

A young woman with dark curly hair and glasses is looking intently at a book she is holding. She is in a library, with rows of bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. The lighting is soft, and the overall atmosphere is one of quiet study.

CONTEMPORARY HBCUs: CONSIDERING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND STATE PRIORITIES

James T. Minor, PhD

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FOREWORD

Since their inception, HBCUs have evolved continuously to meet the changing characteristics of increasingly diverse students and today's academic, research, civic, and labor-force needs. The nation has become more colored, more culturally diverse, more global, and more technological. At lightening speed, globalization is occurring and creating more opportunities for some, but for many with limited resources, more challenges, as well. Escalating college costs are threatening to foreclose the option of a higher education to increasing numbers of college ready students at a time when most new jobs require a postsecondary education. Meeting these employment needs will require training a more diverse and technologically sophisticated workforce.

Educating more diverse and traditionally underserved students while containing costs has long been the province of the nation's HBCUs. Today, HBCUs continue to lead the nation in this regard with some challenges and many favorable results that are noted in Dr. Minor's report. HBCUs are prepared to do even better if equitable public and private investments are made in these institutions.

Minor provides a valuable snapshot of trends and overarching issues regarding contemporary HBCUs. The report compares enrollment, funding, and degree programs for public HBCUs with those of public PWIs using four states as case studies. The report makes clear that despite nearly 35 years of higher education equity litigation, administrative fiat, and invaluable federal support to offset the

disparities in state support, the parity gap in public HBCU and PWI support remains.

This report is especially important because using quantitative data, it points out a number of contemporary challenges faced by public HBCUs that must be overcome, but it also demonstrates promise and opportunities. The data show that investing more equitably and efficiently in HBCUs is the best investment the nation, states, foundations, and businesses can make in meeting today's educational and workforce needs. HBCUs are doing proportionately better than most of their PWI counterparts at enrolling, retaining and graduating African American students in today's high need industries such as health professions, the sciences, technology, engineering, physics, and teacher education. They are doing this at a lower cost than their PWI counterparts. HBCUs are also doing an especially laudable job recapturing lost and fallen youth, especially disproportionate numbers of African American males at a time when 60% of them do not graduate from high school with their cohorts. While HBCUs are doing more to educate underrepresented students with fewer resources, there is mounting evidence that many flagship institutions are disengaging from educating the increasingly diverse populations of their states.

The data are by no means all positive or encouraging. Dr. Minor points out that HBCUs, like their white counterparts are losing far too many students. According to a survey by *The Education Trust*, only 60% of all college students complete undergraduate study in six

years. Seventy percent of students who attend HBCUs are classified as low-income which contributes to even lower graduation rates at many HBCUs. The encouraging news from this report is that by increasing the capacity at HBCUs and investing in their missions—which includes remediation for students ill-served by PK-12 systems—the trend can be reversed.

Minor's report is a significant addition to higher education research that is sure to spawn additional studies and robust policy discussions. NAFEO looks forward to joining Dr. Minor, his research team and Lumina Foundation in continuing discussions about the findings, implications, and collaborative action items suggested by this report.

I thank Lumina Foundation for supporting this important work. I am grateful to Dr. Minor and the HBCU presidents, chancellors and administrators who contributed to this report that recognizes the contemporary importance of HBCUs in American higher education.

Dr. Lezli Baskerville, President & CEO
National Association for Equal
Opportunity in Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

The 130-year record of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) is well documented. Numerous books, reports, and scholarly articles exist chronicling the legacy, rich traditions, and contributions made by HBCUs. Most notable are the contributions to significantly increasing the percentage of Black Americans able to attend college, effectively creating cohorts of Black leadership, and helping achieve economic mobilization of African American communities. The historic virtue of HBCUs is well recognized. A more contentious issue concerns the place of HBCUs today. Since their founding, the enterprise of higher education and the American idea of social justice have changed considerably. Consequently, the role of HBCUs, particularly for institutions in the public sector, is frequently questioned. This era of accountability, combined with questions about the place of race in public higher education and pressures for more efficiency among public universities, creates a uniquely different environment in which public HBCUs operate.

