THE EVOLVEMENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
A PUBLIC FLAGSHIP ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

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“Cheta ikele Chineke gi nihe ọma nile ọ na emere gi mba nine.” This quotation in Ibo language was hammered during our daily prayers on my siblings and I by our late parents Benedict & Esther when we were growing up in Nigerian’s eastern region. Translated, “Remember to give thanks to your God for all the good things that he has been bestowing on you all the time.” Therefore, I am very grateful to God for his guidance and protection throughout the past seven years of this doctoral program that did provide many individuals in my path that made the attainment of this degree possible. Especially with sincerity and gratitude, I express a big thank to my advisor, Dr. Lynda A. Beltz who provided reassuring words and excellent guidance, along with Dr. Kristal M. Clemons, who refocused my methodology choice, offering better clarity, and direction. I am very grateful for their professionalism. I also express my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Alane K. Shanks, one of my committee members. I am equally very thankful to Dr. Yvonne Anthony, who served as my personal critic and editor and patently reviewed and critiqued every facet of my dissertation, from inception to completion. I am very grateful for her steadfastness and devotion. I will be eternally grateful. I also thank Dr. Asopuru Okemgbo, a childhood friend, who kept me on track throughout the years of this doctoral course work, and also thank you to Florence Craig for reading and correcting all of my papers, as my initial reader and editor throughout the years in this program. I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Chiso Ndukwe-Okafor, a professional colleague who initiated my interest in this doctorate program and a course-mate.

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Dedication

In Memory

Parents

Benedict Ndimako Okoli

Esther Nwaigbe Okoli (nee Obi)

Late Siblings

Chinyere Okoli

Ijema Iloduba (Nee Okoli)

Ozioma Okoli

Chukwuma Okoli
Abstract

Affirmative action in college admissions has been losing support in the United States for some time. New “colorblind” methods are gaining ground among the proliferation of lawsuits and political initiatives regarding race in college admissions. A key issue among proponents and opponents in the public debate is whether or not the educational value of diversity is sufficiently compelling to justify considerations of race as a factor in deciding whom to admit to colleges and universities, or whether diversity can be achieved by admitting lower income students, without considering race. Many public and private universities adopted a diversity rationale as their primary justification for promoting affirmative action programs. Nowhere can the issue of diversity be seen more clearly as a contentious, heated, and national debate than among the multi-campus state university systems.

In the late 1990s, the increasingly hostile legal environment and string of legal challenges to race-sensitive admissions influenced University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst) to rethink its diversity strategy. In March 1999, the university announced a revised admissions process to give consideration to an applicant’s income and geography, and to de-emphasize considerations of race. Since that time, minimal research literature examined the impact of UMass Amherst’s revamped admission strategies, which substitutes class for race as regards minority enrollment.

This case study focuses on the evolution of affirmative action programs at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, a distinguished flagship academic institution in New England. It describes how it evolved and where it stands today (2016). A qualitative case study, using document analysis as the assessment method on affirmative
action policies and procedures at UMass Amherst, was performed. Critical Race Theory (CRT) was the theoretical framework applied to the study.

Findings show that since the 1960s and early 1970s, the university designed and implemented a long array of initiatives to improve the diversity climate for students, faculty, and staff. The firm commitment of various Chancellors, supporting the values of diversity and inclusion is notable, including the work done by various Diversity Committees. During the period 1999-2016, there still remained an amount of minority student underrepresentation, particularly African-American students, which raises questions about the university’s choice of approaches and strategies throughout the years, as well as its effectiveness in resolving issues of campus diversity and inclusion. Students still view the work of the university administration as insufficient practices and policies when it comes to affirmative action.

The study concludes that banning race-based admission policies does have a negative enrollment effect particularly on African-American students. Greater efforts are still needed to increase access and opportunity for African-American students. It is noted that although UMass Amherst eliminated race from its admission policies, enrollment for Asian students increased by 83% from fall 1996 (1,113) to fall 2015 (2,040). Similarly, enrollment for Hispanic/Latino students increased by 54% from fall 1996 (779) to fall 2015 (1,203).

Despite the benefits of diverse student cohorts documented in the literature, the underrepresentation of African-American students still exists. Patterns of inequitable distribution of access to African-American students constituted a considerable challenge to UMass Amherst. Future studies are encouraged to identify other organizational and
programmatic factors that promote a compelling interest of diversity within flagship universities.

Keywords: Affirmative action, flagship universities, diversity, inclusion, race, college/university admissions, Critical Race Theory, race-neutral policies, minority student enrollment, African-American students, New England universities
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Affirmative action in college admissions has been losing support in the United States for some time (Strauss, 2014). New “colorblind” methods are gaining ground among a proliferation of lawsuits and political initiatives regarding race in college admissions (Strauss, 2014; Howell, 2010). A key issue among proponents and opponents in the public debate is whether or not the educational value of diversity is sufficiently compelling to justify consideration of race as a factor in deciding whom to admit to colleges and universities, or whether diversity can be achieved by admitting lower income students, without considering race. Many public and private universities across the country have adopted the diversity rationale as their primary justification for promoting affirmative action programs. The prominent argument in support of affirmative action admission policies has been that racial diversity strengthens the quality of education offered to students (Camargo, Stinebrickner & Stinebrickner, 2007). Moreover, study results show that diversity does make a positive difference in a student’s cognitive and personal development by stimulating critical thinking (American Council on Education and American Association of University Professors, 2000) and by broadening students’ perspectives (Maruyama & Moreno, 2000), but it is neither automatic nor uniform among institutions of higher education (Orfield, 2001).

Nowhere can the issue of diversity be seen more clearly as a contentious, heated, and national debate than among the multi-campus state university systems, particularly, the flagship academic institutions, as the first public research universities to be established in each state are called (Mintz, 2014). A state’s flagship university is typically research-intensive, grants doctoral degrees, and competes in NCAA Division I athletics (University of Idaho, 2012). These land-
grant institutions form the core of the public systems of higher education in the United States (University of Idaho, 2012), playing a special role in their states’ present and future business and academic leadership, and providing economic and professional opportunities for talented state residents of all races and economic groups (Banerji, 2006).

Public flagship academic institutions are described as statewide, having a broad range of curricula, a heavy research component, higher admission standards, large endowments, a significant presence of out-of-state and international students, major athletic programs, an important impact on communities, and a national presence (Douglass, 2014; National Science Board, 2012; Olson, 2012). In most cases, these institutions were the first public universities to be established in their states (University of Idaho, 2012). Some states have one public flagship institution (e.g. Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Connecticut), while other states have two flagship institutions. For example, both the University of Texas and Texas A&M are considered flagship universities. Although the College Board recognizes only one flagship per state, defining it as the best-known institution in the state, generally it is the first one to be established, and frequently the largest and most selective, as well as the most research-intensive public universities (DIY College Rankings & Education Trust, 2010).

As a group, the 50 public flagship academic institutions have a special responsibility in providing sufficient access to college education for its state’s population. However, according to the Education Trust (2010), students in both entering and graduating classes are looking less and less like the state populations they were founded to serve. Public flagship universities were originally intended to provide excellence to students who cannot afford high-quality private institutions (Education Trust, 2010). Yet many of these universities now direct aid to wealthy students who will attend college without it (Education Trust, 2010). In the meantime, many
high-achieving minority and poor students enroll in lesser institutions or do not attend college at all (Education Trust, 2010).

Although flagship universities have much in common, especially in the unique roles they play and the respect that they receive within their respective states, they also differ in achieving diversity and student success when measured by graduation rates. According to Gerald & Haycock (2006), some public flagship institutions are far more successful than others in enrolling low-income and minority students, while others have far more success in graduating them (Gerald & Haycock, 2006). It is noted that the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst), the focus of this research, was ranked by Education Trust as performing better than most other flagship universities, enrolling low-income students, when compared to other colleges and universities in the state (Education Trust, 2010). Other flagship universities that standout on this measure are the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the University of California-Berkeley, the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and the University of Montana (Education Trust, 2010).

Federal law establishes two categories of policies that may bear relevance on access and diversity goals in college admissions: race-conscious policies (where race is an expressed factor in evaluating applicants) and race-neutral policies (where race is not) (Coleman, Palmer, & Winnick, 2008). Although the impact of race-conscious or race-neutral polices on public flagship educational institutions has been widely reported in the literature, not much attention has been paid, especially in recent years, to such policies at UMass Amherst, an important flagship university in New England. This academic institution warrants studying in regards to its diversity and race-relations efforts, even though it has not been the site of one of the major diversity cases that have garnered national attention, such as the Bakke case at the University of
California. As one of the nation’s flagship universities, there have been many public confrontations and political battles about diversity and race relations that have been fought on and around its campus.

UMass Amherst has found it necessary on occasion to review, modify, and adjust its programs and approaches to supporting minority students on campus. Campus leadership is constantly reviewing its progress in creating a racially and ethnically diverse campus community. Thus, research should be conducted on a regular basis to gauge where UMass Amherst stands in terms of meeting its often-stated diversity goals, especially since it is New England’s most distinguished flagship university. This thesis investigates the state of UMass Amherst today, 2016, in terms of matters of affirmative action now that we are in the second decade of the 21st Century. It also assesses where the university appears to be heading as it relates to diversity and race relations.

While it is a small region geographically, New England is of interest because of its remarkable stronghold of higher education institutions, possessing an extraordinary collection of public and private campuses (New England Board of Higher Education, 1989). Although the issue of affirmative action in New England does not seem to be as high profile or as controversial as in some other regions (Midwest and Southern), the New England Board of Higher Education (1989) reports that “an unacceptably low number of Black and Hispanic students receive undergraduate, graduate, or professional degrees from the region’s colleges and universities” (Bennefield, 1999). A 2006 report by the Institute for Higher Education Policy in Washington, DC and funded by the Nellie Mae Foundation, contended that without a comprehensive and coordinated plan, such consequences for the New England region’s low income, minority and disadvantaged populations could be profound. To offset these negative
consequences, the report recommends that programs be established to reward public institutions that perform well in attracting and retaining low-income students and students of color (Couturier, 2006).

In the late 1990s, the increasingly hostile legal environment and string of legal challenges to race-sensitive admissions did influence the University of Massachusetts Amherst to rethink its diversity strategy. Policies that previously ensured access, and the increased participation of African-Americans in higher education, took a downward turn. Also, two court cases (*Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*) during that time symbolized a national debate on equity and opportunity in higher education (Harper, Patton & Wooden 2009).

In March 1999, the university announced a revised admissions process that gives consideration to an applicant’s income and geography, and to de-emphasize the consideration of race (Bennefield, 1999). At that time, according to the university’s Chancellor David K. Scott, “The current political climate, created by court decisions striking down race-sensitive admissions policies in California, Texas, Washington, and closer to home, at the Boston Latin School, was the main reason for the University’s decision” (Bennefield, 1999). University officials made it clear that they were not retreating from their original goals but simply thinking of new ways to address diversity without facing a legal challenge.

Since that time, minimal research in the literature examines the impact of UMass Amherst’s revamped admission strategies, which substitutes *class* for *race* on minority enrollment (Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians), and whether the institution’s diversity goals are being achieved. In other words, questions that still need to be asked include: (1) whether by the university adopting color-blind policies, has it failed or succeeded in adequately addressing the historical exclusion of students of color from higher education; and (2) has the
university’s class-based policies demonstrated a compelling educational interest in having a racially and ethnically diverse student body?

This case analysis of the University of Massachusetts Amherst is important for a number of reasons. UMass Amherst serves as the flagship institution for a New England state and is a leading public university that views “diversity as critical to equity and excellence in education” (Vision Statement), and has a formal Diversity Plan (January 26, 2014) that outlines its affirmative action policies and practices. UMass Amherst’s 2014 Diversity Plan builds upon its diversity initiatives from the past: formation of the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students (CCEBMS) in 1967; building the W.E.B. DuBois Department of African-American Studies; being recognition as a degree-granting department in 1970; and implementing the 1998 Community, Diversity, Social Justice Initiative.

The Five College Consortium

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is part of what is known as the Five College Consortium with Smith, Mount Holyoke, Hampshire, and Amherst Colleges. The Consortium was established in 1965 to promote the broad educational and cultural objectives of its member institutions, which include four private liberal arts colleges and the Amherst campus of the state’s university. Hampshire College joined the Consortium in 1970 (Five College Consortium, 2015). Notably, the Five College Interchange Program allows students to take classes at Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith Colleges at no extra charge.

Founded in 1862, the University of Massachusetts Amherst itself, the flagship campus of the University of Massachusetts, has a distinctive mission in the commonwealth. It partners with other campuses in the University of Massachusetts system (Boston, Dartmouth, Lowell, and Worcester) as part of its public mission in research and education. As the flagship campus,
UMass Amherst interacts with public institutions throughout the state, and especially with those community colleges in the vicinity that serve as feeder schools for transfer students wishing to complete their four-year undergraduate education on the Amherst campus (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009).

According to the University’s College Portrait (2014b), in fall 2013, there were 28,518 students attending the flagship of the public University of Massachusetts system. They were predominantly White (66% or 14,700), followed by a smaller percentage of Asians (8% or 1,702), Hispanic/Latino (5% or 1,061), African-American/Black (4% or 795), and Two or More Races (2% or 512). About 13% (or 2,780) of the student population’s race/ethnicity was not reported. International students comprised 2% (or 537) of the population while Native Americans comprised <1% (13). A majority (93%) was full-time students, male (51% or 11,260) and live in Massachusetts (76%). The average age of undergraduates is 20 years. The student-to-faculty ratio was 18:1. Six out of ten students who apply are admitted—89% receive financial aid. One in four of the students are considered as low-income. In fall 2013, there were 1,232 full-time faculty; of which, 21% were persons of color and female (41%) (UMass Amherst, 2014b).

The focus of this qualitative research project is to examine the past, current, and potential future impact of affirmative action policies at UMass Amherst. It is an academic institution that, through its Diversity Plan, affirms its commitment to diversity as an integral part of the educational process. Relative to other flagship universities, UMass Amherst kept a relatively low public profile on the issue of affirmative action. Thus, undertaking an in-depth investigation/analysis of the affirmative action policies at UMass Amherst, considering how they evolved and where they stand today, will contribute to the expanding literature available
about affirmative action at flagship universities. Before focusing on the case study, a definition of affirmative action is provided and followed by a statement on the significance of the research problem.

**Definition of Affirmative Action**

According to the Legal Information Institute at Cornell University, affirmative action is “a set of procedures designed to eliminate unlawful discrimination between applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. Applicants may be seeking admission to an educational program or looking for professional employment” (Legal Information Institute of the Cornell University Law School).

Affirmative action is rooted in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. It became a formally and legally recognized concept among college admissions in 1964 with the passage of the Civil Rights Act (reference). Title VI of the Act states that institutions receiving federal funding cannot discriminate against any individuals on the basis of race, color of skin, or national origin (Coelen et al., 2001). The affirmative action policies of the mid-1960s dramatically increased educational opportunities for African-Americans, particularly at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). The peak of the movement for diversity on campuses came in the mid-1970s when “minority high school graduates had the same chance as whites to start college the next fall” (Orfield, 2001). Despite this momentum, the original filing in 1978 of *The Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* attempted to dismantle affirmative action at postsecondary institutions of higher education (Harper, Patton & Wooden, 2009).

Although *The Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* was not the first case to tackle race-conscious admissions policies, it remains the seminal case study of affirmative action in higher education. *Bakke* not only upheld the use of race-conscious admissions practices, it
also introduced the notion of “student-body diversity” as a compelling state interest (Ledesma, 2007). Ever since the Supreme Court’s 1978 decision in *Bakke*, various affirmative action programs were employed by institutions of higher education across the United States as a means of offsetting the effects of past racial discrimination and providing greater educational opportunities to minorities.

In *Grutter v. Bollinger*, a landmark case where the United States Supreme Court upheld the affirmative action policies of the University of Michigan Law School, a majority of Justices endorsed the diversity rationale with Supreme Court Justice O’Connor writing for the majority that diversity yields “substantial, important and laudable educational benefits” and “promotes learning outcomes and better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce, for society, and for the legal profession” (Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, 2014).

**Significance of the Research Problem**

Affirmative action policies that pertain to college admissions continue to majorly impact UMass Amherst. In 1992, the University of Massachusetts instituted a policy to “mitigate or eliminate artificial barriers and to increase opportunities for the recruitment and retention of minorities, women, and other potentially disadvantaged groups.” (UMass Amherst 2014a). According to the university’s 2014 Diversity Plan:

UMass Amherst has a long tradition of valuing diversity in people, in areas of study, and in research and creative activity. […] The campus has a proud legacy of bold efforts to remove the barriers to a fully inclusive campus and to increase the diversity of its student body, faculty and staff. […] There are multiple aspects to diversity, which includes race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability,
veteran status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, gender identify and expression, marital status and economic condition (UMass Amherst 2014a, p.1).

New England was the birthplace, historically, of anti-slavery and disunion in the United States. What happens at UMass Amherst is bound to impact what happens at all of the other flagship and public universities in Massachusetts and New England.

**Education as a Civil Right in Massachusetts**

In Massachusetts, the struggle for education as a civil right began in the 1800s. Historically, the first state court case about racial segregation was in Massachusetts: *Sarah C. Roberts v. The City of Boston (1849)*. That ruling declared that it was legal for Boston not to admit five year-old Sarah Roberts, who was African-American, to her all-White neighborhood school. Although Boston officially stopped having separate schools shortly before the Civil Rights Movement, in the 1970s, it was the site of one of the most violent and vicious desegregation battles (Perry, 2014). This was the situation, despite the fact that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, affirmative action began to promote opportunities for minorities. Nevertheless, Massachusetts was one of the most important states in the fight against slavery and disunion with many of America’s leading abolitionists coming from the state. Yet, ironically, during the latter years of the 20th Century (1980s and 1990s), long after the famous 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, there was much racial unrest in Massachusetts and especially in Boston. This had an impact on what happened at UMass Amherst in regards to affirmative action. Notably, in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, 349 U.S. 294*, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the concept of “separate but equal” had no place in American life, or jurisprudence, in effect, nullifying the legality of segregation that had been established in the 1896 decision *Plessy v Ferguson*. 
Similar to what was occurring on other college campuses, the political climate prompted the establishment of several multicultural initiatives at UMass Amherst. Specifically, in 1968, the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students enrolled 128 African-American students; in 1970, the W.E. Dubois Department of Afro-American Studies was founded. In 2000, the University of Massachusetts announced a new admissions policy that uses a point system to downplay race and SAT scores and, instead, puts greater emphasis on a student’s high school grade point average. In 2005, the Commission on Campus Diversity, an independent 23-member panel, found that UMass Amherst lacked centrally-coordinated, diversity-building initiatives and, at times, it failed to provide adequate academic advising for minority students. The panel also criticized the university for lacking a strategic plan to increase minority enrollment at a time when the number of minority students and staff were dropping (Jan, 2005).

