our community and, moreover, our nation must face our shared histories of discrimination in order to move forward towards a more equitable future.

USC has had a complex and often fraught relationship with race and racism.<sup>2</sup> We hope to use the task force to address many aspects of this history by conducting historical research about USC, exploring opportunities for reparations, and recommending steps to further share history and reconcile with USC's history.

Several of USC's elite peer institutions, such as Harvard, Georgetown, and Yale, have released reports addressing historical connections to enslavement and contemporary issues of race and inequality (see: [Appendix I](#)). As such, we propose that USC follow the general model pioneered by other institutions, which includes a university sanctioned task force that researches and reports on complex histories of race and civil rights violations, and then proposes steps towards reconciliation.

Additionally, many of our peer institutions, such as Duke, Georgetown, and Yale, have made the decision to remove statues and monuments from their campuses, along with renaming buildings and residence halls that have a connection to histories of racism and white supremacy in the United States (see: [Appendix II](#)).

We hope that USC will not only follow the lead of our peer institutions, but also that of the City of Los Angeles and the State of California. On Tuesday, August 7th, 2018 the LA County Board of Supervisors

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<sup>1</sup> "Access and Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion,"

<https://www.provost.usc.edu/access-and-opportunity-diversity-and-inclusion/>

<sup>2</sup> "Ugly Outtakes from USC History,"

<https://uscundercurrent.wordpress.com/2011/08/28/ugly-outtakes-from-usc-history/>; James W. Johnson, *The Black Bruins*, 95, <https://books.google.com>



officially apologized to the women who were forcefully sterilized at LA County USC Medical Center in the 1960s and 70s.<sup>3</sup> The Board of Supervisors also expressed their support for California Senate Bill 1190 Eugenics Sterilization Compensation Program.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, in order to address the history of race, racism, and civil rights violations, we propose that the Diversity and Inclusion Council do the following:

1. Conduct historical research about USC's relationship with race, including USC's involvement with the following:
  - a. Forced sterilization at (USC) LA County Hospital<sup>5</sup>
  - b. USC's role in Japanese internment<sup>6</sup>
  - c. Von KleinSmid's connection to the eugenics movement<sup>7</sup>
  - d. The background of the name Traveler<sup>8</sup>
2. Explore opportunities for appropriate changes and reparations, perhaps reconcile the former historical actions by:
  - a. Acknowledging and apologizing to impacted minority populations (for example, the women who were forcefully sterilized at LA County USC Medical Center and those who were sent to internment camps during their college careers) and their descendents by offering various forms of reparations including honorary degrees, financial compensation, and long-term institutional support
  - b. Including Von KleinSmid's eugenics work and unsavory history in the USC website about past presidents, and removing the Von KleinSmid name from any and all university-related structures
  - c. Renaming campus monuments that are connected to USC's fraught relationship with race, and removing or re-labeling their existing plaques
3. Recommend action items to further share history and reconcile with USC's history, perhaps:

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<sup>3</sup> "LA County Apologizes to Survivors of Coerced Sterilizations Four Decades Later," <https://californialatinas.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/LA-County-Apologizes-to-Survivors-of-Coerced-Sterilizations-Four-Decades-Later.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> "SB-1190 Eugenics Sterilization Compensation Program," [https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180SB1190](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB1190)

<sup>5</sup> Alexandra Minna Stern, "Sterilized in the Name of Public Health: Race Immigration and Reproductive Control in Modern California" <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1449330/>; Renee Tajima-Peña, *No Más Bebés* <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/no-mas-bebes/>; Erick Galindo, "'Shameful' Chapter of Los Angeles History"

<http://www.lataco.com/shameful-chapter-of-los-angeles-history-county-this-week-apologizes-for-forced-sterilizations-of-women-1968-1974/>

<sup>6</sup> "After 70-year wait, Japanese Americans to get USC Degrees," <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2012/03/japanese-american-usc-degree-internment.html>

<sup>7</sup> Terry Nguyen, "Untold History: How Rufus von KleinSmid Supported the Eugenics Movement at USC," <https://dailytrojan.com/2017/08/23/untold-history-rufus-von-kleinsmid-supported-eugenics-movement-usc/>; Lida Dianti, "In Light of Its Unsavory History, Rename Von KleinSmid Center," <https://dailytrojan.com/2016/01/26/in-light-of-its-unsavory-history-rename-von-kleinsmid-center/>

<sup>8</sup> Nathan Fenno, "Traveler, USC's mascot, comes under scrutiny for having a name similar to Robert E. Lee's Horse," <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-usc-traveler-20170818-story.html>



- a. Creating an official report to be published on the USC website that outlines all of USC's history, including the wrongs that USC has done in the past, and steps USC is taking now to reconcile this history
- b. Erecting new statues and monuments or renaming existing buildings on campus in order to acknowledge and celebrate the diverse and courageous individuals affected by USC's past actions and to better reflect USC's current student population

We believe that the act of reconciliation involves not only an acknowledgement or apology, but also tangible action steps. USC can do more to address its past and further cultivate a campus space that is inclusive and accepting of all. To catch up to our peer institutions, we must take appropriate action and continue to change and grow according to the needs of our diverse students, faculty, and staff.