The purpose of The Contemporary HBCU Project has been to examine the present-day role of HBCUs in public systems of higher education. Most observers recognize the contributions made by HBCUs, but fewer, including some proponents, are able to clearly articulate their place in the contemporary context of higher education. For example, HBCUs continue to disproportionately enroll and graduate African American undergraduates. At the same time, there remains reluctant and sluggish support for HBCUs from government agencies and the private business sector. Even

the twenty-seven-year-old White House Initiative on HBCUs has not produced noticeable results. In fact, the initiative has been criticized by its advisory board, which cited decreased federal funding for HBCUs, lack of cooperation among federal agencies, and disregard of board recommendations as serious concerns (White House Initiative on HBCUs' *Annual Report*, 2005). In order to sustain and improve support for public HBCUs, a clear and consistent articulation of their role in public higher education, their common challenges, and their promise must be achieved. In doing so, it is necessary to view these issues using a contemporary lens: that is, focusing more on how public HBCUs might best be utilized in the future rather than reminiscing about their past.

This report is intended to provide a contemporary view of the roles public HBCUs play in public higher education systems relative to degree attainment and opportunity for African American students. Four states were targeted as cases for study: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina. The report begins with an outline of the present-day context for HBCUs and frames contemporary issues related to their advancement. Then, institutional data and state appropriations data are presented to identify trends or common issues across the four states. One aim is to provide data-driven reference points and comparative analyses that enhance larger policy discussions and move beyond institutional anecdotes.



UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT FOR HBCUs

Recognizing that the context in which HBCUs operate is significantly different from that of most other institutions has become a ground rule for related research, policymaking, and analysis (Freeman, 1998; Minor, 2005). The 103 historically Black colleges and universities in the United States share a common history but currently occupy diverse positions within the higher education milieu. Despite the early struggles of HBCUs and current institutional inequities, it is a widely known fact that they continue to produce a higher percentage of African American graduates than other colleges and universities, despite having significantly fewer resources. HBCUs, which represent less than 3 percent of all postsecondary institutions, produce 25 percent of African American graduates (Cook & Córdova, 2006). Furthermore, HBCUs graduate 40 percent or more of all African Americans who receive degrees in physics, chemistry, astronomy, environmental sciences, mathematics, and biology (Southern Education Foundation, 2005). Approximately 40 percent of African Americans with PhDs earned bachelors' degrees from HBCUs (Hubbard, 2006). Eight-five percent of Black doctors attended HBCUs (Williams & Ashley, 2004). Additionally, several studies document increased developmental gains and increased satisfaction with the college experience among African American college students who attend HBCUs compared to their counterparts who attend historically White institutions (Berger & Milem, 2000; Outcalt & Skewes-Cox, 2002). Collectively, HBCUs sustain the pipeline of educated African American college graduates who help diversify graduate programs and the U.S. workforce.

At the same time, African Americans continue to experience disparities in the percentage of college-aged students enrolled in institutions of higher education and those who actually receive degrees (Cook & Córdova, 2006). Although the actual number of African American students enrolled in college increased more than 40 percent over the last decade, the percentage of students completing at least four years of college is 17.5 percent for African Americans compared to 35 percent for Whites. A recent study shows disparities in African American enrollment and degree attainment in fourteen of the nineteen southern states where African Americans and HBCUs are most highly concentrated (Perna, Milem, Gerald, Baum, & Hutchens, 2006). A widening gender gap also exists between the numbers of African American men and women enrolled at HBCUs. From 1993 through 2003, one African American male enrolled for every seventeen African American women (Cook & Córdova, 2006, p.7). It is curious that the southern region of the United States has the largest concentration of African Americans, the largest collection of HBCUs with the richest tradition of successfully educating African American students, and at the same time, noticeable disparities in degree attainment for Blacks.