Since Brown, Courts interpret that explicit considerations of race are unconstitutional. As a result, efforts to desegregate, such as affirmative action at the college level, or plans to create more diverse primary and secondary schools, are generally considered unconstitutional (Perry, 2014). In turn, the vast majority of public colleges and universities, which have a duty to serve a cross-section of the population, are hamstrung in their efforts to equalize educational opportunity. In fact, the 2006 report by the Education Trust Fund, “Engines of Inequality: Diminishing Equity in the Nation’s Premier Public Universities,” concluded that the nation’s 50 flagship universities are failing to serve the full breadth of their states’ population, and they are also failing as regards access and student success. Moreover, the report gives UMass Amherst an “F” for underrepresented minority access (Gerald & Haycock, 2006).

Banerji (2006) believes that flagship institutions need to “reaffirm their historic commitment to opportunity and set a new course” (Banerji, 2006). A study, led by a Princeton
University sociologist, on the University of Texas’s Top 10 Percent Program, aimed to ensure diversity following the state’s ban on affirmative action and agrees with this assertion. In 1996, the University of Texas replaced affirmative action where admission at the university was offered to the top tenth of each graduating high school’s class with the best grades. The Texas Ten Percent Plan provides students in the top 10% of their high school graduating class with automatic admission to any public university in Texas, including the two flagship schools: the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M (Daugherty, Martorell, & McFarlin, 2014). Perhaps surprisingly, the study concluded that in order for public flagship institutions to serve a function in creating a community of leaders among all segments of the population, it is necessary to take race into account in college admissions’ decisions given that the university’s program failed to promote racial diversity (Tienda, 2010). Underlying this recommendation is the premise that racial diversity strengthens the quality of education offered to all students (Camargo et al., 2007).

To demonstrate the timeliness of this research, in April 2014, Governor Deval Patrick called the Supreme Court’s ruling that allows voters to outlaw the use of race as a factor in college admissions as very troubling and said that his administration would assess the implications for Massachusetts (Associated Press, 2014). In October 2014, students at UMass Amherst received an email from the Chancellor’s Office stating that two UMass students were the targets of blatantly racist hate-speech in their residence halls. Following the news about these acts, members of the UMass community gathered for an emergency meeting in the Student Union to foster conversation about racism on campus and steps that can be taken to prevent further hate crimes. According to the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs and Campus Life,
“These matters are troubling and they definitely shine a light on a larger societal issue…people have this deluded idea that somehow we are in a post-racial society” (Dotzenrod, 2014).

The Chancellor’s Statement on affirmative action and discrimination is expressed in the university’s 2013-2014 Affirmative Action Plan, which emphasizes diversity as a goal for the University of Massachusetts. “Our goal is to achieve a campus where men and women of diverse groups come to understand and appreciate the variety of perspectives which diversity makes possible” (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2013). A separate document, the University’s Diversity Plan, outlines several priorities for sustaining diversity on campus. For example, one priority involves conducting of an annual campus-wide survey that measures the university’s environment as it pertains to diversity, inclusion, and equity. In 2013, 72% of the students regarded UMass’ administrative leadership as “very” or “somewhat” committed to diversity (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014a).

This commitment is demonstrated in various organizational ways. The chancellor designates a senior-level executive to direct the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office and to develop the UMass Amherst Affirmative Action Plan. The 2013-2014 Affirmative Action Plan is primarily workforce-focused or employee-based. Student enrollment metrics, such as indicated by race and ethnicity, are not reported in the plan. Rather, the plan cites that with respect to minority representation among employees, in 2013-2014, of the 5,332 employees, Asians constituted the largest minority group on campus (463 or 8.7%). The second largest minority group was African-American/Black employees (193 or 3.6%), followed by Hispanics/Latinos (201 or 3.8%). The smallest racial group was Native Americans, who numbered 31 in 2013-2014. Minorities are employed in the greatest numbers as faculty (280 or 18.9%) and professional staff (251 or 15.3%) (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2013).
The Executive Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office chairs the Chancellor Diversity Advisory Committee, which is comprised of faculty, staff, students, and community members (UMass Amherst Diversity Matters, 2014). The Diversity Advisory Committee is charged with reviewing campus policies and procedures relating to diversity, developing initiatives to advance diversity on campus, and providing input for the Comprehensive Diversity and Equity Plan.

Currently, there are 1,170 full-time instructional faculty: 93% hold the highest degree in their field (reference). Of the 22,000 undergraduate students, 3,750 are students of color (African-American, Latino/a, and Asian, and Native American students). UMass Amherst is comprised of various schools and colleges: College of Education; College of Engineering; College of Humanities and Fine Arts; College of Natural Sciences; College of Nursing; College of Social and Behavioral Sciences; Commonwealth Honors College; and Isenberg School of Management; School of Computer Science; School of Public Health and Health Sciences; Stockbridge School of Agriculture; and Graduate School. UMass Amherst emphasizes community service as part of its academic programs. The White House named UMass Amherst to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for four consecutive years, in recognition of its commitment to volunteering, service learning, and civic engagement. The Carnegie Foundation has also named the flagship university a “Community-Engaged University” for the Advancement of Teaching. The Princeton Review included UMass Amherst in its “Colleges with a Conscience: 81 Great Schools with Outstanding Community Involvement” (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015).

Research Questions
This research project examines the impact of affirmative action policies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, a flagship institution in New England, in the second decade of the 21st Century. The goal of the study is to document and preserve an important piece of higher education history from the perspective of individuals who lived through and participated in the events. Themes and/or patterns are identified. As mentioned, the findings from this study will contribute to the expanding literature available about affirmative action at flagship institutions.

The research questions explored in this study are as follows: (1) How have affirmative action policies impacted the University of Massachusetts Amherst with regard to higher education access; (2) What affirmative action policies and plans are now in existence at the University of Massachusetts Amherst?; (3) What are the likely consequences of current affirmative action policies and plans at the University of Massachusetts Amherst?

**Positionality Statement**

I was born in West Africa, the southeast region of Nigeria. I came to the United States as an international student more than 35 years ago. This was possible because of the emphasis placed within my country on access to high quality education. African parents and guardians devote substantial amounts or all of their resources to ensure that their children/dependents receive a quality education. I am an example of this cultural norm, having successfully completed both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from a private university in the United States.

I am sensitive and cognizant of the fact that accessing a quality education is beyond the reach of many low-income minority students. Based on my experiences (and confirmed by various studies), the education of Black males is of particular concern. A recent study from the
Maynard Media Center on Structural Inequity (2015) reported that young Black men are not attending and graduating from college at the same rate as Black women. They are scarcely enrolled at colleges throughout the country including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The Department of Education reported that the national college graduation rate for Black males is 33.1% versus 44.8% for Black women. Additionally, Black men represent 7.9% of 18 to 24 year-olds in the United States, but only 2.8% of graduates at public flagship universities (Maynard Media Center on Structural Equity, 2015).

Since UMass Amherst is a public flagship university in New England that is committed to diversity, I was interested in examining how this commitment has played out in minority student enrollment, especially among African-American males. At one time, the university placed great emphasis on race in the admissions process, and then it switched to a more “colorblind” admissions process (for fear of being sued). The following question is of great interest to me: What happened to minority enrollment as a result of the University “switching” to more of a race-neutral admission policy?

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework used to explore this topic was Critical Race Theory (CRT), with a focus on the Interest-Convergence Principle. These served as a lens to examine the historical inequities regarding educational opportunity, achievement, outcomes, as well as disparities in achievement between students of color and White students (Zion and Blanchett, 2011). They also serve as powerful tools to conceptualize inclusion in education.

**Critical Race Theory**

In 1994, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was first used as an analytical framework to assess inequity in education (Hiraldo, 2010). It emerged from the early work of Derrick Bell and Alan
Freeman, who in the mid-1970s began analyzing the role of race and racism in promoting social inequities among minority groups. Solorzano and Yosso (2002) took CRT a step further and applied its relevance to the field of education, namely, by promoting a transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Hilrado (2010) highlighted CRT’s important role when higher education institutions work toward becoming more diverse and inclusive, such as in the case of UMass Amherst.

There are five themes that form the basic perspectives and pedagogy of CRT in education. The first is the intercentricity of race and racism. CRT scholars assert that race is a social construct, and that racism occurs implicitly at micro (individual) and macro (societal) levels. Such scholars believe that racism is endemic to American life (Buenavista, Jayakumar, & Misa-Escalante, 2009). CRT in education centralizes race and racism, while focusing on the intersections of racism with other forms of subordination (Yosso, Villalpando, Degado Bernal, & Solorzano, 2001). The second is the challenge to dominant ideology. CRT assumes that race matters, and disparities can be attributed to how people of color differentially experience education (Buenavista et al., 2009). Thus, CRT in education challenges traditional claims of the educational system, such as color-blindness and race neutrality, highlighting how such ideas is inapplicable to explaining racial differences (Yosso et al., 2001). The third is the commitment to social justice. A goal of CRT is to dismantle institutions that perpetuate and maintain racist ideologies (Buenavista et al., 2009). CRT in education seeks to advance a social justice agenda, which struggles to eliminate racism and other forms of subordination, while empowering groups that have been subordinated (Yosso et al., 2001). The fourth is the centrality of experiential knowledge. CRT recognizes that the experiential knowledge of people of color is legitimate and appropriate. CRT in education views this knowledge as strength and draws explicitly on the
lives of students of color by including such methods as family history, biographies, chronicles and narratives (Yosso et al., 2001). The fifth is the interdisciplinary perspective. CRT scholars assert that it is important to understand race and racism in both historical and contemporary contexts, and that interdisciplinary (such as ethnic and gender studies) might be useful in drawing attention to the relationship between historical and contemporary experiences (Buena Vista et al., 2009). CRT in education challenges traditional mainstream analyses by analyzing racism and other forms of subordination in education in historical and interdisciplinary terms.

Clearly, social justice is the thematic vision that drives critical race methodology, providing a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is more equitable. Affirmative action is an example of a program that supplements perceived social inequities in education. However, Aguirre (2000) notes that affirmative action programs can fall short of their goals if their implementation is treated as a bureaucratic activity in academia (Aguirre, 2000). Nevertheless, CRT encourages considerations of the social, political, and historical roles that education has played in contemporary experiences of particular ethnic subpopulations as regards college access and success (Buena Vista et al., 2009).

**Interest-Convergence Principle**

One tenet of CRT that is applicable to affirmative action is the interest-convergence principle. Legal scholar and social activist Derrick Bell introduced interest-convergence in 1980, describing it as an idea that the “interest of Blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of Whites” (Dunbar, 2008).

The best-known application of this thesis involves the 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The idea is that the Supreme Court supported *Brown* because it served the United
States’ Cold War agenda of supporting human rights, and that it was a decision largely imposed on the south by people in the north (Brophy, 2008). Dudziak (1988), upon reviewing historical documentation of classified government documentation, concurred with Bell that Brown’s passage occurred more as a matter of national interest on the part of America, rather than as a remedy for past social wrongs based on race (Dudziak, 1988). In 2003, Bell viewed Grutter v Bollinger as a definitive example of his interest-convergence thesis where Blacks received favorable judicial decisions to the extent that their interests coincided with the interests of Whites (Driver, 2011).

Ledesma (2007) reports that, according to Bell, the application of the interest-convergence principle extends to higher education and race-conscious admissions policies. The interest-convergence principle can be used as an analytical lens for understanding the complex role of race in the educational experiences of African-American students in general, and athletes in particular (Donnor, 2005). According to Donnor (2005), the principle’s “analytical viewpoint suggests that terms such as ‘merit’ and ‘color-blindness’ serve as code words for laws and policies that secure and advance the political and economic interests of upper class whites” (Donnor, 2005).

CRT situates race at the center of its critique, which is why it is applicable to this research study. Its utility as a framework helps to gain a deeper understanding of the socio-historical context of how minorities are racialized in the United States and how subsequent racial constructs often shape the educational experiences and outcomes of African-American and Latino college students. CRT helps in understanding the historical and contemporary marginalization of minority students in higher education and the ways in which such issues can be addressed, such as through affirmative action programs. CRT scholars perceive a need for
further studies to examine where interest-convergence may have occurred and to highlight these examples in research literature (Zion & Blanchett, 2011). As such, the CRT and its interest-convergence principle are the theoretical rationale and basis for this study.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to present and synthesize research on the highly controversial issue of affirmative action admission policies in higher education. This literature review aims to accomplish the following: (1) discuss, at the outset, the historical roots of affirmative action and its connection to the Civil Rights Movement; (2) provide a summary of judicial rulings concerning college admissions; and (3) conclude with background information on diversity initiatives at UMass Amherst. This chapter includes the following sections: Historical Roots of Affirmative Action, General Background of Affirmative Action Admissions Policies in the United States (specifically concentrating on the last few decades), and Background of Affirmative Action and Admission Policies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Historical Roots of Affirmative Action**

Affirmative action programs are based on the concepts of equality embedded in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935, requiring the National Labor Relations Board to take “affirmative action” against unfair labor practices (Lehmuller & Gregory, 2005), was the starting point for affirmative action.

Affirmative action is an outcome of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, providing the impetus for vast changes in social policy and a provision for equal opportunity to minority groups and women in education and employment. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin of any program receiving federal financial assistance (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).
United States President John F. Kennedy first introduced the term “affirmative action” in a civil rights speech given on the campus of Howard University, an HBCU. However, in 1965, it was President Lyndon B. Johnson who officially brought Kennedy’s vision to life with the signing of Executive Order 11246, requiring federal contractors to increase the number of minority employees as an “affirmative step” toward remedying years of exclusion for minority workers in those firms (Harper et al., 2009).

This policy positively affected African-American participation in higher education. African-Americans were afforded opportunities to matriculate at institutions that were once completely inaccessible to nonwhites. The earliest access to higher education for African-Americans was initiated in 1799 when John Chavis, a Presbyterian Minister and teacher, was the first Black person on record to attend an American college or university. In 1804, Middlebury College in Vermont awarded an honorary master’s degree to Lemuel Haynes, an African-American who fought in the Revolutionary War. In 1823, Alexander Lucius Twilight became the first known African-American to complete his studies and graduate with a degree from Middlebury College. In 1826, Edward Jones graduated from Amherst College and became the second African-American to graduate with a degree.

An additional stride toward educational opportunity was when Oberlin College, founded in 1833, became the first institution to openly admit Blacks and women. In 1844, Oberlin graduated its first Black student, George B. Vashon, and in 1862, graduated the first African-American woman. This denoted progress considering inadequate representation of educated African-Americans up to that point was minimal (Harper et al., 2009). UMass Amherst does not report when it admitted its first African-American student. It does report that, in 1875, the first female student was admitted part-time and, in 1892, the first full-time female student was
admitted. According to UMass Amherst, in 1968, the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students enrolled 128 African-American students.

**General Background of Affirmative Action Admissions Policies in the United States**

**Judicial Rulings**

The history of major legal milestone rulings on affirmative action (Brunner & Rowen) is provided as an appendix. Notably, affirmative action continues to be a fluid policy in higher education that has changed over time. Policy efforts enacted through the 1960s opened many opportunities for African-American students in higher education. Colleges and universities adopted affirmative action programs in the 1960s in response to civil unrest. Blacks in particular mobilized to demand increased access to higher education. During the 1970s, the total enrollment of nonwhites in institutions of postsecondary education increased; and perhaps more significantly, their enrollment in elite colleges and universities increased (Moran, 2006).

Despite this trend, there is still a recurrent struggle for racial equity and to close college opportunity gaps between African-Americans and their White counterparts. Court rulings reflect the dynamic nature of affirmative action throughout the history of higher education. Although primary and secondary schools were at the heart of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (347 U.S. 483) Supreme Court case, the precedent clearly applied to public postsecondary institutions. The court ruled that racial segregation, including the operation of “separate, but equal” facilities in public education would no longer be legal. It is important to note that this mandate did not reach higher education until one decade after *Brown* when President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Harper et al., 2009).

Affirmative action policies of the 1960s dramatically increased educational opportunities for African-Americans. Despite this momentum, attempts to dismantle affirmative action started
in 1973 with the original filing of the landmark *Bakke* case. Allan Bakke, a white male applicant who was denied admission to the University of California Davis (UC Davis), believed he would have been admitted were it not for affirmative action programs (Harper et al., 2009).

Commonly known as *Bakke*, in 1978, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (438 U.S. 912) was one of the first court cases concerning affirmative action in educational institutions. In *Bakke*, the court sought to answer the question of whether or not a state university could use *race* as a factor in its admission process.

The University of California Davis (UC Davis) Medical School had twice rejected Alan Bakke’s application for admission, even though his grades and test scores were higher than many of the applicants who were accepted. As part of its admissions procedures, the medical school set aside 16 seats (out of 100) for qualified minorities. According to Bakke, the Equal Protection Rights under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution were violated. From his perspective, the university’s affirmative action program excluded him from consideration for one of the 16 set-aside seats solely on the basis of his racial background.

The *Bakke* case guided affirmative action for 38 years, declaring that affirmative action is unfair if it leads to reverse discrimination. The Supreme Court was split in a 5-4 decision. Since there was no single majority, the university’s use of a rigid quota system, where a number of seats is isolated from the general pool of candidates, is not constitutionally permissible. However, Justice Lewis Powell’s deciding opinion condemned the use of quotas, but concluded that it was permissible to take *race* into account, as one among several factors in seeking to secure the educational benefits of diversity (Rojas IV, 2012).

In 1992, four White students applied for admission to the University of Texas Law School and were denied admission. In *Hopwood v. University of Texas* (518 U.S. 1033; 1996),
the applicants argued that the law school’s affirmative action admission policy violated equal protection. The United States District Court of Western Texas ruled in favor of the applicants (Nichols, Ferguson, & Fisher, 2005). The state of Texas’s appeal to the United States Supreme Court was denied, and the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals decision was that the university’s admission policy did in fact discriminate in favor of minority applicants (Nichols et al., 2005).

In *Hopwood*, the United States Court of Appeals held that student body diversity in higher education can never serve as a compelling justification for racial classifications (Daniel & Timken, 1999). *Hopwood* contradicted the Supreme Court’s seminal decision in the *Bakke* case where the Court held that diversity may serve as a compelling rationale for race-conscious admissions policies (Daniel & Timken, 1999).