Thank you for considering our proposal. We hope that the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council will accept these tasks and improve our campus for current and future Trojans.

**Graduate Student Government Executive Board 2018-2019**

**Appendix I - Past and Existing Reports or Working Groups Regarding Historical Relationships with Race and Inequality at Peer Institutions**

<b>University</b>	<b>Working Group or Task Force</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Source</b>
Brown University	University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice	2003-2006	<a href="https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/report/">https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/report/</a>
Clemson	University task force on the History of Clemson	2015-2016	<a href="https://www.clemson.edu/about/history/taskforce/">https://www.clemson.edu/about/history/taskforce/</a>
Columbia University	University funded research project, “Columbia University and Slavery”	2015-2017	<a href="https://columbiaandslavery.columbia.edu">https://columbiaandslavery.columbia.edu</a>
Dalhousie	University initiated scholarly panel	2017	<a href="https://www.dal.ca/news/2017/01/19/considering-lord-dalhousie-s-legacy-on-race.html">https://www.dal.ca/news/2017/01/19/considering-lord-dalhousie-s-legacy-on-race.html</a>
Emory	Faculty-led research initiative, “Transforming Community Project”	2006-2011	<a href="http://emoryhistory.emory.edu/issues/discrimination/slavery/index.html">http://emoryhistory.emory.edu/issues/discrimination/slavery/index.html</a>
Furman	University Task Force on Slavery and Justice	2017-2018	<a href="https://www.furman.edu/about-furman/history/task-force-on-slavery-and-justice/">https://www.furman.edu/about-furman/history/task-force-on-slavery-and-justice/</a>
Georgetown	University convened Working Group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation	2015-2018	<a href="http://slavery.georgetown.edu/">http://slavery.georgetown.edu/</a>
George Mason	University funded research project, “The Enslaved Children of George Mason”	2017-2018	<a href="https://ecgm.omeka.net">https://ecgm.omeka.net</a>
Harvard	Faculty Committee on Harvard and Slavery	2016-2017	<a href="https://www.harvard.edu/slavery">https://www.harvard.edu/slavery</a>
Hollins	University committee, “Hollins Heritage Committee”	2017-2018	<a href="https://hhc.press.hollins.edu">https://hhc.press.hollins.edu</a>

King's College	University funded research project, "Kings & Slavery: A Scholarly Inquiry"	2018-2019	<a href="https://ukings.ca/administration/public-documents/slavery-scholarly-inquiry/">https://ukings.ca/administration/public-documents/slavery-scholarly-inquiry/</a>
Princeton	University funded research project, "The Princeton & Slavery Project"	2013-2017	<a href="https://slavery.princeton.edu">https://slavery.princeton.edu</a>
Richmond	University funded research project, "Race & Racism at the University of Richmond"	2015-2018	<a href="https://memory.richmond.edu">https://memory.richmond.edu</a>
Rutgers	University funded research project, "Scarlet and Black" (formerly entitled "The Committee on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Populations in Rutgers History")	2015-2018	<a href="https://scarletandblack.rutgers.edu">https://scarletandblack.rutgers.edu</a>
Salem	University Committee on the History of Salem Academy and College	2017-2018	<a href="https://www.salemacademyandcollege.org/history-committee">https://www.salemacademyandcollege.org/history-committee</a>
Sweet Briar	University funded research project, "African American Heritage at Sweet Briar" (part of the Tusculum Institute)	2001-2017	<a href="http://tusculum.sbc.edu/africanamericans/default.shtml">http://tusculum.sbc.edu/africanamericans/default.shtml</a>
University of Mississippi	University funded research project, "University of Mississippi Slavery Research Group"	2013-2016	<a href="http://slaveryresearchgroup.olemiss.edu">http://slaveryresearchgroup.olemiss.edu</a>
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill	Chancellor's Task Force on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill History	2015-2018	<a href="http://historytaskforce.unc.edu">http://historytaskforce.unc.edu</a>
University of Virginia	President's Commission on Slavery and the University	2013-2018	<a href="http://slavery.virginia.edu">http://slavery.virginia.edu</a>
Washington & Lee	University Commission on Institution History and	2013-2017	<a href="https://www.wlu.edu/presidents-office/issues-and-initiatives/commission-on-instit">https://www.wlu.edu/presidents-office/issues-and-initiatives/commission-on-instit</a>