Persistent disparities in educational attainment now show more noticeable consequences in all sectors of American society. The combination of changing societal demographics and educational inequities create a workforce that is increasingly diverse but insufficiently educated. National concerns about global competition, workforce development, and

the need for a better-educated citizenry necessitate the expansion of postsecondary degree attainment. Several states have recently dedicated resources to increase the level of education and training among their citizens with economic interest as the primary motivation. African Americans along with Latino Americans represent the two largest minority groups in America but are among the least likely to receive a college degree (Cook & Córdova, 2006). The economic well-being of many states, particularly those in the South, depends on the ability to better educate their citizens. The greatest regional demographic concentration of African Americans remains in the southern states, mainly Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). According to the *National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) Report*, these four states are expected to suffer revenue shortfalls averaging \$68 million in 2008 due to losses in personal and corporate income (NASBO, 2007). Coincidentally, African Americans in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia are among those who experience the largest disparities in postsecondary degree attainment (Perna et al., 2006). Proponents of HBCUs have long recognized the potential to expand the reach of this higher education sector. Given the track record of successfully educating disproportionate numbers of students who might not otherwise attend college, investing in public HBCUs is more reasonable than it is risky.

Many public HBCUs are in a precarious position. While most remain committed to their traditional missions, they face increasing competition for students.

Many HBCUs have also outlined ambitious agendas to increase research productivity and acquire external funding, while attempting to maintain student centeredness (Hale, 2006). Meanwhile, the legal saga of desegregation litigation has not completely come to an end. Several states continue to be monitored by the U.S. Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) for compliance with federal laws that prohibit discriminatory policies in public higher education (Mills, 2004). Arguably, the mission and role of public HBCUs was once well defined. They existed primarily to educate African Americans who were denied access to historically White institutions. Today the role of public HBCUs is less distinct but not necessarily less important. Accordingly, it is important to define (and redefine if necessary) the contribution of HBCUs in public systems of higher education. The entire nation will benefit from making certain that all public institutions of higher education—not just a select few—increase their capacities and optimize opportunities to produce better-educated citizens. I argue that such opportunities will be maximized by paying closer attention to the relationship between the least educated populations and the institutions most able to serve them.

In March of 2007 I called together fifteen exceptional higher education professionals in Washington, D.C., to discuss the most critical policy issues influencing institutional capacity at public HBCUs. These individuals consisted of HBCU presidents, association and foundation leaders, government officials, and researchers. While the discussion covered an array of issues from diverse perspectives, two salient

topics emerged: funding equity and degree program distribution. Participants summarily raised the notion that if public HBCUs received more equitable financial support and were able to effectively address what is perceived as an imbalance in the distribution of degree programs, they could more effectively fulfill their mission. To be clear, the group of higher education professionals at this meeting did not suggest that merely addressing these two issues would remedy every challenge public HBCUs face. But they did feel that action in these areas would likely increase institutional capacity dramatically. At the time of the meeting, the participants did not know which two themes would become the focus of this report; they agreed, however, that a first step to making these arguments more evident required some level of analysis that would verify or at least test their notions.

To help readers better understand contemporary HBCUs, this report illustrates issues of funding and degree programs with data points, bringing together enrollment, state funding, and degree program data for all public four-year institutions across four states: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina. Enrollment data were gathered using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS), along with institutional system data from each state. Appropriations data were collected from each state along with documents detailing funding formulas and processes. Finally, an accounting of graduate degree offerings (i.e., certificate programs, masters' degrees, and doctoral degrees) was undertaken for every public four-

year institution across each state using the most recent university catalogs. Additionally, I spent numerous days over the last eighteen months visiting campuses, meeting with leaders, reviewing documents, and attending public board meetings. These data represent the best possible information at the time of collection and analysis. In some cases, clarifications and verifications were made by directly contacting state higher education officials. Although all data across states is not necessarily comparable in the way it was collected, reported, or made available, it is presented here in the most comprehensible way possible.