In 2003, both the *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger* cases raised interesting points about the admissions process at the University of Michigan. On June 23, 2003, in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (124 S. Ct. 35), the Supreme Court upheld the University of Michigan Law School’s affirmative action program and specifically endorsed Justice Powell’s view in the 1978 *Bakke* case that student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can justify using race in university admissions.

The justices concluded that the affirmative action program at the University of Michigan Law School was lawful in ensuring racial and ethnic diversity. Citing *Brown v. Board of Education* for the proposition that “Education […] is the very foundation of good citizenship,” the Supreme Court stated, “The diffusion of knowledge and opportunity through public institutions of higher education must be accessible to all individuals regardless of race or ethnicity” (Americans for a Fair Chance, 2004). The court regarded the pursuit of student body
diversity as justifiable because it prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society (Edwards, 2004).

On June 23, 2003, the Supreme Court also ruled in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (537 U.S. 1044). This case has facts similar to those of the *Bakke* case. Barbara Grutter, a White applicant to the University of Michigan Law School, was denied admission. She claimed that she was discriminated against on the basis of race and, as a result, the law school had violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The university openly admitted that, following the *Bakke* decision, it used *race* as a factor in its admission process in order to achieve student body diversity.

In a 5-4 opinion, the court held that the law school’s use of *race* did not violate the Constitution because it furthers a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body (“AREA et al. Amicus Brief: *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin,*”). In writing the majority opinion, Justice Sandra Day O’Connor found the law school’s use of *race* included an individualized review of each applicant and did not mechanically accept or reject an applicant based on *race* (Tanabe, 2009).

The Supreme Court, however, ruled (6-3) against the university’s admission policies since it was not narrowly tailored to achieve the state’s interest in educational diversity (Rojas IV, 2012). Further, the more formulaic approach of the University of Michigan’s undergraduate admissions program needed modification. The college used a system that assigned points for certain factors (geography, legacy/alumni relationships, and race). Unlike the University of Michigan Law School, which used a highly, individualized holistic review, resulting in an overall score for each applicant (Rojas IV, 2012), the university’s undergraduate program did not
provide individual consideration of applicants deemed necessary in previous Supreme Court decisions ("AREA et al. Amicus Brief: Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin,").

This meant that academic institutions could not award points to applicants based solely on race, but race could be used as a “plus” factor in an individualized evaluation of applicants (Harper et al., 2009). Taken together – Grutter, Gratz and Justice Powell’s opinion in Bakke – establish that the United States Constitution permits race-conscious admissions policies when they are carefully designed and consider race as a flexible and individualized review of all applicants (Americans for a Fair Chance, 2004). These court decisions signified a temporary victory for African-American students’ access to higher education.

In 2008, Abigail Fisher, whose application to the University of Texas-Austin was rejected, filed a case. Fisher, who is White, argued that she had been a victim of racial discrimination because minority students with less impressive credentials than hers had been admitted. On June 24, 2013, in Fisher v. University of Texas-Austin (570 U.S.), the Supreme Court decided to allow universities to consider using race as a factor in admissions to achieve diversity provided that they can prove that workable, race-neutral alternatives do not suffice. The Court sent the case back to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit to determine whether the University of Texas-Austin passed this test of “strict scrutiny” ("AREA et al. Amicus Brief: Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin,"). It is important to note that, in the wake of this Supreme Court ruling that could potentially open doors for more challenges to affirmative action, the Obama Administration, in September 2013, told colleges and universities to strive for a more “racially diverse educational environment,” by employing affirmative action when considering college applications (Hefling, 2013).
The 2003 *Grutter v. Bollinger* affirmative action case made it clear that courts would need to confirm that there is no other realistic alternative that does not use *race*, which would also create a diverse student body. On July 15, 2014, a federal appeals court upheld the University of Texas-Austin’s consideration of *race* in admissions in a 2-1 decision. This meant that the university’s admission program was narrowly tailored to achieve the school’s compelling educational interests (College Board, 2014).

**Diversity Rationale: A Compelling Educational Interest**

In the 1970s, civil rights proponents, minority groups, college and university officials, and President Jimmy Carter’s administration were all deeply concerned that the Supreme Court might affirm the California’s Supreme Court decision barring the use of race in admissions decisions, thereby, nullifying affirmative action programs (Synnott, 2004). However, on June 28, 1978, in a 5-4 decision, Justice Powell provided the critical fifth vote in *Bakke* to reverse the California Supreme Court injunction against the use of race in admissions decisions (Synnott, 2004).

In the 1978 *Bakke* case, Justice Lewis Powell wrote the pivotal opinion that diversity is a compelling educational interest for justifying affirmative action programs in higher education. He charted a different course than his peers, concluding that race-based admission practices were permissible to advance diversity in higher education. Using Harvard University’s Undergraduate Program as a model for fair, non-discriminatory and quota-less affirmative action in university admissions (White, 1978), he made clear that race had to be part of a process of individualized review, along with other characteristics, such as leadership potential, history of overcoming disadvantage, and maturity (Moran, 2006).
Since then, educators in the United States have argued that affirmative action policies are justified because they ensure the creation of the racially and ethnically diverse student bodies essential to providing the best educational environments for students, minority, or non-minority (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). Based on their three research studies on diversity in the classroom, the American Council on Education (ACE) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) concluded that “many higher education faculty members and administrators are deeply concerned that abandonment of race-sensitive admissions and hiring, at a time when most minority groups continue to be underrepresented in higher education, will severely limit diversity and will undermine the learning environment for all students” (American Council on Education and American Association of University Professors, 2000, p. 2).

Liu (1998) notes that most defenders of diversity rely not on constitutional jurisprudence but on educational policy arguments, such as the argument that all students benefit from classroom interactions with those from diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds (Liu, 1998). Critics of the diversity rationale, on the other hand, see it as a smokescreen for racial balancing and quotas (Alger, 1998).

In 1997, the Association of American Universities (AAU) adopted a statement that expressed strong support for continued attention to diversity in college admissions (Association of American Universities, 1997). In 2003, the AAU reaffirmed its commitment to diversity in its Statement of Higher Education Presidential Associations on Affirmative Action Cases before the United States Supreme Court (Association of American Universities, 2003).

There is an emerging body of scholarship that speaks directly to the benefits of a racially/ethnically diverse postsecondary educational experience. Gurin et al. (2002) report four types of research studies that affirm the diversity rationale for affirmative action:
Students’ subjective assessments of the benefits received through interactions with diverse peers. Faculty assessments about the impact of diversity on student learning or on other outcomes related to the missions of their universities. Monetary and nonmonetary returns to students and the larger community in terms of graduation rates; attainment of advanced and professional degrees that prepare students to become leaders in underserved communities; personal income or other post-college attainment that results from attending highly selective institutions where affirmative action is critical to diversity. Tying the diversity experience during college years to a wide variety of educational outcomes (Gurin et al., 2002).

Milem (2003) provides a three dimensional framework that describes the ways in which diversity benefits individual, institutional, and society. Individual benefits refer to the ways in which the educational experiences and outcomes of individual students are enhanced by the presence of diversity on campus. Institutional benefits refer to the ways in which diversity enhances the effectiveness of an organization or institution. Societal benefits are defined as the ways in which diversity in colleges and universities impact quality of life issues in the larger society (Milem, 2003).

Further, Park, Denson, & Bowman (2013) note that there are two types of diversity: socioeconomic and racial. They assert that both socioeconomic and racial diversity are essential to promoting a positive racial climate on campus, and that racial and socioeconomic diversity, while interrelated, are not interchangeable (Park, Denson, & Bowman, 2012). Synnott (2004) also believes that economic status, as much as race, has continued to determine access to higher education (Synnott, 2004).
Gurin (1999), on the other hand, focuses on three types of diversity: structural diversity, or the extent to which a campus has a diverse student body; classroom diversity, or the extent to which classes address knowledge about diverse groups and issues of diversity as part of the classroom; and informal interactional diversity, or the extent to which the campus provides opportunities for informal interaction across diverse groups. He also makes a compelling case for the value of diversity in preparing students to succeed in a global climate (Gurin, 1999).

Other studies highlight the success of diversity benefits in higher education. Nichols, Ferguson, & Fisher (2005) report that William Bowen and Derek Bok, in their book, *The Shape of the River* (year), document the success of affirmative action in college admissions over the past five decades, concluding that students of all races value diversity and believe it contributes to their educational experience (Nichols et al., 2005). According to Lee (2003), such contributions are two-fold: “discourse benefits” and “leadership benefits.” The former are benefits to students, the university, and society arising from the discourse and interactions that all students will have on a racially diverse campus. “Leadership benefits” accrue to society in the form of professional positions in nationally sensitive, non-educational institutions (Lee, 2003).

In 2012, the United States Department of Education and the United States Department of Justice jointly issued a written “Guidance” to explain how, consistent with existing law, postsecondary institutions can voluntarily consider race to further the compelling interest in achieving diversity. Such guidance provided practical examples of actions for postsecondary institutions to consider, consistent with Title IV, Title VI, and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (United States Department of Justice and United States Department of Education, 2012). The “Guidance” reads in part as follows:

A. Admissions
Example 1: An institution could consider an applicant’s socioeconomic status, first-generation college status, geographic residency, or other race-neutral criteria if doing so would assist in drawing students from different racial backgrounds to the institution.

Example 2: An institution could select schools (including community colleges) based on their demographics (e.g., their racial or socioeconomic composition), and grant an admission preference to all students who have graduated from those schools, regardless of the race of the individual student.

Example 3: An institution could include in its admissions procedures special consideration for students who have endured or overcome hardships such as marked residential instability (e.g., the student moved from residence to residence or school to school while growing up) or enrollment in a low-performing school or district.

Example 4: An institution could form partnerships with other institutions of higher education, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), other minority-serving institutions, or community colleges to help the institution increase diversity.

B. Recruitment and Outreach

Example 1: An institution’s recruitment and outreach procedures could target school districts or high schools that are underrepresented in the institution’s applicant pool by focusing on geographic underrepresentation (e.g., schools in the Midwest, or urban or rural communities) or other characteristics (e.g., low-performing schools or schools with high dropout rates). Such targeting may also assist the institution in achieving racial diversity.
Example 2: An institution could target districts or schools that enroll students who are predominantly from low-income households to help the institution achieve its interest in racial diversity.

Example 3: As part of its overall recruitment efforts, a postsecondary institution could target geographic areas, specific districts or schools, or colleges (e.g., community colleges, or, at the graduate level, HBCUs or other minority-serving institutions), that have a significant number of potential applicants who are of races underrepresented in the institution’s applicant pool.

Example 4: An institution could consider other recruitment and outreach tools to increase diversity in its applicant pool, such as, a part of its overall recruitment efforts, direct mail and other outreach efforts to potential applicants — including the use of advertising in media aimed at specific racial groups, participation by admissions staff in community-sponsored events aimed at informing underrepresented groups about the institution, and encouraging individual students to apply.

State Bans on Affirmative Action Programs

On April 22, 2014, the Supreme Court dealt a major blow to affirmative action programs, upholding the right of states to ban racial preferences in university admissions. The 6-2 decision was brought by the state of Michigan on a voter-initiative banning affirmative action. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (2014), the nine states that currently have bans include the following:

Texas (HB 588, “10 Percent Plan”)

In response to a federal appeals court ruling in Hopwood v. Texas that ended affirmative action policies at Texas public colleges and universities, legislators passed House Bill 588
(known as the "10 Percent Plan"). Legislation requires the Texas higher education system to admit all students who finish in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class to the public institution of their choice. The law delineates 18 academic and socioeconomic criteria that state colleges and universities can consider when making admission decisions for students who do not fall within the top ten percent of their class.

Washington (Initiative 200) and California (Proposition 209)

California (1996) and Washington (1998) passed similar laws eliminating all affirmative action programs at all public colleges and universities in these two states. In 1995, the University of California Board of Regents voted to ban the use of race/ethnicity in college admissions. The California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209), in 1996, banned affirmative action (Nichols et al., 2005).

Florida (Executive Order 99-281)

In 1999 Florida's Governor Jeb Bush issued executive order 99-281, known as the “One Florida” initiative. The Executive Order prohibits the use of affirmative action in state schools' admissions policies, as well as in government employment and state contracting. The “One Florida” initiative was designed to replace race-based admissions with a set of reforms that created a partnership between Florida and the College Board to improve college readiness. The partnership increased the number of students, particularly low-income and minority students, enrolling in and passing Advanced Placement (AP) classes.

Moreover, Governor Bush implemented the Talented 20 Policy in the Florida State University System. Under this policy, public high school graduates that finished in the top 20 percent of their class were guaranteed admission in the fall 2000. Race consciousness was
allowed, however, in awarding scholarships, conducting outreach, or developing pre-college summer programs (Nichols et al., 2005).

**Nebraska (Initiative 424)**

This ballot measure was passed in 2008. It eliminated affirmative action programs at state colleges and universities.

**Arizona (Proposition 107)**

In 2010, this ballot measure was a citizen initiative banning the use of race, ethnicity, or gender by units of state government, including public colleges and universities.

**New Hampshire (House Bill 0623)**

In 2011, New Hampshire passed a law (effective January 1, 2012), prohibiting preferential treatment or discrimination in recruiting, hiring, promotion, or admission based on race, sex, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation. The law applies to state agencies, the university system, the community college system, and the postsecondary education commission.

**Oklahoma (State Question 759)**

In 2012, voters approved legislative referendum prohibiting the state from granting preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, sex, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting. It is noted that Colorado became the first state to reject an anti-affirmative action ballot initiative (Amendment 46) in November 2008. As a result, affirmative action programs in Colorado continue to exist.

**Michigan**

In October 2013, the United States Supreme Court heard arguments on Proposition 2, prohibiting state and local agencies from giving preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, sex, ethnicity, or national origin. In April 2014, the court ruled that voters may prohibit
affirmative action in public universities, thus overturning the lower court's decision, and upholding Proposition 2.

In studying the impact of statewide bans and judicial rulings on minority student enrollments, Blume & Long (2013) found substantial declines in levels of affirmative action practiced by highly selective colleges in the states affected by bans, and no evidence of declines outside these states. They also found “substantial and significant” declines in adjacent states particularly when the adjacent states lacked highly selective colleges. The researchers based their conclusions utilizing national representative data on the admissions decisions of high school students in 1992 and 2004 to estimate the magnitude of the change in affirmative action in college admission decisions. This relatively recent study shows that affirmative action bans reduce college admissions opportunities for minorities (Blume & Long, 2013).

In April 2014, the New York Times published an article examining how minorities fared in states with affirmative action bans. The state of Florida showed a decline from 49% for Hispanic admissions (before ban) to 18% (after ban). At the University of California Berkeley and the University of California Los Angeles, 49% of the state’s population is Hispanic; although, only 11% and 17% of freshmen are Hispanic, respectively. There are other studies that contribute to the increasing evidence about the detrimental effects bans on affirmative action had on the representation of minorities in postsecondary education, namely, undergraduate institutions, law schools, and in graduate fields of study (Garces, 2013; Hinrichs, 2012; Wightman, 1997). Declines in the enrollment of underrepresented minorities in public medical schools (17%) were reported for those states with affirmative action bans, resulting in long-term negative consequences. Examples include increasing health disparities among communities of color and the inability for minority individuals to receive effective health care (Garces, 2014).
Garces (2014) recommends further studies that employ qualitative methods (such as this research) to help explain why declines have taken place and to shed light on institutional responses that can help mitigate declines in racial diversity (Garces, 2014). Friedl (1999) also suggests that more empirical data is needed to demonstrate how affirmative action enhances the educational experiences of students (Friedl, 1999).

The next section provides background information on the history of affirmative action at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Background of Affirmative Action and Admission Policies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

UMass Amherst was established in 1863 under the Morrill Land Grant Act as Massachusetts Agricultural College. In 1867, it opened on a 310-acre campus with four buildings, four faculty members, and 56 students. Currently, it serves about 22,000 undergraduate students and 3,750 students of color, on average, each year. There are currently 1,170 full-time instructional faculty with 93% holding the highest degree in their fields.

The University of Massachusetts is a five-campus system, recognized for the quality of its education, and the scope and excellence of faculty research. The five-campuses are: UMass Amherst, UMass Boston, UMass Dartmouth, UMass Lowell, and the UMass Medical School.

The top states sending students to UMass Amherst each year are New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, California, Rhode Island, Maine, Illinois and Colorado (UMass Amherst, 2015). Of these states, it is noted that California is the only one that has a statewide ban on affirmative action programs among public colleges/universities (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2014).
The spring semester of 1971 was a historical moment for affirmative action at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Faculty Senate voted on April 15, 1971 to establish a Committee on the Status of Women and to appoint a new permanent administrator, at a rank no lower than Associate Provost, to direct the office and improve the conditions of this group on campus. Without this position, it was felt that a meaningful affirmative action program, which would include authority to implement procedures and corrective measures, would not come to fruition. It is noted that this resolution approved by the Faculty Senate was limited to women and did not include minorities (Marcus, 1976).

However, on February 2, 1972, a committee issued a 12-page document, which was intended to serve as an interim Affirmative Action Plan. Included in this document was a Statement of Intent “to create a positive employment opportunity for minorities and oppressed individuals, e.g. physically and mentally handicapped, aged, veterans, ex-convicts, with the intent of addressing existing discriminatory attitudes and preventing them in the future. Minorities are defined in Executive Order 74 as including: Spanish-surnamed, American Indians, Afro-Americans and Orientals.” Executive 74 is the Massachusetts equivalent to the Federal Executive Order 11246, as amended. Also, although there was a major commitment to women throughout the report, women were not mentioned in the Statement of Intent (Marcus, 1976).

Thus, the campus had its first Affirmative Action Plan, placing a stronger emphasis on minorities than on women as the only minority and monitoring authority under the proposed Equal Opportunity Officer. It was important because it called for non-discriminatory hiring and personnel practices. In June 1972, after various drafts, University President Robert Wood sent an official memorandum to the Chancellors of the Amherst and Boston Campuses and to the Dean of the Medical School in Worcester, ordering that immediate steps be taken to guarantee
the implementation of a number of procedures designed to promote affirmative action. He requested that all deans and department heads be informed of the urgent need to concentrate on the recruitment and hiring of Blacks, other minorities, and women faculty. At its May 26, 1972 meeting, the Board of Trustees furthered this action by passing a resolution empowering President Wood to develop a university-wide policy on affirmative action (Marcus, 1976).

