

# About the DEIB Task Force

## Why the DEIB Task Force?

In June 2020, Columbus State University commissioned an investigation through the University System of Georgia following claims by students and alumni of racial bias and discrimination in the Theatre Department. That independent investigation, which included more than 50 interviews with current students, alumni and faculty, sought to substantiate these allegations.

Based on those interviews, a number of the students' complaints were corroborated, including:

- the use of inappropriate and racially insensitive language by departmental faculty.
- the need to increase opportunities for students of color in the department's season selections and casting.
- the lack of diversity among the department's full-time and tenured faculty.

[The full report is available for download.](#)

Following the investigation's conclusion and receipt of recommendations from the investigators, the university took several responsive steps in December 2020, including:

1. Forming a departmental-level task force charged with creating processes, practices and accountability measures to recruit, support and retain departmental faculty and staff with a demonstrated commitment to promoting diversity, inclusion and equity.
2. Implementing ongoing department-wide education and training for its faculty, staff and students on the topics of bias, harassment, discrimination and related university policies and procedures.
3. Establishing a standing committee composed of student leaders, faculty, staff, community members and alumni who have a strong interest in supporting and addressing issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. The committee will guide departmental leadership in ensuring season selections and casting offer students substantive and equitable opportunities to hone their craft.

Progress toward these steps is being monitored by the university's provost and the dean of the College of the Arts. Both remain in contact with task force leadership regarding its work and recommendations.

*"It is our hope that CSU Theatre can text-ly the charge for the entire university and model for other arts institutions across the country what effective change and action look like for students now and students to come."*

- Beth Reeves '09, '17

Task Force Chair