	Community and a Working Group on African Americans at Washington & Lee		<a href="https://www.wlu.edu/presidents-office/issues-and-initiatives/timeline-of-african-americans-at-wandl">utional-history-and-community https://www.wlu.edu/presidents-office/issues-and-initiatives/timeline-of-african-americans-at-wandl</a>
William & Mary	University funded research project, “The Lemon Project: A Journey of Reconciliation”	2009-2018	<a href="https://www.wm.edu/sites/lemonproject/">https://www.wm.edu/sites/lemonproject/</a>
Yale	University funded research project, “Yale, Slavery, & Abolition”	2001	<a href="http://www.yaleslavery.org/Resources/su-mm.html">http://www.yaleslavery.org/Resources/su-mm.html</a>

## Appendix II - Reconciliatory Actions Taken by Peer Institutions

University	Action Taken	Year	Source
Duke University	Removed a statue of Robert E. Lee	2017	<a href="https://today.duke.edu/2017/08/duke-removes-robert-e-lee-statue-chapel-entrance">https://today.duke.edu/2017/08/duke-removes-robert-e-lee-statue-chapel-entrance</a>
Florida State University	Moved a statue of Francis Eppes VII, founder of FSU and slave owner, from the front gates and removed the name B.K. Roberts, a pro-segregation Supreme Court justice, from the law school building	2018	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/18/us/florida-state-statue-relocated-trnd/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/18/us/florida-state-statue-relocated-trnd/index.html</a>
Georgetown University	Renamed two buildings that were named after former Georgetown presidents who were slave owners, Mulledy and McSherry. (Part of the Working Group of Slavery, Memory and Reconciliation) Buildings are now named Freedom and Remembrance Hall.	2015	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/georgetown-university-to-rename-two-buildings-that-reflect-schools-ties-to-slavery/2015/11/15/e36edd32-8bb7-11e5-acff-673ae92ddd2b_story.html?utm_term=.1b8de8f763cc">https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/georgetown-university-to-rename-two-buildings-that-reflect-schools-ties-to-slavery/2015/11/15/e36edd32-8bb7-11e5-acff-673ae92ddd2b_story.html?utm_term=.1b8de8f763cc</a>
University of Georgia	Removed a portrait of Robert E. Lee from campus	2017	<a href="https://www.redandblack.com/uganews/demosthenian-removes-portrait-of-robert-e-lee-following-debate/article_65688354-8956-11e7-9851-ff8d069d37a7.html">https://www.redandblack.com/uganews/demosthenian-removes-portrait-of-robert-e-lee-following-debate/article_65688354-8956-11e7-9851-ff8d069d37a7.html</a>
University of Louisville	Removed Confederate monument from campus	2016	<a href="https://louisville.edu/sustainability/news/uofl-removes-confederate-monument">https://louisville.edu/sustainability/news/uofl-removes-confederate-monument</a>
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill	Removed the name of William Laurence Saunders, a Confederate soldier and Ku Klux Klan leader, from a university building, renaming it Carolina Hall	2015	<a href="https://carolinahallstory.unc.edu/">https://carolinahallstory.unc.edu/</a>

University of Texas at Austin	Removed a total of five Confederate statues from campus	2015-2017	<a href="https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/06/27/judge-upholds-removal-confederate-statues-university-texas">https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/06/27/judge-upholds-removal-confederate-statues-university-texas</a>
University of Virginia	Removed Confederate plaques from campus	2017	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/u-va-board-votes-to-remove-confederate-plaques-ban-open-flames/2017/09/15/67414370-9a4d-11e7-b569-3360011663b4_story.html?utm_term=.cc557960105f">https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/u-va-board-votes-to-remove-confederate-plaques-ban-open-flames/2017/09/15/67414370-9a4d-11e7-b569-3360011663b4_story.html?utm_term=.cc557960105f</a>
Vanderbilt University	Renamed a campus building from Confederate Memorial Hall to Memorial Hall	2016	<a href="https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2016/08/15/vanderbilt-will-remove-confederate-inscription-from-residence-hall/">https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2016/08/15/vanderbilt-will-remove-confederate-inscription-from-residence-hall/</a>
Yale University	Renamed a college from Calhoun College, named after white supremacist John C. Calhoun, to Grace Murray Hopper College	2017	<a href="https://news.yale.edu/2017/02/11/yale-change-calhoun-college-s-name-honor-grace-murray-hopper-0">https://news.yale.edu/2017/02/11/yale-change-calhoun-college-s-name-honor-grace-murray-hopper-0</a>