In 1996, Chancellor David Scott asked the Chancellor’s Council on Community, Diversity and Social Justice (CDSJ) to generate a Diversity Action Plan which would help move the campus to a new level of attention and action. In June 2007, the university issued a progress report on several major areas: improving undergraduate advising; faculty recruitment and retention; faculty development; rethinking general education; and student affairs (reorganization, undergraduate recruitment, and retention). Subsequently, UMass Amherst developed an Annual Diversity Plan for these four periods: 2008-2009, 2010-2011, 2012-2013, and 2014-2015.

Currently, in 2016, the University’s Equal Employment Officer is now titled as the Executive Director for Equal Opportunity and Diversity. There is a Diversity Mission Statement for the campus, and a UMass Amherst Diversity Plan (dated January 26, 2014), which outlines priorities and focus areas for the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity. The current version of the Diversity Plan (2014-2015) provides examples of diversity initiatives on campus by department.

The following objectives are presented as part of the Vision Statement section of the UMass Amherst Diversity Plan: promote a campus that is accepting of all differences, develop a more culturally responsive campus community, improve campus climate, strengthen community connections, increase the recruitment, hiring and retention of a diverse faculty and staff, increase the recruitment, retention and graduation rates of undergraduate and graduate students from
diverse backgrounds, strengthen Pipeline programs, integrate a curriculum that fosters cultural competencies, incorporate universal design and universal instructional design concepts, coordinate organizational changes that support diversity goals, and increase accountability for the achievement of diversity objectives.

According to the university’s diversity plan, tremendous resources are being dedicated to achieving the stated objectives. However, their impact seems limited based on enrollment and demographic composition of students. For example, in fall 2013, approximately 28% (or 4,117) of the student population at UMass Amherst was African, Latino, Asian, Native American (ALANA). Of the 4,117 students, only 795 (or 4%) identified as Black or African-American and 1,061 (or 5%) identified as Hispanic or Latino. These figures are in stark contrast to the United States Census Bureau data from 2012, which indicated that 7.9 percent of Massachusetts’ residents identify as Black or African American, and 10.1 percent of Massachusetts’ residents identify as Hispanic or Latino. Clearly, the demographic composition of the student population at UMass Amherst is not reflective of the racial diversity of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Chapter Summary

This chapter affirmed Dickason’s (2001) assertion that affirmative action has gone through three phases. The first phase is “Obligatory Affirmative Action,” which started during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s to the late 1970s. During this period, college admission officers championed the idea of increasing the enrollment of minority students. The second phase, “Voluntary Affirmative Action,” occurred from 1980 to 1995. During this phase, colleges and universities vigorously implemented affirmative action through race-conscious admission policies. The third phase is the “Tempered Affirmative Action Phase” (post-1995 to present
time) where legal rulings dictate what measures are mandated to select students (Dickason, 2001).

Finally, the chapter provided background information on the focus of affirmative action at UMass Amherst, which is *diversity*. This study will examine the impact of the university’s diversity rationale and focus on minority enrollment, educational attainment, and student success.
Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter maps out the methods that will be utilized to conduct this study. There are four basic parts: (1) the research questions that are answered; (2) an overview of the approach that was used in the study; (3) the types of data that were collected; and (4) how the data was analyzed.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to conduct an in-depth investigation/analysis of the affirmative action policies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. It describes how they evolved and where they stand today. A qualitative case study, using document analysis as the assessment method on affirmative action policies and procedures at the UMass Amherst, was performed. The study concentrated on what those policies and procedures were, starting in 1972 when the university’s first Affirmative Action Plan was developed, up to the present (2016). Notably, this entire thesis was based on an analysis of documents existing in the public domain. The data gathered was largely qualitative, with some quantitative (such as student enrollment figures by race/ethnicity).

Case Study Method

Yin (1984) defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (such as affirmative action) within its real-life context. The case study as a research method typically excels at bringing an understanding of an issue and thus, for this particular study, adds strength to what is already known about affirmative action policies at flagship institutions of higher education (Yin, 1984).

Moreover, Yin (2003) asserts that a case study should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of
those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe that they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and the context (Yin, 2003). This case study cannot be considered without understanding the context-judicial rulings, statewide bans, and affirmative action policies at flagship public institutions. It is in these contexts that affirmative action college admission policies evolved.

According to Stake (1994), a case study is a “sharp focus of attention” on a particular situation. There are three types of case studies: *intrinsic* (case itself is of interest to the researcher), *instrumental* (provides insight into an issue to refine a theory), and *collective* (a number of cases are studied jointly in order to understand a phenomenon) (R. Stake, 1994).

Using Stake’s framework, *intrinsic case study* applies to this research. As a person of color, the researcher has a genuine, long-standing interest in affirmative action as a policy and wants to study it further to gain a better understanding of its impact on minority student enrollment at flagship public institutions. The research object in this case study is the affirmative action policies and procedures at UMass Amherst, which are intricately connected to historical, social, and political issues. These provided wide-ranging possibilities for questions, adding some complexity to the case study. Refined, insightful questions arose while reviewing various documents.

**Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA)**

As a valid research resource, documents were used as the sole focus for data collection and analysis. Lindsay Prior (2003) conducted extensive work on the use of documents, and Prior reports their efficacy when conducting sociological research, highlighting that documents are “receptacles of content and full-fledged agents participating in human activity” (Prior, 2003).

Lynggaard (2012) reports that document analysis is the most common research technique used to uncover continuity and change in discourse. Payne & Payne (2004) describe the documentary method as techniques used to categorize, investigate, interpret, and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents whether in the public or private domain (Mogalakwe, 2006). Public documents include government publications such as policy statements, census reports, statistical bulletins, departmental annual reports, consultant reports, etc. (Mogalakwe, 2006).

The identity of a university, according to Prior (2003), can be recognized though its documents. Prior (2003) places documents and the act of documentation as holding a higher level of importance, writing as follows:

A university (any university) is in its documents rather than its buildings. The charter together with other documents names the university, provides warrant to award degrees, and legitimizes the officers of the university and so on. Naturally, a university has buildings and equipment and lectures and students, but none of those things are sufficient for the award of university status. Only the charter can define the organization as a university, and in that sense provide the one necessary condition for its existence (Prior, 2003, p.60).

Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA), a research method for rigorously and systematically analyzing the contents of written documents, was utilized in this historical
Grady (1998) asserts that document analysis is useful when performing historical research, when actual subjects are no longer available for interviews or observations. In this study, QDA was applied to give voice and meaning to past and current affirmative action policies at UMass Amherst. An analysis of the intent and purpose of documents relating to affirmative action was performed within a historical context.

Further, the purpose of conducting a QDA is not to provide a robust evaluation of the affirmative action practices and policies of UMass Amherst, but rather to see whether there are trends in the documents among various university officials. The study “took a step back” so to speak, and considers whether there are gaps in policies and their implementation, to what extent is affirmative action institutionalized, what does it mean in practice to students, and what needs to change from a policy and practice perspective to achieve congruence.

Russ-Eft & Preskill (2001) reports the benefits of using document analysis as an assessment tool (and reasons for choosing it for this study). These include the following factors: (1) good source of background information on affirmative action at UMass Amherst to understand the history, philosophy and operation of the program, policies and practices; (2) provides a “behind the scenes” look at UMass Amherst’s affirmative action Program that may not be directly observable at this point in time; (3) may bring up issues not noted by other means; (4) unobtrusive; and (5) relatively inexpensive.

The Institute of Development Studies (2013) notes other benefits in applying QDA to this study: (1) yields a sense of the strengths and gaps in affirmative action Policies at UMass Amherst; (2) provides information on the trends in affirmative action policies and practices at UMass Amherst (congruencies and disparities between them); and (3) encourages an
independent reflection by the researcher on identifying intended and/or unintended results of UMass Amherst’s affirmative action Program.

Grady (1998) identifies the disadvantages of using document analysis: problems with access to useful documents (or artifacts), and that documents often take considerable time to sort through with one document leading to another and yet another. At the same time, Grady (1998) notes that the major advantage of using document analysis is accuracy, in other words a clear, tangible record since most documents are less likely to be manipulated.

Another benefit of using QDA is that there is very little research literature on the topic of document analysis, according to Darrel Caulley (1983). Caulley recommends that the researcher focus on records that report about, in this case, the Affirmative Action Program’s origin, history, operations and impact through laws, regulations, rules, guidelines and legal interpretations that help to set forth the legal basis of the program. Documents might include minutes of meetings, organizational charts, staff reports, financial statements, annual reports, newsletters, budget justifications, and of particular importance to Caulley, memoranda and documents on the inner workings of programs. Memoranda are a particularly rich source of information since this is the primary means of communication for program personnel (Owen, 2013).

Platt (2006) asserts that more than any other method, QDA requires that the researcher provides detailed accounts, not only of the findings, but of the process by which conclusions were reached. This detailed “paper trail” describes how and on what basis and opinion was reached (Institute of Development Studies, 2013), or an “audit trail” to minimize the researcher’s interpretations being challenged by discrepant evidence (Altheide, 1996).

Data Collection
The centerpiece of research design is data collection (Grady, 1998). For this qualitative research, data collection means using document analysis to produce rich information about the policies and practices concerning affirmative action at UMass Amherst.

Both Yin and Stake recognize the importance of effectively organizing data. For this study, the main form of data collection was historical and contemporary documents and publications in the public domain. Data collection included a review of the documents associated with affirmative action policies at UMass Amherst in order to produce an account of both process and outcomes relating to their implementation. Specifically, a careful examination was conducted on a number of historical files (including memoranda, reports, proposals, meeting summaries, press releases, and other institutional records) that relate to the university’s attempt to institutionalize its Equal Opportunity and Diversity Program. Since these documents pertain to decisions made by a public institution, the information was readily available through the Open Public Records Act (OPRA). Documents gathered were hard copy or electronic.

A data collection form (see attached Written Document Analysis Worksheet) was utilized to summarize data gleaned from the document reviews. The following information was collected when reviewing a document: (1) type of document; (2) unique physical qualities of the document; (3) date of document; (4) author (or creator) of the document (if known); (5) position or title (if known); (6) for what audience was the document written; and (7) document information. Such information regarding documents focused on the following elements: important points made by the author in the document; why was this document written; what evidence in the document tells why it was written; list what the document tells about affirmative action policies and/or practices at UMass Amherst; unanswered questions not addressed in the document; author’s connection to affirmative action policies and/or practices at UMass Amherst;
intended audience for the document (public or private); and intent of the author to inform or persuade.

If needed, the researcher first contacted UMass Amherst to gain its cooperation, explain the purpose of the study, and assemble key contact information. The researcher stated his intent to request copies of documents and how best to retrieve these items.

**Primary Data Source: Public Domain Documents**

Documents in the public domain were the primary source of data for this research. No interviews were conducted nor did the researcher administer surveys. However, in addition to obvious documents in the public domain, other sources of information were reviewed, including: reports from national organizations concerned with diversity at the national level, speeches by various presidents and chancellors of UMass Amherst at one time, speeches by former Governor Duval Patrick, speeches by former and current legislators, articles in newspapers and magazines, videotapes and photographs of relevant events, and position papers.

The systematic organization of documents/data was important to prevent the researcher from becoming overwhelmed by the amount of information collected and to prevent the researcher from losing sight of the original research purpose and questions. The following procedures were implemented once documents had been collected: (1) ensured that each document was clearly delineated and properly named; (2) abstracted each file by identifying themes and information relevant to the study. According to DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000), a theme is an abstract that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent pattern. Van Manen (1990) views themes as written attempts to get at the notions of data to make sense of them and give them shape; (3) cross-referenced with other documents of similar subject matter; (4) hard copies
of pertinent documents were immediately scanned and saved on the researcher’s password-protected personal computer. Only the researcher had access to the documents and other data.

**Data Analysis**

The researcher examined documents to find links to the research questions, and categorized, tabulated, and recombined data to address the initial purpose of the study. When necessary, the researcher moved beyond initial impressions to improve the likelihood of accurate and reliable findings. Throughout the analysis process, the researcher remained open to new opportunities and insights.

The data analysis itself begins with a detailed description of the case study and its setting. The approach presented a chronology of events using data from public domain documents (and other sources previously delineated) to determine patterns of similarities and differences. A naturalistic generalization approach was applied as well. Stake (1995) originated this term to mean generalizations that can be made from the findings of a case study (R.E. Stake, 1995). Thus, for this study, generalizations were made about what occurred and how the findings could assist other colleges/universities when implementing affirmative action policies and programs.

In terms of deriving patterns from data collected, the researcher engaged in what is called analytic induction, reviewing data for categories of phenomena, defining sets of relationships, collecting more data, etc. A loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data may occur as additional questions emerge. Data was scanned for patterns in order to build a picture or a story to describe what is occurring (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

It is noted that although this is a qualitative research study, the data analysis included quantitative data (e.g. number of minority students enrolled in a particular academic year) represented in Tables to support conclusions.
Trustworthiness

The notion of “trustworthiness” is from the seminal research of Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln (1985). Numerous frameworks have been developed to evaluate the rigor or to assess the trustworthiness of qualitative data (Guba 1981; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Moreover, according to Baxter & Jack (2008), there are several basic key elements that can be integrated in the study to enhance overall quality or trustworthiness: the case study research study is clearly written and substantiated; case study design is appropriate for the research question; data are collected and managed systematically; and the data are analyzed carefully.

Scholars also suggest a “triangulation of data sources” as a primary strategy to support the principle that the phenomenon be viewed and explored from multiple perspectives (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Wesley (2010) notes that for qualitative document analysts, triangulation may take two forms: (1) “quantizing” the findings by indicating how many times a particular set of keywords, such as “diversity” and/or “inclusion” appeared in the document; (2) “member-checking” by consulting with the authors of the documents to see if one’s interpretations match their original motives or intent (Wesley, 2010). These guidelines were applied to the study to instill confidence that the phenomenon (affirmative action policies and programs) were examined and recorded with scrutiny and that the findings are congruent with reality.

Wesley (2010) adds that all document analysts must protect the authenticity or “truth value” of their research to ensure measurement validity. Authenticity of the evidence for analysis is the fundamental criterion in any research (Mogalakwe, 2006). An authentic analysis is one that offers a genuine interpretation of reality, or an accurate reading of a particular set of documents (Wesley, 2010), relying upon the subjective evaluation of the reader (Krippendorff, 2004).
To address these issues of reliability and validity, the researcher employed techniques to show that, if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and documents, similar results would be obtained. As recommended by Platt (1981), and to ensure credibility, the researcher also closely scrutinized each document and did not include those that have the following circumstances: when the document did not make sense or had obvious errors; when there were different versions of the same document; when there were internal inconsistencies in terms of style and content; and/or when the version available was derived from a dubious, suspicious or unreliable secondary source.

**Basic Intent for Collecting and Analyzing Data on UMass Amherst**

Based on documents reviewed, UMass Amherst has a long-standing commitment to building a racially and ethnically diverse campus community of faculty, staff and students. Over the years, campus leadership has worked diligently towards this goal. Further, data collected and analyzed helped inform us to what extent the Amherst campus has found success in minority recruitment and retention based on the 2005 recommendations of the Commission on Campus Diversity, what new resources were acquired as a result of the commission’s recommendations, and what have been some of the challenges in implementing these recommendations. Also, it helped inform us what has been the impact of the university’s college admission affirmative action policies on minority enrollment. Does the university have a “critical mass” number/percentage that it uses to ensure a baseline level of diversity? What concerns remain unresolved and what new issues appear?
Chapter 4: Research Findings

This chapter presents the study’s findings. Since it is restricted to the presentation and analysis of the data collected, it does not draw conclusions or discuss results within the context of the literature. A later chapter will present conclusions and discuss the findings, and how they fit into the existing body of knowledge.

Introduction

This study conducted an in-depth analysis of the affirmative action policies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, starting with how they evolved and where they stand today. Document analysis was used in this qualitative case study as the method to assess the affirmative action policies and procedures at UMass Amherst.

The following section concentrates on what those policies and procedures were, starting in 1972, when the university’s first Affirmative Action Plan was developed. The national context, which prompted UMass Amherst to establish its plan, is discussed at the outset.


The Executive Order, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 24, 1965, prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, and national origin by those organizations receiving federal contracts and subcontracts totaling more than $50,000 (University of California’s Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, 2015). Compliance with this regulation also requires federal contractors to take affirmative action to promote the full realization of equal opportunity for women and other minorities, establishing a written affirmative action plan, and assigning responsibility to an official for implementation of equal employment opportunity and the affirmative action plan (University of California’s Office of
Equal Opportunity and Diversity, 2015). The Executive Order was anchored in Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

On October 1, 1972, the Federal Office for Civil Rights (OCR) issued Guidelines for Higher Education institutions to follow concerning Executive Order 11246. As a written public policy, the guidelines required college and university presidents across the country to be in compliance with Executive Order 11246 and implementing regulations. The guidelines mandated academic institutions to create/implement the following: (1) a statement of commitment to non-discretionary employment practices and equal employment opportunity; (2) the appointment of an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer to organize and monitor the affirmative action program, said officer is to have the appropriate institutional support for completing the task; (3) the collection and analysis of data by an organizational unit and job classification relating to the presence of women and minorities and their conditions of employment (as compared to those of majority males); (4) the development of mechanisms to correct any deficiencies identified by that analysis; (5) the development of a monitoring system for the program, and the submission of annual reports to the OCR; and (6) faculty and supervisory officials must be involved in the effort, and suggested the development of committees or task forces for that purpose.

Thus, universities and colleges, falling under Executive Order 11246 had to set forth a plan, which contained more than a commitment to a statement of equal employment opportunity and a statement of goals. It was necessary that the commitment to equal employment opportunity be detailed through personnel policies and supported through data on the respective academic institution’s workforce, including its composition of women and minorities.
Stanley Pottinger, the first Director of the federal OCR, and who was considered a liberal Republican under the Nixon Administration, justified the need for the guidelines given the myriad problems concerning discrimination on college campuses (Pottinger, 1972). Problems ranged from racial discrimination to sex discrimination in both student body and faculty (Pottinger, 1972). He urged campuses to engage in “good faith efforts” to identify and recruit, on a nondiscriminatory basis, qualified women and other minorities so that they can become available for equal consideration (Bunzel, 1998, page number). He felt that performance standards should not be compromised or abandoned when hiring women and other minorities (Bunzel, 1998).