ENROLLMENT

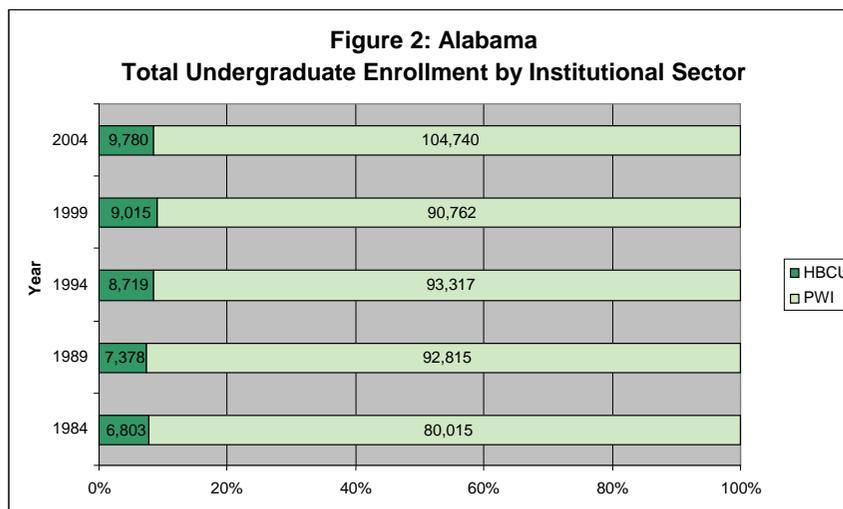
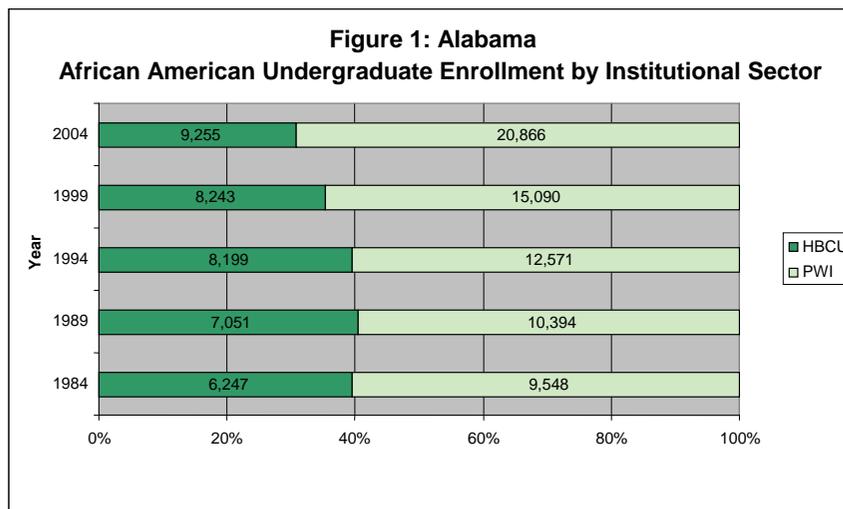


ALABAMA

The four-year public higher education sector in Alabama is comprised of sixteen institutions, two of which are HBCUs (Alabama State University and Alabama A&M University). Higher education in Alabama is organized by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, a twelve-member lay board. The Commission was established to provide study and analysis as a basis for long-range planning with the intent to create a coordinated system of higher education in Alabama. Additionally, each institution is governed by an individual Board of Trustees.

In the fall of 2006 Alabama State University enrolled 4,584 undergraduates. Alabama A&M enrolled 4,978. African Americans make up 26.5 percent of

Alabama's population; yet, in 2004 only 5,291 bachelors' degrees were awarded to African Americans in the state. Alabama State and Alabama A&M enroll nearly a third of African American (AA) students in the public four-year sector. Figures 1 and 2 show trends of undergraduate (UG) enrollment over twenty years. HBCUs and predominantly White institutions (PWIs) have maintained steady enrollment growth, yet the proportion of African American students enrolled at HBCUs has declined since 1994.