Another context to recognize is the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment, which was first revealed in 1972, which was the same year of OCR’s affirmative action mandate for colleges and universities. For a period of 40 years (1932-1972), 399 Black men with syphilis (between the ages of 25 to 60) participated in the United States Public Health Service (PHS) study (Brandt, 1978). Many syphilitic men were not given penicillin to treat the disease although effective syphilis treatment was available (Brandt, 1978; Riggs, 2012). As a result, several died throughout the duration of the study. The Tuskegee revelation in 1972 prompted the establishment of an Ad Hoc Advisory Panel to review the study (Brandt, 1978). The federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), the government agency that provided oversight to the Office of Civil Rights, convened the Advisory Panel. Subsequently, the Advisory Panel concluded that the study was unethical for two reasons: the subjects participated in the study under the guise of receiving treatment, yet, no treatment was provided; and the subjects participated in the study without giving their informed consent. The study had a very negative impact, creating much distrust about research participation especially among male
African-Americans (Brandt, 1978; Riggs, 2012). It has conjured much discussion about racial inequality and how to minimize racial disparities, which remains a central issue of affirmative action.

**UMass Amherst’s First Affirmative Action Policy (1972-1998)**

Heightened national consciousness of racial justice impacted the UMass Amherst campus climate, and it met with some of the same trends as other campuses were experiencing across the United States. One trend was the increased numbers of minority undergraduate populations on campuses and the pressure to improve academic and social conditions for these students. The late 1960s and the early 1970s “witnessed the beginning of a dramatic increase in the enrollment of black students in predominantly white colleges and universities” (Allen, 1988, p.165).

During the late 1960s, in response to the Civil Rights Movement, UMass Amherst also experienced an increased presence of Black students. At that time, increasing Black students’ access to higher education was seen as a major solution to the problem of racial inequality (Allen, 1988). The increased presence of Black students on the UMass Amherst campus brought with it an outbreak of ugly racial incidents, which led to a revitalization of the university’s commitment to minority students. One particular incident stands out (Marcus, 1976).

On November 7, 1968, a Black student, James R. Hall, and a White friend were attacked on Orchard Hill by a group of five white students, who told them that “n****s don’t belong at UMass anymore.” According to Marcus (1976), the following day, “the Student Afro-American Society led a march of one hundred black students on the Whitmore Administration Building to present a list of demands relating to racial conditions on campus. Four of the twenty-two items called for increased numbers of black staff, especially among the faculty; several others
demanded sensitivity and racial awareness training for University students and staff” (Marcus, 1976, p. 17).

This particular incident prompted the evolution of affirmative action efforts on the UMass Amherst campus. Starting in the spring of 1969, efforts included a series of lectures focusing on the myths and realities of racism with subsequent small group discussions and projects. Also, the University’s Student Affairs Division sponsored workshops on institutional and personal racism. The university invested $120,000 for these purposes during 1969-1974 (Marcus, 1976). Moreover, UMass Amherst implemented two key initiatives on campus: the formation of the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students (CCEBMS) in 1967 and the building of the W.E.B DuBois Department of Afro-American Studies, recognized as a degree-granting department in 1970 (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014).

In 1970, Robert Wood, the new university president overseeing the multi-campus public system, appointed a Committee on the Future University of Massachusetts to look at five areas. These included the following: “accessibility to able students; diversity of academic program; undergraduate teaching as a special priority; service to the public; and productivity in the use of resources” (Marcus, 1976). The committee was comprised of students and faculty as well as a broad representation of those active in higher education (Marcus, 1976).

During 1971, the committee met and released its report with recommendations. Recommendations pertaining to the admission of minority students were three-fold: (1) the public university system must not become economically and racially segregated; (2) a new admissions process should be adopted involving significant efforts to recruit students who are unlikely to qualify for admissions through the conventional means; and (3) the new student admission formula should be based on high school grades or rank in class to ensure
representation from rural and inner city schools (Marcus, 1976, p. 19). Regarding the latter, the committee’s justification was that reliance on standardized tests for admissions would discriminate against disproportionate numbers of students from lower income and minority families.

Notably, the committee’s report was presented in 1971, which was several months prior to the Office of Civil Rights’ mandate in 1972, which obligated the entire higher education sector across the country to initiate activity to ensure equal employment opportunity. It is worth noting that UMass voluntarily fulfilled some of OCR’s requirements prior to the announcement of the mandate in 1972. Some leading colleges and universities (like UMass Amherst) had already initiated race-conscious admission policies by the time the mandate took effect, having the acknowledged goal of increasing the number of racial minority students (Garrow, 2007).

Specifically, UMass Amherst developed a committee to examine access, institutional climate for minority students, use data to identify-related deficiencies, and to substantiate recommendations. For example, the committee cited in its report that minorities comprised only 2% of the Amherst campus faculty and included only four full professors – calling for an increase in this statistic (Marcus, 1976).

On February 2, 1972, the university issued a 12-page document intended to serve as an interim Affirmative Action Plan and a guideline for future activity. Included in the document was a Statement of Intent (Marcus, 1976). It read as follows:

The University of Massachusetts Amherst Campus Affirmative Action Program is a positive plan designed to create positive employment opportunities for minorities and oppressed individuals, e.g., physically and mentally handicapped, aged, veterans, and ex-convicts with the intent of addressing existing discriminatory
attitudes and preventing them in the future. Minorities are defined in Executive Order 74 as including: Spanish-surnamed, American Indians, Afro-Americans and Orientals. In addition, a key thrust of the program will involve the identification of the specific inequities caused by previous discrimination and the establishment of operational goals against which the University can measure success in alleviating these inequities.

The university’s interim Affirmative Action Plan placed a strong emphasis on minority employment and the coordination and monitoring authority in the hands of an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer. While the interim plan was the first of its kind, it was only given limited circulation throughout the campus and did not address the handling of minority student admissions.

On May 26, 1972, the University’s Board of Trustees passed a resolution empowering President Robert Wood to develop a university-wide policy on affirmative action (Marcus, 1976). The Board emphasized that affirmative action in both hiring and admissions are key elements in creating a responsive institution. In responding to this directive, President Wood acted as such: (1) ordered each campus in the UMass system to submit final Affirmative Action Plans directly to him by June 30, 1972 with monthly reports beginning in July 1972 to Peter Edelman, Vice-President for Policy and Plans; and (2) appointed an Affirmative Action Officer within the President’s Office. Officially, Chancellor Bromery became the “equal employment opportunity officer” required by Executive Order 11246.

It took a two-year process for the University to develop its first official affirmative action Plan, Volume 1 – dated March 1974. The Amherst campus committed itself to undertake efforts that resulted in increased numbers of minorities and female students and staff, and the provision of adequate compensation and career encouragement for these groups.
The *Bakke* case in California in the late 1970s signaled universities and colleges to use race as a significant factor to be considered in the admissions process in order to foster a more diverse student population. In theory, UMass followed this policy until 1998 when it eliminated race as a factor in admissions and scholarship decisions.

Significantly, UMass made this decision when it was around the time (1997) that New England Board of Higher Education (the NEBHE) in 1989 convened the Task Force on Black and Hispanic Student Enrollment and Retention in New England. Task Force members represented the Connecticut Department of Higher Education, Connecticut State University System, Greater New Haven State Technical College, Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations, Rhode Island Office of Higher Education, Tufts University, University of Massachusetts, University of Southern Maine, University of Vermont, and Yale University. A lawyer from Boston was also a member. Five NEBHE staff members assisted the Task Force. The co-chair of the Task Force was Dr. Edgar E. Smith, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, University of Massachusetts System, and he was also Black. Another UMass representative on the Task Force was James M. Wilson from the UMass Institute for Social and Economic Research who provided expert assistance with the collection and interpretation of the New England data. In January 1989, the Task Force issued its report while noting:

The NEBHE Task Force has uncovered the same stark inequities in minority participation in New England higher education. Blacks and Hispanics receive only 3.7 percent of all bachelor’s degrees, 3.4 percent of master’s degrees, and 4.3 percent of doctorates awarded in New England. These percentages are unacceptably low. Blacks and
Hispanics represent 6.2 percent of the region’s population and, it should be remembered, possess a much higher proportion of New England youth (page vii).

The Task Force identified nine key findings. “Finding #2: Even though New England may be the higher-education capital of the world, an unacceptable low number of Black and Hispanic students receive undergraduate, graduate, or professional degrees from the region’s colleges and universities” (New England Board of Higher Education 1989, p. 5). “Finding #6: Racist behavior and attitudes on New England campuses must be acknowledged and eradicated” (New England Board of Higher Education, 1989, p. 16). The Task Force recommended “presidents and boards of trustees should make a greater commitment to the academic success and expanded enrollment of Black and Hispanic students. Presidents should active self-assessments of their campuses’ racial climate and then adopt initiatives to address problems discovered” (page v).

Although the New England Board of Higher Education’s Task Force highlighted concerns about persistent racial inequities among the region’s campuses, UMass still decided voluntarily to minimize the role of race in its admissions process. Students were not silent and protested the university’s decision. Between 1992-1997, the UMass Amherst administration agreed twice with student protesters to bring undergraduate minority enrollment up to 20 percent. The first commitment was made in fall 1992 when protesters occupied a campus building for a week. The second commitment was made in March 1997 when more than 100 students held a six-day, sit-in at the Goodell Building on the Amherst campus. The students said they were trying to make the university live up to commitments it made in the fall of 1992. In formal agreements with protesters, university officials set a 20 percent minority goal, vowed to strive for
more racial diversity among administrators, and pledged millions of dollars more to help poor and minority students (Associated Press, 1999; Robin, 1999).

Like students, some minority faculty members expressed concern about low minority-student recruitment and admissions levels. On April 2, 1996, Rita Nethersole, an African-American and Statewide Associate Vice-President of Student Affairs, transmitted an email memorandum to Executive Vice-President James Julian, requesting that President William M. Bulger meet with the minority faculty caucus to discuss their concerns regarding UMass admissions and diversity policies (Nethersole v. Bulger, 2002). The Nethersole memorandum stated:

The University Caucus of Color, a group of faculty and staff of color, have requested a meeting with the president and five chancellors. We hope that this meeting could be a conversation, which the concerns of the community of color can be detailed to the president and responded to by the president and the five chancellors. Those concerns include the issues of diversity among the University leadership, University admission policies, responsibility for diversity concerns within the President’s office, Affirmative Action, the Report of the Massachusetts Association of Scholars, Ethnic Studies Program, etc. I envision that this meeting would take approximately two hours and involve twenty-five campus representatives. The Caucus would like to schedule the meeting for the early part of the day.

Within weeks after her memorandum, Nethersole received notice that UMass was considering whether to terminate her employment “for cause” (although her role as Associate Vice-President of Student Affairs included promoting faculty/student diversity). University
administration felt that Nethersole’s memorandum, referencing the Caucus “concerns” with faculty/staff “diversity,” implied opposition to the UMass policies (Nethersole v. Bulger, 2002). In fall 1997 (about 18 months after the Nethersole memorandum), President Bulger instructed the University’s General Counsel to inform Chancellor Scott to end the 20 percent admissions policy. In 1998, minority enrollment was down at the Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, and Lowell campuses from the year before. At UMass Amherst, freshmen minority enrollment dropped by 41 students to 655 for a total of 19 percent (Associated Press, 1999).

Elimination of Race-Based Admission Policies at UMass Amherst (1998-2004)

A decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling on the Boston Latin Civil court case, where race was eliminated in the admissions process, prompted UMass Amherst officials to follow suit. Boston Latin Public High School is a competitive magnet school that actively implemented a race-based affirmative action system in their admissions policy. In 1998, a student sued the school for reverse discrimination and lost, but later won on appeal in the First United States Circuit Court of Appeals (Gaytan, 1999).

The University no longer considered race a priority in determining admission eligibility and scholarship decisions. Rather, the new policy included categories such as “personal talents,” “geographic location,” and “compassion” – serving as alternative criteria for admissions. Other non-race variables that will be considered equally were family income and whether students will be the first generation in their families to attend college (Gaytan, 1999). According to university officials, the goal was to define diversity as broadly as possible.

In a memorandum (dated February 19, 1999) from the Chancellor David Scott’s Office to the campus community:
The University of Massachusetts is moving to modify some of its admissions and financial aid practices in light of changing legal views on affirmative action nation-wide. UMass Amherst has a long-standing commitment to diversity but we recognize that a new climate exists. We are looking at some short-term and some long-term approaches dealing with the changing times. In the past, especially after the Bakke case in California in the late 1970s, many universities used race as a significant factor to be considered in the admissions process in order to foster a more diverse student population. UMass followed this practice with a goal of recruiting an incoming first-year class of qualified students who reflect the diversity of graduating seniors from Massachusetts high schools. With the recent legal interpretations in mind, now when we consider which applicants to admit, we will use a much broader array of permissible criteria for achieving diversity. The same will hold true for certain scholarships, which in the past, could be awarded mainly on race and ethnic criteria. We will broaden the definition of diversity for these scholarships.

Following this announcement of UMass Amherst’s new policy in February 1999, both undergraduate and graduate students began organizing, forming the Task Force for Equal Opportunity and Access for All People. After a few rowdy rallies and marches to the admissions and administrative offices, UMass Amherst Chancellor David Scott explained the reason for the change by referring to the Boston Latin decision (Gaytan, 1999). Other reasons given by the university were the recent court ruling that struck down a race-based admission policy [the Supreme Court’s 1978 decision in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*] outlawing racial quotas, extra outreach efforts and racial and gender preferences, but allowing race as a
factor in admission policies as well as similar decisions made in the states of Washington, Texas and California (Associated Press, 1999).

Despite Chancellor Scott’s insistence that the admissions practices have only been “modified,” the number of African-American acceptances dropped twenty-two percent, while the enrollment of white students rose by twenty-four percent (Gaytan, 1999). Along with this noticeable reduction of African-American students (and faculty of color), during the period 1999-2004, the Amherst Campus experienced several negative (and sometimes violent) incidents that involved matters of race (Commission on Campus Diversity, 2005).

UMass Amherst Commission on Campus Diversity (2004-2005)

Given the climate that existed on the UMass Amherst campus, Chancellor John V. Lombardi appointed the Commission on Campus Diversity to examine the history and current challenges pertaining to racial and ethnic diversity and inclusion at the school. The charge to the Commission was issued on October 14, 2004 (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006) as follows:

On our campus, we know that the racial and ethnic conflicts that exist in the communities from which our students come carry over into campus life. We know that education programs designed to establish the standards of behavior we expect from all members of our community must be constantly revised and reinforced since each new generation of students requires clear direction about our expectations within this campus community. We know that some among us believe that encouraging conflict is an effective tactic while others believe that disengagement from these difficult issues are the appropriate response. Neither approach produces the kind of university community we require, and both approaches are indicative of a need to
review and reframe our commitment of resources, our organizational structure, and
our programs to improve the conditions and reduce behaviors that create occasions for
conflict and provide the opportunities that reengage more of our campus community
in the work of improving the campus. [...] To that end, the Chancellor, Provost, and
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs have established the Commission on Campus
Diversity with strong national leadership to provide an opportunity to understand our
challenges better and to design a strategy to implement the many improvements everyone
recognizes are necessary (page 2).

Over a four-month period (November 2004-February 2005), the Commission studied
many reports, held confidential interviews, and received testimony from almost 100 students,
faculty, administrators, staff, alumni, and others in the university community. The 23-member
commission, chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School of Howard University, conducted its
own confidential deliberations. It released its report on March 1, 2015 titled, “Diversity and
Inclusion at UMass Amherst: A Blueprint for Change.” The report highlighted the following
serious problems at UMass Amherst (Commission on Campus Diversity, 2005):

Lack of consistent and unequivocal commitment to diversity, inclusion and social justice
in the mission statement, practices and structures. There is an additional lack of
consistent clarity concerning Amherst campus expectations, philosophies and core values
with respect to diversity and inclusion. As a result, some students, staff, faculty and
others, regarding the campus’ treatment of members of underrepresented minority
groups, express many feelings of mistrust, disappointment and anger towards some
aspects of the Amherst campus administration. Some of the students’ negative
feelings are associated with their conviction that their voices are disrespected, not taken
seriously, and in some cases ignored, and in their belief that the authority of the Student Government to advocate on behalf of diversity and inclusion has been undermined crisis management, rather than planning centered approach to addressing issues of diversity and inclusion, resulting in a cyclical waxing and waning of campus initiatives that seem to respond to the need to reduce the “heat” of overt manifestations of racism, ethnocentrism or violence when they occur rather than an approach based on careful planning and assessment in conformity with good practice in higher education. Lack of centralized coordination of diversity activities and no senior level individual designated to “champion” and advocate on behalf of inclusion and diversity issues at all levels of university life. In some instances, this has created a duplication of effort with diminished impact (page 6). Absence of an overall undergraduate and graduate strategic enrollment management plan exacerbated by the lack of a professionally qualified and seasoned Director of Admissions (for the past five or six years) have left unaddressed a serious pattern of declining enrollment of minority students on the Amherst campus, and have contributed towards missed opportunities to enhance equity in recruitment, applications, admissions, financial support, retention and graduation of students from underrepresented minority groups in all academic units, including the Commonwealth College (Honors College). The absence of an organizational structure that strictly aligns financial aid and admissions further contributes to these missed opportunities to increase minority student enrollment. Uneven and oftentimes deficient academic advising of students generally especially African, Latino, Asian and Native American (ALANA) students. Overextended goals for the ALANA support programs with respect to their original intent to serve as transitional entities to advance racial/ethnic equity and to
provide a welcoming environment for ALANA students vs. their evolution to providing some essential services for students that are inadequately provided by the Amherst campus such as advising, recruitment and some academic services in addition to their social and cultural activities and advocacy for students. Moreover, there seems to be a pattern of racial/ethnic balkanization that often results in a dis-connectivity of students of color from the general campus community, as well as within ALANA student communities. Serious declines in faculty, staff and administrators of color in recent years in the face of almost universal expressions of needs to increase faculty and leadership diversity. Absence of benchmarks, targets, assessment tools, accountability standards and rewards to govern the expectations of deans, department heads, faculty, staff and others in achieving institutional and school/college inclusion and diversity goals (page 7). The presence of other “isms’ beyond racism that, while beyond the charge to the Commission, deserve attention from the Amherst campus (e.g., issues revolving around such matters as socioeconomic class, disability, language preference, sexual orientation, etc.) Insufficient support and unevenness in the general education courses and discipline-specific course offered and required of UMass Amherst undergraduates designed to enhance their knowledge of and competence in diversity issues. No apparent effort to include such courses on a consistent basis within graduate programs. Insufficient support for the curricular and pedagogical requirements to adequately meet diversity and inclusion goals in academic areas. Inadequate opportunities to enhance the ability of staff, administrators and others to meet the unique challenges involved in addressing the unique needs of underrepresented minority students. Severe cuts in the UMass Amherst’s budget seem to have compromised its ability to provide adequate
staffing and other resources to support essential services and programs to enhance diversity and inclusion (page 8).

The Commission made a number of recommendations, as summarized below:

Appoint a senior level administrator with adequate staffing, budget and resources to report directly to the Chancellor to review and coordinate all diversity and inclusion activities at the Amherst campus. [...] As a standing member of the Chancellor’s cabinet, the appointee should advocate for diversity and inclusion policies, goals and practices campus wide, and make an annual report to the Chancellor and the campus community on progress towards achieving the campus’ policies, goals and practices. The appointee shall not substitute for the expectation that other faculty and administrators will pursue efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion (pages 8-9). Establish an advisory council for the proposed senior diversity official consisting of individuals from a cross-section of the university community to assist in planning and assessing diversity and inclusion goals, policies and programs. Re-structure the institution’s administrative organization to enhance the achievement of inclusion and diversity goals, including the assignment of increased responsibility and oversight by the Office of the Provost in pursuing such goals, particularly those that relate directly to academic functions such as student advising. Establish a planning and assessment process to govern undergraduate and graduate enrollment management with particular attention to reversing the current decline of minority students on the Amherst campus through intensified efforts to recruit, enroll, retain and graduate students from underrepresented groups (page 9). Re-structure and improve the institution’s academic advising services such that these advising services become more available and effective for all students and sensitive to the unique issues
and concerns of students of color. Re-define and re-structure ALANA support programs, including ALANA Honors. Re-structured support programs should work, in strict cooperation and collaboration with respective academic and student affairs units. Launch a systematic and coherent drive to reverse the decline of faculty and administrators of color by intensifying efforts to recruit, hire, promote and tenured faculty members from these groups, with increased accountability for deans, department heads and other academic leaders to achieve targeted goals. Increase accountability and incentives for deaneries, departments and administrators across executive areas to establish and implement benchmarks, targets and assessment procedures to govern diversity efforts within their units (page 10). Review, assess and strengthen, as needed, the general education requirement and courses within majors for undergraduate and graduate students to enhance their knowledge of and competence in diversity and inclusion topics. Review, assess and strengthen, as needed, opportunities for staff, administrators and faculty to acquire the sensitivities and competencies required to meet the unique needs of racially and ethnically diverse students. Require all members of the Amherst campus’ leadership community to develop plans to intensify and assess efforts to achieve an improved climate for enhancing diversity and inclusion within their areas of responsibility. In full recognition of the current serious budgetary challenges, UMass Amherst must find or raise the funds necessary to provide the structures, educational experiences and infrastructures required to address the academic and campus climate issues contained within this report. Establish a regularized and annual process for assessing the progress toward the achievement of the institution’s inclusion and diversity goals by a body similar to the current Commission with the expectation that an annual
written report and recommendations emanating from such a process are provided directly to the Chancellor. Student voices should be valued and the integrity of student government and its agencies respected in the pursuit of diversity and inclusion goals. It is clear from the Commission’s Blueprint for Change report that both diversity and inclusion were critical goals for UMass Amherst, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ academic flagship institution. However, these were goals that the university fell short in accomplishing, especially in the areas of minority student enrollment and support services to ensure their academic success, and the recruitment and retention of faculty of color. The report concludes as follows:

UMass Amherst has no choice […] but to restore its national reputation as a campus where diversity matters and where structures, policies and practices translate diversity goals into realities. In sum, the Amherst campus has an opportunity to assume leadership in an area that is of compelling interest to the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and, indeed, to the people of our country (page 45).

Campus’ Response to the Commission’s Blueprint for Change Report (2005-2008)

On April 29, 2005 (approximately 60 days after the Commission’s March 1, 2015 report), the Chancellor’s Office issued a campus response in the 35-page document titled, “On Improving Campus Diversity Action Plan,” to help move diversity issues forward. It proposed action in two major areas: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, and it reaffirmed that “the agenda for diversity and inclusion is a core issue within the mainstream of campus life” (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014).

The campus’ response to each recommendation is presented below:
**Recommendation 1:** Appoint a senior level administrator with adequate staffing, budget and resources to report directly to the Chancellor to review and coordinate all diversity and inclusion activities at the Amherst Campus.

**Campus Response:**

This recommendation at first look is attractive. It would allow the campus to consolidate everything that affects programs of diversity under one executive leadership. However, even if this were desirable, the segregation of diversity-oriented activities into one office relieves all other parts of the institution of responsibility for these issues. We do not believe that this is an effective way to achieve the results recommended by the Commission…The creation of a Vice Chancellor for Diversity with the authority and responsibility necessary would require a reorganization of the institution to move some significant portion of the funding and responsibility for academic affairs and some portions of student affairs into the office of the new Vice Chancellor. In addition, Associate Chancellor Terry will provide direct review and monitoring of the campus progress in implementing the action plan (page 30).

**Recommendation 2:** Establish an advisory council for the proposed senior diversity official consisting of individuals from a cross-section of the university community to assist in planning and assessing diversity and inclusion goals, policies and programs.

**Campus Response:**

The action plan creates a top-level advisory group, chaired by Associate Chancellor Terry who has the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the campus action plan…That process will include the appointment of an ad hoc review committee to advise the Chancellor on the progress made in all units. This group will include representatives
from various campus constituencies: faculty, staff, students, and community. The Chancellor will appoint individuals to this ad hoc committee annually, including some who served on the Commission, some who represent different areas of the campus mission, and some who have a historical perspective on the campus’ efforts in this area. No senior administrative officers or others with major budgetary authority over programs and activities reviewed will serve on this ad hoc Chancellor’s review committee. The ad hoc committee will meet with the Chancellor soon after the close of the fiscal year to review the campus’ progress in achieving its goals (page 31).

**Recommendation 3:** Re-structure the institution’s administrative organization to enhance the achievement of inclusion and diversity goals, including the assignment of increased responsibility and oversight by the Office of the Provost in pursuing such goals, particularly those that relate directly to academic functions such as student advising.

**Campus Response:**

The campus implements this recommendation as described in considerable detail in the Academic Affairs section and in the Student Affairs section with particular emphasis on the close integration between recruitment, admission, financial aid, retention, and campus life and the academic success of students and the coordination required between these two units (page 31).

**Recommendation 4:** Establish a planning and assessment process to govern undergraduate and graduate enrollment management with particular attention to reversing the current decline of minority students on the Amherst campus through intensified efforts to recruit, enroll, retain and graduate students from underrepresented groups.
**Campus Response:**

The campus implements this recommendation in both the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs sections of the plan…the implementation places particular emphasis on the need to align recruitment, admission, and financial aid with the Academic Affairs and academic advising services. Both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs outline the programs and activities that take specific actions to reach populations of underrepresented prospective undergraduate and graduate students, and recruit and support them. In addition, both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs include specific programs to improve the advising and support functions and to coordinate them more effectively to achieve improvement in the retention of both minority students and all students (page 31).

**Recommendation 5:** Re-structure and improve the institution’s academic advising services such that these advising services become more available and effective for all students and sensitive to the unique issues and concerns of students of color.

**Campus Response:**

The campus implementation of this recommendation appears primarily in the Academic Affairs section of the plan. These plans have direct links and support outlined within the Student Affairs section because the attention and focus on academic advising is central to campus effectiveness on these issues.

**Recommendation 6:** Re-define and re-structure ALANA support programs, including ALANA Honors.
Campus Response:

The campus implements this recommendation primarily through the plans reflected in the Student Affairs section…In addition, the Honors function in this recommendation will need to become part of the Academic Affairs activities as it speaks to the academic distinction of ALANA students…The Associate Chancellor and the ad hoc advisory committee as well as the Student Affairs assessment and evaluation process will monitor the effectiveness of this redefinition and restructuring.

**Recommendation 7:** Re-structured support programs should work in strict cooperation and collaboration with respective academic and student affairs units.

Campus Response:

The campus implements this recommendation by addressing throughout the plan the cooperation and collaboration required of both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. This collaboration appears in various places throughout the plans of these two units. The assessment and evaluation processes described in both units will measure the effectiveness of this collaboration and the Associate Chancellor and the ad hoc advisory committee to the Chancellor will review the results (page 32).

**Recommendation 8:** Launch a systematic and coherent drive to reverse the decline of faculty and administrators of color by intensifying efforts to recruit, hire, promote and tenured faculty members from these groups, with increased accountability for deans, department heads and other academic leaders to achieve targeted goals.

Campus Response:

The clear description in the Academic Affairs section of its plan to improve the campus’ ability to successfully recruit and retain minority faculty and staff serves as a model for
other campus units. The Associate Chancellor and the ad hoc advisory committee to the Chancellor will review the success of these efforts in all units.

**Recommendation 9:** Increase accountability and incentives for deaneries, departments and administrators across executive areas to establish and implement benchmarks, targets and assessment procedures to govern diversity efforts within their units.

**Campus Response:**

The campus implements this recommendation through a variety of different mechanisms. At the core level, the CDSJ (Community, Diversity and Social Justice) reaches into every department, program, and unit on campus with programs to assess and enhance diversity and inclusiveness among important goals. In addition, every unit has programs to track their success in achieving improvements in their diversity goals. Each of the key units in this discussion, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, has an assessment and evaluation process described in this plan. At the campus level, the Associate Chancellor and the ad hoc advisory committee to the Chancellor will review these improvements on an annual basis.

**Recommendation 10:** Review, assess and strengthen, as needed, the general education requirement and courses within majors for undergraduate and graduate students to enhance their knowledge of and competence in diversity and inclusion topics.

**Campus Response:**

This recommendation’s implementation falls primarily within the purview of the Faculty Senate. Academic Affairs has asked the appropriate committees of the Faculty Senate to address these issues and make recommendations to the faculty for curricular changes
needed after the review and assessment to strengthen the campus’ curriculum in this regard.

**Recommendation 11:** Review, assess and strengthen, as needed, opportunities for staff, administrators and faculty to acquire the sensitivities and competencies required to meet the unique needs of racially and ethnically diverse students.

**Campus Response:**

The campus implementation of this recommendation again requires multiple engagements with various units. Some of the opportunities needed appear in activities in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs that link programs related to students with those related to faculty and staff. Much of this activity again reflects the work of CDSJ (Community, Diversity and Social Justice) in all the programs and units on campus. Another portion involves the enhanced training of administrative staff sponsored by Administration and Finance that reaches out to all administrative units to ensure that supervisors have the skills necessary to manage and support a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff.

**Recommendation 12:** Require all members of the Amherst campus’ leadership community to develop plans to intensify and assess efforts to achieve an improved climate for enhancing diversity and inclusion within their areas of responsibility.

**Campus Response:**

The campus’ implementation of this recommendation appears in comments on other related recommendations in this plan. However, the long-standing commitment to CDSJ (Community, Diversity and Social Justice) as the primary vehicle for this activity has the
involvement of every division of the university and has activities, committees, and review and evaluation projects in every unit of the institution.

**Recommendation 13:** In full recognition of the current serious budgetary challenges, UMass Amherst must find or raise the funds necessary to provide the structures, educational experiences and infrastructures required to address the academic and campus climate issues contained within this report.

**Campus Response:**

The campus will establish a Diversity Tax that will reallocate approximately $800,000 to support the initiatives described in this document. This represents just a specific portion of the investment in the agenda described here, as the hiring of a diverse faculty and staff, the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body, and the improvements in advising and other elements reflect increased investment…The reason for the explicit Diversity Tax is to recognize that the success of these programs is everyone’s responsibility and that the investment of resources is the commitment we all make to achieve a more diverse campus (page 33).

**Recommendation 14:** Establish a regularized and annual process for assessing the progress toward the achievement of the institution’s inclusion and diversity goals by a body similar to the current Commission with the expectation that an annual written report and recommendations emanating from such a process are provided directly to the Chancellor.

**Campus Response:**

As mentioned in various places above, the Associate Chancellor will have the responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the action plan and will recommend the members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Campus Diversity to the Chancellor (page 34).
Recommendation 15: Student voices should be valued and the integrity of student government and its agencies respected in the pursuit of diversity and inclusion goals.

Campus Response:

The campus implements this recommendation as described in detail in the Student Affairs Section Part II, Student Retention, Section A Creating a Coordinated Approach to Diversity Activities, Part 3) Role of Student Government Association and Student Organizations. In addition, the campus includes student representatives in the Faculty Senate, and student representation on a wide range of ad hoc committees created on campus for various purposes. Students serve on committees related to athletics and recreation, and students elect and lead the Area Governments for the residence halls (page 34).

In February 2006, university administration issued a status report to the Board of Trustees Committee of the Whole titled, “UMass Amherst: A Commitment to Inclusiveness and Diversity.” Several points were made in the report as follows:

As of FY 2006 the campus provided over $800,000 toward specific items related to the Campus Action Plan from the Diversity Tax that reallocated funds from all parts of the campus to support this initiative. In addition, a new allocation of $75,000 supports faculty development and mentoring, and student affairs reallocated over $400,000 to fill two long vacant positions in admissions, a special assistant to the Vice-Chancellor to help with the implementation of aspects of the Action Plan, and the creation and appointment to a new position to lead the Center for Student Development as outlined in the Action Plan. The Amherst campus has increased need-based financial aid by 104% between FY2002 and FY2006 to continue the campaign to ensure accessibility to the
campus. This took place while state financial aid fell 4% and total student charges increased 51%. Between 2000-2001 and 2004-2005 campus funding of community scholarships, first generation and low-income students increased by 28%. Between 2001-2002 and continuing through 2004-2005, ALANA students received 27.5% of the total campus financial aid budget including both need-based and merit-based financial aid. In fall 2004, the ALANA students represented 16.5% of the undergraduate students (page 5). We now track and monitor first year students who our early warning system identifies as being potentially at-risk in their academic performance by ensuring that they use the advising and academic support resources that will enable them to achieve academic success and continue on to complete their degrees (page 6). We have begun increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the advising team with broader representation of ALANA staff among all levels of our staff (i.e. professional, graduate TAs and peer advisors). Student academic success also requires a diverse curriculum, and to further enhance the courses within which issues related to diversity receive substantial attention, the Provost initiated a program for faculty, Small Grants in Support of Diversity Education, funded by the Diversity Tax (page 7).

In June 2007, the campus released another progress report titled, “Continuing a Focus in Diversity and Positive Climate: An Update of the Actions Indicated in the Campus ‘Action Plan.’” Within Academic Affairs, major areas included: Improving Undergraduate Advising; Faculty Recruitment and Retention; Faculty Development; and Re-Thinking General Education. Major areas for Student Affairs included: Reorganization; Undergraduate Recruitment, and Retention (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014).
Chancellor Challenges the Campus to Recommit to Diversity (2009)

On August 1, 2008, Chancellor Robert C. Holub arrived on campus, and one month later, he delivers his first formal address to the faculty at the University’s Fourth Annual Faculty Convocation. He made the following statements about diversity and inclusion at the Convocation (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014):

With regard to diversity and inclusion... we have done a remarkable job with recent faculty hires, and [...] 22% of our incoming class is from minority groups, our undergraduate population is thus approaching—in terms of percentages—the composition of minorities in the Commonwealth. We must continue along this path, making certain that access for all prospective students is a guiding principle of our campus. In contrast to the private institutions of the state, UMass Amherst must always be the pathway of opportunity for students no matter what their background. We are proud of this role and will always embrace it as the essence of our institutional commitment (page 2).

In spring 2009, Chancellor Holub issued the Framework for Excellence: The Flagship Report, which challenged the campus to recommit to diversity (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009). It read as follows:

While we can be proud of our record (in improving the diversity on campus), we should not be content with the gains we have made. We must continue to attract the very best minority students and faculty to the campus and make special efforts to hire a staff that reflects the population of not only the region but also the state. In addition, we must expand our notion of diversity into realms beyond race and ethnicity, welcoming individuals of various political and religious beliefs and heritages, as well as individuals of different sexual preferences, gender identities, and age brackets and an increasing
number of veterans seeking to further their education. We must welcome this diverse, cosmopolitan population of students, faculty, and staff, but we must also ensure that we establish a campus climate in which everyone feels safe and accepted and can thrive in this diverse community (page 14).

The Chancellor’s Office, on behalf of the University, pledged to promote diversity through several initiatives (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009).

With regard to the student population, we must find new and creative ways to attract students from communities with known diversity. We will expand on programs to promote college attainment at target high schools and then implement programs on campus that will assist in retaining these students. We also will develop plans to build a feeder program in targeted areas—such as Springfield—where we connect with students and families in middle school years and work to bring them to UMass Amherst through coordinated efforts and partnerships with selected schools. A pilot program is in development now and could serve as a model for future efforts (pages 14-15). We will explore ways to increase the number of international students on campus, especially from those countries that are currently underrepresented in the student population, thereby doing much to enhance the diversity of our campus community. We will continue our efforts in faculty and staff hiring, ensuring that all search committees are constituted with adequate representation of diverse perspectives and that searches encourage the recruitment of a diverse candidate pool. We will continue to monitor our progress for the recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty and utilize resources of the Mellon Mutual Mentoring project to increase members of underrepresented faculty. We will enlist, wherever possible, the Faculty Senate in our efforts, in particular the Senate’s
Council on Diversity on the Status of Women (page 15). The administration will work closely with the Faculty Senate Council on Diversity to monitor campus climate and to make suggestions for improving the comfort level on campus for individuals with different backgrounds, beliefs, ages, and life experiences. The Council has recently agreed to expand its student membership significantly in order to ensure broad input. The Chancellor will ask this Council for an annual report on its findings and will meet with the Council as appropriate.

**Creation of the Chancellor’s Diversity Advisory Board (2010-2011)**

During the spring of 2010, new steps were taken to strengthen and revitalize diversity initiatives on campus. Chancellor Holub formed the Chancellor’s Diversity Advisory Committee to serve as an advisory board on matters of diversity (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014). The committee was charged to the following: review campus policies and procedures related to diversity; help to develop new coordinated initiatives to advance diversity and equity on campus; and contribute to the development of a comprehensive diversity and equity plan.

Part of this initiative included the collection of baseline data on the various diversity programs and activities in place on campus. Baseline data provided at that time on the student body was as follows (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014):

In fall of 2010, there were 20,126 undergraduates and 6,196 graduate students. ALANA students (American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian; Black, African-American; Hispanic/Latino; Pacific Islander; or 2 or more races) comprised 21.1% of the undergraduate body and 20.2% of the graduate student body. There were 4,460 entering first-year undergraduates in fall 2010 of which 20.8% were of ALANA heritage. [...] For all full-time first-year students who entered in fall 2004, 68.9% had graduated in 6
years; this rate compared to 59.8% for minority students, and 53.4% for under-represented minority students (page 8).

Additional outcomes, stemming from the Chancellor’s Diversity Advisory Board, were the creation of the first version of the UMass Diversity Matters website and the UMass Diversity Mission Statement. Moreover, in 2011, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the Chancellor’s Diversity Advisory Board created the first Diversity Plan, which was a compilation of diversity activities and data from across campus. (Note: The report has been published annually since this date).

**Diversity Initiatives under Current Chancellor Kumble R. Subbaswamy (2012-2016)**

On July 1, 2012, Dr. Kumble R. Subbaswamy assumed the role as the 11th Chancellor of the flagship campus. In October 2012, a Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight (JTFSO) was charged to make recommendations to the Chancellor with respect to a high-level Strategic Plan. The JTFSO is a group of 31 faculty, staff and students appointed by the Chancellor and the Faculty Senate to lead the planning effort relating to the development of a strategic plan to be submitted to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) as part of the campus’ fifth-year interim accreditation report (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014, p. 4). The plan was to have a particular focus on increasing enrollment of underrepresented groups on campus and ensuring a positive experience for all members of the UMass Amherst campus community.

JTFSO produced a document, “Innovation and Impact: Renewing the Promise of the Public Research University,” which set an agenda for the campus (and continues to serve as a guide for planning and implementation across the campus). The JTFSO recommended that the
University find “strength in the community” through (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2013):

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness:** By embracing diverse people, ideas and perspectives we create a vibrant learning and working environment. Breaking down barriers to meaningful participation fosters a sense of belonging and treats all individuals with dignity and respect. In this environment, we work toward an equitable society in which all enjoy equal rights and opportunities…The contributions of each individual should clearly be valued by the institution, and be reflected in a rewarding work experience and clear paths to personal and professional growth. In part that would mean a renewed commitment to diversity and inclusion.

**Social Progress and Social Justice:** UMass Amherst has a profound legacy of and commitment to social justice, extending across generations and spanning disciplines. We accept for ourselves and instill in our students the ongoing commitment to create a better more just world (page 4).

In 2013, Chancellor Subbaswamy made these remarks at the 2013 Faculty Convocation as follows (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014):

Today, the flagship campus of the Commonwealth, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, remains true to its founding tenets of teaching, research and engagement …UMass Amherst has been a wellspring of innovation that has improved the well-being of populations far beyond our campus. From breaking gender, race, and sexual orientation barriers in the academy to delivering solutions to current-day challenges and improving the human condition, we demonstrate the value of engaged scholarship on a daily basis (page 3).
In the same year, Chancellor Subbaswamy appointed Amilcar Shabazz, Chairman of the W.E. Dubois Department of Afro-American Studies, to serve as his faculty advisor for diversity and excellence. His responsibilities included meeting with various groups and members of the senior administration, staff, faculty and students to develop and implement appropriate academic initiatives to advance the campus’ diversity goals. He also worked with the UMass Amherst’s Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity to oversee the campus’ Diversity Plan and assess both its progress and outcomes (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2014).

In 2014, Chancellor Subbaswamy appointed the Diversity Strategic Planning Steering Committee to develop an action plan regarding diversity, equity, and inclusiveness as laid out in the Joint Task Force for Strategic Oversight’s Phase I Report. Over the course of its initial meetings, the Steering Committee identified five thematic areas around which to organize its findings and recommendations (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015):

- Establish UMass Amherst as a destination of choice for students of color and other underrepresented groups.
- Improve the campus climate of inclusion.
- Enhance effectiveness of curriculum and educational programs with regard to diversity and inclusion.
- Increase focus on recruiting, retention, and promotion of diverse faculty and staff.
- Increase outreach and engagement with external communities/schools with large proportions of underrepresented minorities.

The Steering Committee was appointed during a time when racial tension and unrest permeated the campus. The campus community, at a Town Hall Meeting, expressed a plethora of concerns on October 16, 2014, sponsored by the Strategic Planning Steering Meeting. The Town Hall Meeting addressed two questions. Several responses (direct quotes) from students, faculty and staff are provided below to answer the first question, “What are some
actions/strategies we can take as a campus community to improve our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion?”

- Deal with racism on an institutional level. Our entire body should be aware of institutionalized racism and its effect on all of us.
- Please create a mandatory diversity course for all undergraduate students (race, class, gender, sexuality, etc.).
- How do we as instructors talk about race in the classroom?
- I think the college must be required to have a student adviser of color and a required diversity coordinator at an Assistant Dean level.
- Funding for cultural and black student organizations.
- Need more racially and gender diverse police officers.
- Administration representation at cultural and black student functions.
- Have consequences for those who do not respect diversity.
- Have walk-in meetings with administration on a weekly basis.
- Reevaluate the admissions process: Are standardized tests directed at white students? Is an SAT or ACT requirement helping to not keep the campus racially diverse?
- As stated before, there should not only be an increase in diversity demographics for undergraduates and graduates, but also faculty. It is important for us to see that we can at least learn from people who look like us. Today was the first time that I saw an African who is part of the faculty. That’s baffling to me.
- Higher enrollment and financial support for students of color.
- Systematic recruitment of students of color. More intense recruitment of faculty of color.
• Greater representation of people of color among students and faculty (honestly our statistics are horrid).

• Allow higher financial aid for Hispanics and other students of color.

• We need to require social justice/diversity courses on this campus. Students who are ignorant to racism need to be taught. Our community needs to be aware that racism is real and learn how to prevent it. Many white students I know are not used to diversity or people of color from their hometown, so they need to learn about people of color. We need seminars or training about social justice/diversity for students and faculty.

• It has been my observation that UMass Amherst is incredibly segregated in terms of living areas. I want to see a real effort to diversify the residential communities.

• Report the truth about these racist acts/attacks on students of color.

• Create private spaces where students of color can feel safe.

• Create an environment through activities where all races come together as one.
  Minorities are often isolated from the white student population and not by choice, so I think if there were more activities and initiatives to try to bring together it would help.

• Have and stick to serious repercussions for anyone who participates in or associates with racist behavior. Should be zero tolerance for death threats.

• I was very shocked and slightly disturbed and upset that students felt racially judged by faculty, professors and the police. Those who I believe would be there when I was attacked racially are the ones giving the hate.

• We as a community should be deeply disturbed and concerned that people are still racist inherently and ignorantly. And should make serious efforts to change that.
• We have a program for students with alcohol issues. We need a program for those who are found guilty of hate crimes. If this does not work, then we should expel them. However, our priority should be to change the way people see diversity before allowing them to return into the world with those ideas.

• We need to realize that it is overwhelming for students of color to attend this school and be in such a homogeneous environment. As a student of color, it makes this school really unattractive. I like the school academically but socially I feel isolated and at a disadvantage. I feel robbed of my college experience.

• Real racism exists behind closed doors and in private conversations. We need to find a way to change the minds of people and bring them to see that they are in fact wrong. This can be done by bringing more students of color to the campus. I have several white friends who have never had a student of color in their class and in their community prior to college. And in college at this school that has a very minimal percentage of students of color is where they have experienced the greatest amount of diversity. How do you expect them to learn anything?

• Inclusion of the five colleges to target racist incidents on all campuses. The Consortium promotes study and socialization across campuses, which mean that issues are not isolated on one campus. All five colleges must work together to affect change with the Consortium, if there is any hope to affect our society at large.

• Stop giving lip service. We need real change.

• I think a lot of suggestions have been made and I just want to show my support as a student for these proposals.
• This has been a shocking week, which has crystallized a lot of issues. I would propose a day of reflection on campus. We could suspend classes for a day and devote it to discussions, contemplation, and reflection.

• As a non-colored student, I have found that a huge contribution to the problem is that white students are not mandated to attend meetings such as these. Why are the victims having this discussion when the problem lies with the perpetrators? We need to focus on prevention and information with those who commit racist acts or crimes.

Attendees at the October 16, 2014 Town Meeting answered a second question, “In addition to what the campus can/should do, what can you personally commit to doing to ensure that all members of our community experience a welcoming and safe environment in which to live, learn and work?” A sample of responses (direct quotes) from students, faculty and staff are provided below:

• Treat people the way I would like to be treated.
• I am going to talk to my peers and point out acts of racism.
• I will not disregard the experiences of women and minorities as trivial and insignificant.
• Talk to faculty more about the need for equality.
• As a teacher and citizen, I challenge racism whenever I see it. As a teacher, multiculturalism is an everyday part of my curriculum. Black History is not reserved for February.
• Promote discussion and reflection in my department about how we may be participating in supporting racism among us.
• Support the efforts of other students of color groups.
• Make the truth known even if I fear repercussions from faculty members and administrators.

• I will always support other students if they truly want to learn about racism and social justice issues but I am tired of educating my white counterparts.

• Educate, prevent, provide and support.

• Spread love, not hate.

• I am not on campus for much longer but maybe the UMass campus can fund these diverse groups more so that they can build these functions. Also, please take death threats seriously. It makes me feel unsafe to live in a town that doesn’t do this.

• Be a mentor/role model to students of color.

• I began the year talking about Ferguson in my College Writing 112 class. Tomorrow I will be discussing what happened at UMass.

• Continue to pressure administration and state legislators to increase the numbers of minority faculty and students, quickly and dramatically.

• I thank you for this meeting and the ability to come together to make suggestions and express frustrations, anger and grief. We all have a lot of work to do and a lot to learn. This committee gives me hope.

As a follow-up to the October 16, 2014 Town Hall Meeting, Chancellor Subbaswamy sent a two-page letter (dated November 4, 2014) to the campus community titled, “Update on Campus Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.” Although various structures were being implemented to create a more inclusive and equitable climate on campus, racial incidents at the university prompted the necessity for this letter.
I am writing this letter to follow up on the campus’ continuing efforts to “embrace diverse people, ideas, and perspectives” to create “a vibrant learning and working environment.” Those words, incorporated in our campus strategic plan 18 months ago, set a standard to guide our actions. I want to share with you where we stand and where we are heading to bring our words to life. This semester we have been reminded yet again how much work remains to be done. A series of racist, hateful, threatening acts outraged our community. On October 16, just days later, hundreds of members of our community turned out at a Town Hall meeting to show their personal commitment to change. The Town Hall meeting had been scheduled weeks earlier as a forum to seek input in developing the Campus Diversity Strategic Plan. However, it understandably became a forum for our students of color and others to express their deep frustration, and even anger, over what many speakers saw as a pattern of exclusion, insensitivity or even hostility from other segments of the campus. While such incidents and feelings are not unique to our campus (and our society in general), they call on us to re-examine fundamentally our commitment and approach to diversity and inclusion. They demand that we live up to the standard we have set for ourselves (page 1).

In the letter, the chancellor reviewed the actions that the university was taking to achieve its diversity and inclusion goals. He underscored the work of the Diversity Planning Steering Committee and how its work had become more urgent given the racial climate on campus.

The deliberations of the Steering Committee will bring these issues to the core of campus plans in a way we have not done before. And they will acknowledge the reality that our work must be ongoing because each incoming cohort of students must engage and come to terms with living and learning in a multicultural campus anew (page 1).
The following initiatives for the next admissions cycle were presented in the Chancellor’s letter (page 2):

- Establishment of a new position of Assistant Provost for Diversity to increase our focus on recruiting under-represented graduate students.
- An immediate increase in Community Scholarships for in state, low-income or first generation college attendees.
- Making philanthropic support for need-based scholarships an explicit priority during the remainder of the UMass Rising Campaign and beyond.
- Formation of a Graduate Student Diversity Task Force to recommend ways to improve the recruitment, retention and degree completion of under-represented minority graduate students.

On March 30, 2015, the Diversity Strategic Planning Steering Committee provided its Diversity Strategic Plan. Several recommendations were presented in the report:

- Establish UMass Amherst as a destination of choice for students of color and other underrepresented groups.
- Improve the campus climate of inclusion.
- Enhance effectiveness of curriculum and educational programs with regards to diversity and inclusion.
- Increase focus on recruiting, retention, and promotion of diverse faculty and staff.
- Increase outreach and engagement with external communities/schools with large proportions of underrepresented minorities.
The Steering Committee suggested that the recommendations be implemented in three broad ways. First, the Chancellor’s Diversity Advisory Council should have the responsibility of assessing and monitoring outcomes. Second, campus leadership in the context of overall campus should assess progress and unit plans on a regular basis (especially the Chancellor, faculty and specific student groups). Third, there is a heavy emphasis on diversity as it relates to race, ethnicity and gender among students, faculty and staff who are United States citizens. The conversation must expand to more comprehensively reflect other dimensions of diversity such as sexual orientation and identity, internationalism, veteran status, family socioeconomic status and others.

For 2015-2016, the Diversity Strategic Planning Steering Committee was comprised of the following representatives from various areas throughout the campus:

- Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for Advocacy, Inclusion and Support Programs (Chair)
- Deputy Chancellor - fall 2015
- Associate Chancellor and Chief Planning Officer
- Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs & Campus Life
- Vice Chancellor for University Relations
- Faculty Advisor to the Chancellor for Diversity & Excellence
- Chancellor's Office (Staff)
- Associate Provost for Enrollment Management
- Assistant Provost for Diversity
- Associate Dean, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences
• Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, School of Public Health and Health Sciences - spring 2016

• Executive Director, Equal Opportunity & Diversity/Chief Diversity Officer

• Director of Intercultural Teaching and Faculty Development - spring 2016

• Professor of Communication (Faculty) - fall 2015

• Associate Professor, Isenberg School of Management

• President of Student Government Association (Student)

• President, Graduate Student Senate (Student)

• Vice President, Student Government Association (Student) - spring 2016

• Speaker of the Undergraduate Student Senate (Student) - spring 2016

• Legal Studies/Political Science (Student)

The Steering Committee, working with existing statements from various university documents, including the Code of Student Conduct, Principles of Employee Conduct, the Diversity Mission Statement and Innovation and Impact, set forth the following values (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015; p. 4):

• The University of Massachusetts Amherst, as a public land grant institution, has a responsibility to provide access and opportunities for all people while demonstrating a commitment to inclusion of historically underrepresented groups.

• The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to ensuring freedom of expression and dialogue among diverse groups in a community defined by mutual respect.
• Historical and structural biases based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religion exist in our nation and have influenced the history of our institution.

• Institutions of higher education are entrusted with significant resources and commensurably significant responsibilities. UMass Amherst affirms its responsibility by creating and ensuring a respectful, safe, and inclusive campus for all members of the community.

• The University of Massachusetts Amherst does not tolerate incidents of discrimination, assault, harassment, threats, intimidation, profiling, or coercion based on membership or perceived membership in a particular racial, religious, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation group nor based on color, national origin, disability, or veteran status. Such acts are antithetical to the values of the campus and damage individuals and the free and open environment of the University.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed synopsis of UMass Amherst’s various affirmative action policies and initiatives adopted and implemented throughout a time span beginning in the 1960s up to the present (2016). Initially, the university adopted a race-based student admissions policy but voluntarily switched to one that minimized race as a significant factor and maximized other variables, such as socioeconomic status. The chapter also highlighted the various committee structures that held the “diversity mantel” on behalf of the Office of the Chancellor, followed by a waxing and waning of the implementation of recommendations and reforms.
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions of this study and implications for further research based on findings. Also, findings are analyzed in the context of the literature on affirmative action in college/university settings.

Introduction

This qualitative single case study examined the evolution of affirmative action admission policies and practices at UMass Amherst starting in the 1960s to the present (2016). The study sought to answer three research questions using the document analysis method. The questions posed include the following:

- How have affirmative action policies impacted the University of Massachusetts Amherst with regard to higher education access?
- What affirmative action policies and plans are now in existence at the University of Massachusetts Amherst?
- What are the likely consequences of current affirmative action policies and plans at the University of Massachusetts Amherst?

Empirical Findings

Starting with its first Affirmative Action Plan in the 1960s and early 1970s, the University of Massachusetts Amherst achieved over time a degree of diversity within its campus community. The institution has designed and implemented a broad array of initiatives to improve the diversity climate for students, faculty, and staff. The firm commitment of the various chancellors to support the values of diversity and inclusion is notable, including the work done by the various diversity committees.
Yet, although the university agreed twice (1992 and 1997) to increase undergraduate minority enrollment, it never followed through on its formal agreement with student protesters. A 20 percent increase in minority enrollment was promised but never achieved. In 1998, minority enrollment was down by 41 students to 655 for a total of 19%. Graduate enrollment of African-American students dropped between 1973-1974 to 1996-1997 by 56%, or from 307 to 132. The inability of the university to meet this target twice, lends credence to Interest-Convergence Theory, the lens through which affirmative action policies at University of Massachusetts Amherst were analyzed and reviewed for this study. This theory helps to explain the decision of the president of the UMass System at the time, William Burger, to overrule the promise made to students by the UMass Amherst chancellor David K. Scott. President Bulger instructed the general counsel of the university to end the 20% admissions policy in fall 1997, ignoring the minority students’ protest. President Burger may be seen as representing the interests of the majority-white-students and community constituency, measuring the 20 percent enrollment target of minority students in University of Massachusetts against the interest of the majority; this exemplifies a non-interest convergence that stopped the policy from moving forward.

Regardless of this decline in minority enrollment, the university still changed its policy in 1999 by minimizing race and ethnicity as factors in admission and financial aid practices. This decision clearly had a negative impact on the climate of diversity and inclusion. No court ruling mandated UMass Amherst to change its policy. It was done voluntarily. University officials justified their decision based on two scenarios: the court ruling that struck down a race-based admission policy at the competitive Boston Latin School, along with the 1978 Supreme Court
case, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*. Both prompted the university to rethink race-based preferences in its admission policy.

During the period 1999-2014, there still remained an amount of racial, ethnic, and gender underrepresentation among both students and faculty of color that raised questions about the university’s choice of approaches and strategies throughout the years, and their effectiveness in resolving issues of campus diversity and inclusion. The university seemingly adopted a more reactionary mode than adopting a framework that is preventative for addressing diversity and inclusion. Prior to 2014, there was a recurring pattern of racial/ethnic discord, which was followed oftentimes by a pattern of immediate responses by university officials. The bottom line is that it has not improved significant access to higher education for minority students.

The experience of underrepresented minorities generated a dialogue in the Town Hall meeting (October 16, 2014) around explicit acts of prejudice and also to frank discussions about how inequality had been sustained through conditions, such as institutional racism and unconscious bias (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015). As expressed, many students arrive at UMass Amherst from geographic areas where they have not had opportunities to interact with people of color, or to have learned appropriate social skills to interface with different cultures.

Further, students, faculty and staff of color spoke of their experiences as being racially and ethnically isolated members of the campus community. There had been a feeling by some that racism is tolerated by UMass Amherst administration, and that the various diversity initiatives are empty gestures and not genuine efforts. Clearly, students viewed the work of the administration as insufficient practices and policies, and that inadequate punishment is administered to those students who engage in racist or discriminatory behaviors.
In contrast, during the period 2005-2014, UMass Amherst saw a dramatic increase in admission applications from 20,207 to 37,183 (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015). The greatest growth in applications came from Underrepresented Minorities (URM), growing by 335%, in comparison to 184% for total applications. URM indicates all U.S. citizens who self-identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native; Black/African American; Hispanic/Latino of any race; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island; and, since 2010, Non-Hispanic/Latino students who identify with two or more races (except if the two races are Asian and White) (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015). The disproportionate growth in URM enrollments reflects the state’s demographic makeup. For fall 2013, 2014 and 2015 semesters, underrepresented minority students were respectively 11.4%, 10%, and 12.1% of the total number of students enrolled. Between fall 2006 and fall 2012, URM enrollment averaged 10.5%. Thus, URM enrollments peaked in the fall 2015 semester.

Regardless of this growth, the Diversity Strategic Planning Steering Committee in 2015 called for aggressive actions to further expand URM diversity on campus. “In short, we must act to establish UMass Amherst as a ‘destination of choice’ for students of color and other underrepresented groups. Opportunities to achieve this goal come in three principal areas: the admissions process, yield enhancement, and enrollment planning” (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015, page 9). In this context, “yield” is defined as the percentage of those accepted who choose to enroll at UMass Amherst. Overall yield declined from 27.3% in 2005 to 20.4% in 2014.

The university decided in 1999 that diversity should not be viewed simply as a matter of race and ethnicity, but that race is only one element in a range of factors to be considered in the admission process. According to the Associate Provost of Enrollment Management:
UMass Amherst looks for students who come from low-income families, who are the first in their family to attend college, or who are from underrepresented ethnic groups. We also determine if the student is likely to contribute to and benefit from critical thinking and diversity of ideas that are so important to the mission of a public research university (Krantz, 2015).

**Improvements Are Still Needed by Executive Leadership to Improve Current Diversity Climate at UMass Amherst**

The university chose to use workable alternatives to accomplish the compelling goal of racial diversity, namely, various diversity committee structures and establishing the Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity. However, its own Diversity Strategic Planning Steering Committee underscores that further improvement is still needed by UMass Amherst to address deeply rooted inequalities.

Students particularly affirm that work is still needed to change the diversity climate at UMass Amherst. On November 18, 2015, students at UMass Amherst gathered in the Commonwealth Honors College to protest a lack of diversity on campus and to stand with students of color at universities throughout the country. The President of the Black Student Union (BSU) addressed the crowd:

We are coming together in solidarity with students who are everyday dealing with institutional racism, institutional oppression, being marginalized in our own communities, and being oppressed on our campuses (Bowler, 2015).

Another student shouted out during the protest, “The problems are stemming from a lack of diversity. UMass needs more black people, more brown people, and more Asian people. UMass needs diversity. Period. You don’t need to be a person of color to realize the lack of diversity”
(Bowler, 2015). One student expressed frustration, “We have been fighting for several years. We have the same list of demands since 1969, and nothing has been changed” (Bowler, 2015). On February 24, 2016, student Ellanje Ferguson wrote an article in the *Amherst Wire*, that UMass Amherst historically and still remains a “PWI” (Primarily White Institution). This is a term used to describe institutions of higher learning in which Whites account for 50 percent or greater of student enrollment. She adds:

> Although times have changed, racisms still exists. Right now, at colleges and universities across the United States, from UMass to the University of Missouri, students of color are expressing their frustrations with the way their intellect, opinions and lives have been handled by administration. In movements across the country including #BlackLivesMatter, students have taken action in solidarity with victims of oppression. My peers have protested poor treatment, demanded diversity plans and asked for more support from the moment I stepped foot on campus. Students of color have the right to demand less talk and more action, especially when they’re dealing with racial hostility at a place they call their home nine months out of the year.

Although the university did, over time, institutionalize affirmative action policies through various diversity plan initiatives, the following is a summary of the impact of these efforts on minority enrollment:

- **African-American/Black Students:** UMass Amherst statistics show that between 1996 and 2015, the number of African-American students per year has fluctuated from 773 to 1,002 at any given time. During the period 1996-2008, the number of African American students trended upward from 856 to 1,002. In 2009, it dropped slightly to 998 students, and then steadily declined for the next six years. There was a sizeable
decline (23%) in the number of African-American students from 998 students (2009) to 775 students in Fall 2010, 776 students in Fall 2011 and 773 students in Fall 2012. Enrollment picked up in the next three years: Fall 2013 (795 students), Fall 2014 (836 students), and Fall 2015 (851 students). However, there was little or no growth in the number of African-American students enrolled during the period 1996 (856 students) and 2015 (851 students). The average number of African-American students enrolled each year during that period was 859.

- **Hispanic/Latino Students:** Unlike African-American students, the number of Hispanic/Latino students admitted at UMass Amherst has been steadily rising. Beginning in fall 1996, 779 Hispanic/Latino students were enrolled. In Fall 2015, this number peaked to 1,203. Thus, the number of Hispanic/Latino students enrolled at UMass Amherst grew by 54% during the period 1996-2015. The average number of Hispanic/Latino students enrolled each year during this period was 818.

- **Asian Students:** UMass Amherst statistics show that the number of Asian students has steadily increased since 1996. In fall 1996, there were 1,113 Asian students admitted which grew to 2,040 (or 83%) in the Fall 2015. The average number of Asian students enrolled each year during the period 1996-2015 was 1,448.

- **Under Represented Minorities (URM):** In Fall 1996, there were 1,703 students with URM status. By Fall 2015, there were 2,417 URM—-a growth of 714 or 42%. The average number of underrepresented minority students enrolled each year during the period 1996-2015 was 2,051.

- **African, Latino, Asian, Native American (ALANA):** The total number of ALANA students was 2,816 in fall 1996. By Fall 2015, this number grew to
4,740 or 68%.

- As in the case of both Hispanic/Latino and Asian students, White student enrollment also during the period 1996-2015. In Fall 1996, the total number of White students enrolled at UMass Amherst was 14,635. By Fall 2015, this number had increased to 15,153, or 4%.
Table 1

*University of Massachusetts Amherst Office of Institutional Research*

**First-Time Enrollment Numbers**

Table 2

Transfer Student Enrollment Numbers

Table 3

Total First-Time and Transfer Student Enrollment Numbers

Table 4

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<th></th>
<th>Fall 2000</th>
<th>Fall 2001</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Asian</strong></td>
<td>396</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>407</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Black/African American</strong></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>143</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cape Verdean</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanic/Latino</strong></td>
<td>170</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>231</td>
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<td>219</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ALANA Total</strong></td>
<td>771</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>917</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>White, Non-Hispanic</strong></td>
<td>2,764</td>
<td>2,568</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reporting</strong></td>
<td>3,535</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>3,677</td>
<td>4,041</td>
<td>4,037</td>
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Table 5

Transfer Students Enrollment Numbers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2000</th>
<th>Fall 2001</th>
<th>Fall 2002</th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Fall 2005</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Fall 2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>53</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>ALANA Total</td>
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<td>143</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>845</td>
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<td>780</td>
<td>810</td>
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<td>1,007</td>
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<td>1,054</td>
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<table>
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<th>Fall 2009</th>
<th>Fall 2010</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verdean</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>181</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>225</td>
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<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>808</td>
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<td>852</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>1,033</td>
<td>988</td>
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Table 6

Total First-Time and Transfer Students Enrollment Numbers

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<tr>
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<th>Fall 2000</th>
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<th>Fall 2002</th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Fall 2005</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Fall 2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>326</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>264</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>215</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALANA Total</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>965</td>
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<td>3,977</td>
<td>3,786</td>
<td>4,012</td>
<td>4,076</td>
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<td>3,822</td>
<td>3,888</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4,838</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>564</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>173</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALANA Total</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>1,242</td>
<td>1,318</td>
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<td>3,410</td>
<td>3,589</td>
<td>3,922</td>
<td>3,818</td>
<td>3,764</td>
<td>4,076</td>
<td>3,751</td>
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<td>4,883</td>
<td>4,918</td>
<td>5,318</td>
<td>5,069</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Recommendations for Future Research

The strong relationship between *race* and *social class* has been widely documented. Because *race* and *class* are so correlated, this study reveals that it is difficult to decipher which one actually is more effective in maintaining levels of racial diversity within a college/university setting, holding everything constant. Numerous studies have shown that banning race-based affirmative action profoundly reduces minority representation on college/university campus.

Although there has been a consistent level of commitment of executive leadership to improve the diversity and inclusion climate at UMass Amherst, this study showed similar results particularly for African-American students. That is, banning race-based admission policies has a negative enrollment effect particularly on African-American students.

As noted previously, student representation for this minority population peaked in fall 2008 at 1,002 but has steadily declined since then. In fall 2015, 851 African-American students enrolled at UMass Amherst. In contrast, the number of Hispanic/Latino students enrolled has shown steady, consistent growth: 779 students in fall 1996 to 1,203 in fall 2015, or 54%. The number of Asian students has increased by 83%, or 1,113 in fall 1996 to 2,040 in fall 2015.

UMass Amherst’s workable alternative for achieving racial diversity – organizational intention-commitment by executive leadership and how commitment is operational and institutionalized throughout the organization – as not enough to fulfill this goal. This is concluded given the current levels of dissatisfaction among students toward the lack of diversity (previously discussed), and the fact that the number of African-American students in fall 1996 (856 students) is still about the same for fall 1995 (851 students).

Moreover, UMass Amherst’s Campus Ethnic Diversity Score, according to Morse (2015) for *U.S. News*, is .35, which is considered relatively low given the plethora of diversity initiatives
that UMass Amherst has put into place. This diversity index ranges from 0 to 1. The closer a college’s diversity index is to 1, the more diverse the student population. Conversely, the farther away from 1 a school’s diversity index, the less likely students will run into those who are of the same ethnic group. It is noted that of the 1,800 colleges/universities, the highest index score was .76 and the lowest score was .08.

The change in affirmative action policies by UMass Amherst played a larger role in helping economically disadvantaged students, but it still did not solve the issue of racial or ethnic diversity, especially for African-American students. Greater efforts are still needed to increase access and opportunity for African-American students. UMass Amherst needs to clearly articulate what diversity means on its campus. Administration seems to have one definition, while students have another definition. When UMass Amherst minimized the role of race in its admission policies, it had a negative impact on enrollment figures for African-American students and surprisingly no other ethnic group of students (i.e., Hispanic/Latino and Asians).

Despite the benefits of diverse student cohorts documented in the literature, the underrepresentation of African-American students still exists. Patterns of inequitable distribution of access to African-American students have constituted a considerable challenge to UMass Amherst, a selective public higher education institution in New England.

Future studies are encouraged to identify other organizational and programmatic factors that promote a compelling interest of diversity within flagship universities.
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University of Massachusetts Amherst At a Glance:


### Timeline of Affirmative Action Milestones

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<td><strong>March 6, 1961</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Order 10925 makes the first reference to &quot;affirmative action&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>President John F. Kennedy issues Executive Order 10925, which creates the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and mandates that projects financed with federal funds &quot;take affirmative action&quot; to ensure that hiring and employment practices are free of racial bias.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July 2, 1964</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Rights Act signed by President Lyndon Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>The most sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>June 4, 1965</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech defining concept of Affirmative Action</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an eloquent speech to the graduating class at Howard University, President Johnson frames the concept underlying affirmative action, asserting that civil rights laws alone are not enough to</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
remedy discrimination:

"You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: 'now, you are free to go where you want, do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.' You do not take a man who for years has been hobbled by chains, liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race, saying, 'you are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe you have been completely fair. . . This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity—not just legal equity but human ability—not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result."

Executive Order 11246 enforces affirmative action for the first time

Issued by President Johnson, the executive order requires government contractors to "take affirmative action" toward prospective minority employees in all aspects of hiring and employment. Contractors must take specific measures to ensure equality in hiring and must document these efforts. On Oct. 13, 1967, the order was amended to cover discrimination on the basis of gender.
**Regents of the University of California v. Bakke**

This *landmark Supreme Court case* imposed limitations on Affirmative action to ensure that providing greater opportunities for minorities did not come at the expense of the rights of the majority—affirmative action was unfair if it led to reverse discrimination. The case involved the Univ. of California, Davis, Medical School, which had two separate admissions pools, one for standard applicants, and another for minority and economically disadvantaged students. The school reserved 16 of its 100 places for this latter group.

**June 28, 1978**

Allan Bakke, a white applicant, was rejected twice even though there was minority applicants admitted with significantly lower scores than his. Bakke maintained that judging him on the basis of his race was a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Supreme Court ruled that while race was a legitimate factor in school admissions, the use of such inflexible quotas as the medical school had set aside was not. The Supreme Court, however, was split 5–4 in its decision on the Bakke case and addressed only a minimal number of the many complex issues that had
sprung up about affirmative action.

**White House guidelines on affirmative action**

President Clinton asserted in a speech that while Adarand set "stricter standards to mandate reform of affirmative action, it actually reaffirmed the need for affirmative action and reaffirmed the continuing existence of systematic discrimination in the United States." In a White House memorandum on the same day, he called for the elimination of any program that "(a) creates a quota; (b) creates preferences for unqualified individuals; (c) creates reverse discrimination; or (d) continues even after its equal opportunity purposes have been achieved."

**July 19, 1995**

**Hopwood v. University of Texas Law School**

Cheryl Hopwood and three other white law-school applicants at the University of Texas challenged the school's affirmative action program, asserting that they were rejected because of unfair preferences toward less qualified minority applicants. As a result, the 5th U.S. Court of Appeals suspended the university's affirmative action admissions program and ruled that the 1978 Bakke decision was invalid—while Bakke...
rejected racial quotas it maintained that race could serve as a factor in admissions. In addition to remedying past discrimination, Bakke maintained that the inclusion of minority students would create a diverse student body, and that was beneficial to the educational environment as a whole. Hopwood, however, rejected the legitimacy of diversity as a goal, asserting that "educational diversity is not recognized as a compelling state interest." The Supreme Court allowed the ruling to stand. In 1997, the Texas Attorney General announced that all "Texas public universities [should] employ race-neutral criteria."


**Proposition 209 enacted in California**

A state ban on all forms of affirmative action was passed in Nov. 3, 1997 California: "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public
contracting.” Proposed in 1996, the controversial ban had been delayed in the courts for almost a year before it went into effect.

### Initiative 200 enacted in Washington State

Dec. 3, 1998

Washington becomes the second state to abolish state affirmative action measures when it passed "I 200," which is similar to California's Proposition 209.

### Florida bans race as factor in college admissions.

Feb. 22, 2000

Florida legislature approves education component of Gov. Jeb Bush's "One Florida" initiative, aimed at ending affirmative action in the state.

### University of Michigan’s undergrad affirmative action policy

Dec. 13, 2000

In *Gratz v. Bollinger*, a federal judge ruled that the use of race as a factor in admissions at the University of Michigan was constitutional. The gist of the university's argument was as follows: just as preference is granted to children of alumni, scholarship athletes, and others groups for reasons deemed beneficial to the university, so too does the affirmative action
program serve "a compelling interest" by providing educational benefits derived from a diverse student body.

**Univ. of Michigan Law School's affirmative action policy**

In *Grutter v. Bollinger*, a case similar to the University of Michigan undergraduate lawsuit, a different judge drew an opposite conclusion, invalidating the law school's policy and ruling that "intellectual diversity bears no obvious or necessary relationship to racial diversity." But on **May 14, 2002**, the decision was reversed on appeal, ruling that the admissions policy was, in fact, constitutional.

**Supreme Court Upholds affirmative action in University Admissions**

In the most important affirmative action decision since the 1978 *Bakke* case, the Supreme Court (5–4) upholds the University of Michigan Law School's policy, ruling that race can be one of many factors considered by colleges when selecting their students because it furthers "a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body.” The Supreme Court, however, ruled (6–3) that the
more formulaic approach of the University of Michigan's undergraduate admissions program, which uses a point system that rates students and awards additional points to minorities, had to be modified. The undergraduate program, unlike the law school's, does not provide the "individualized consideration" of applicants deemed necessary in previous Supreme Court decisions on affirmative action.

*See Grutter v. Bollinger.*

**Supreme Court Rules Against Considering Race to Integrate Schools**

*June 28, 2006*

In *Parents v. Seattle* and *Meredith v. Jefferson*, affirmative action suffers a setback when a bitterly divided court rules, 5–4, that programs in Seattle and Louisville, Ky., which tried to maintain diversity in schools by considering race when assigning students to schools, are unconstitutional.

**Ballot Measure to Ban Affirmative Action Goes Before Voters**

*November 4, 2008*

Ballot measures proposing to ban affirmative action — race and gender based preferences by public entities — goes before voters in two states, Nebraska and Colorado. The ban passes
with more than 50% of the vote in Nebraska. Voters in Colorado, though, reject the proposed ban.

Court Orders University to Re-examine Affirmative Action Policy

In *Fisher v. University of Texas*, the court allows universities to continue considering race as a factor in admissions to achieve diversity, but tells them that they must prove that “available, workable race-neutral alternatives do not suffice” before considering race. The court ruled 7–1 to send the case back to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit for further review to determine if the school passed the test of "strict scrutiny," the highest level of judicial review. The ruling is considered a compromise between the court's conservative and liberal factions.

On July 15, 2014, a federal appeals court upheld the UT-Austin's consideration of race in admissions in a 2–1 decision.

Supreme Court Upholds Michigan Ban on Considering Race in College Admissions

April 22, 2014

The Court rules, 6–2, in *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* to uphold a state constitutional amendment that bans
public universities and colleges in Michigan from implementing a race-sensitive admissions policy. The ruling does not address the state's affirmative action policy; instead, it confirms the constitutionality of the amendment process.

Writing for the plurality, Justice Anthony Kennedy said, "This case is not about how the debate about racial preferences should be resolved. It is about who may resolve it.” In a 58-page withering dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor said the Constitution "does not guarantee minority groups victory in the political process. It does guarantee them meaningful and equal access to that process. It guarantees that the majority may not win by stacking the political process against minority groups permanently."