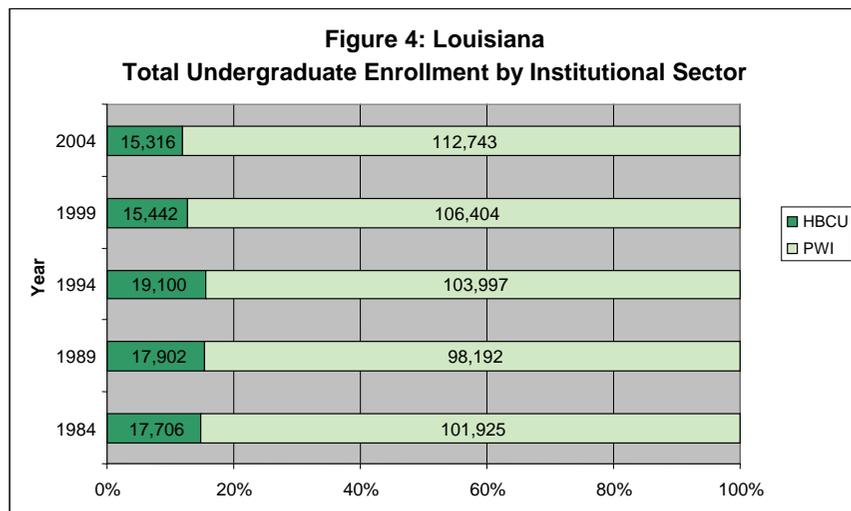
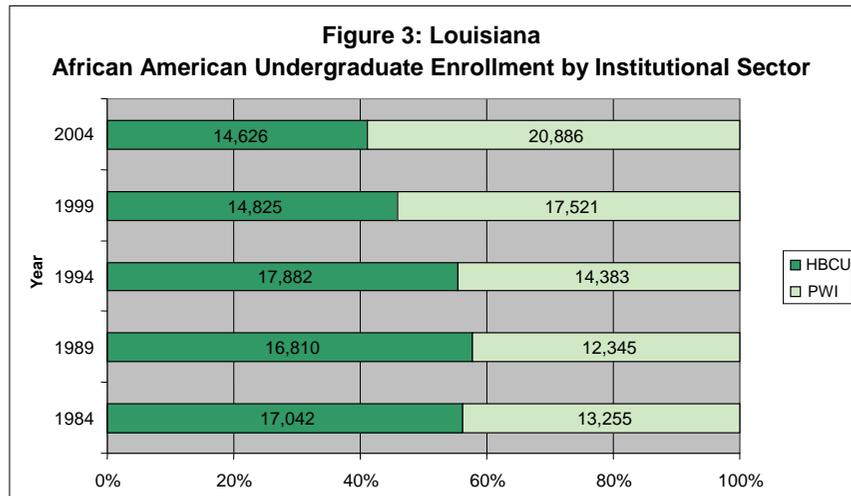
LOUISIANA

The state of Louisiana employs three university systems that govern public higher education. The University of Louisiana system includes eight four-year regional institutions. Only one, Grambling State University, is an HBCU. The Southern University system is the only HBCU system in the United States and is made up of three campuses (Southern A&M at Baton Rouge, Southern University at New Orleans, and Southern University at Shreveport), plus a Law Center and Agriculture Research and Extension Center.

The Louisiana State University system is made up of five campuses, including LSU at Baton Rouge and the University of New Orleans, three Health Science Centers, two Research Centers, and a Law Center.

Unlike Alabama, HBCUs in Louisiana (Grambling and Southern universities) enroll

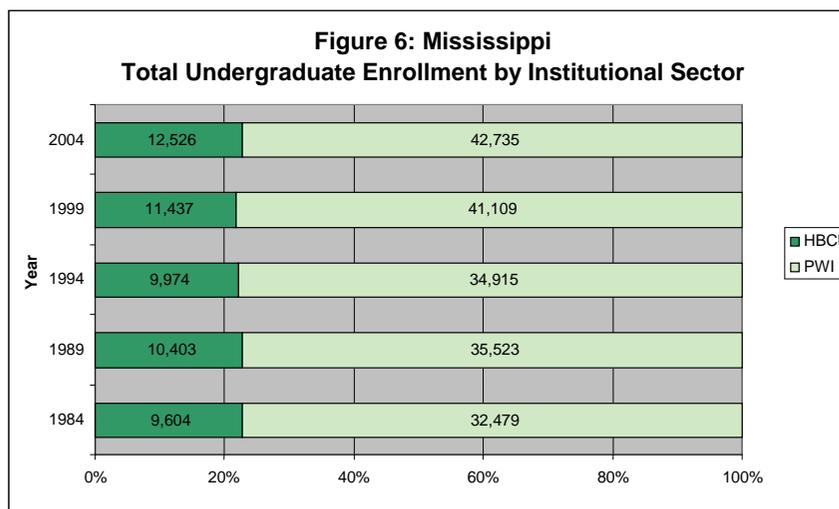
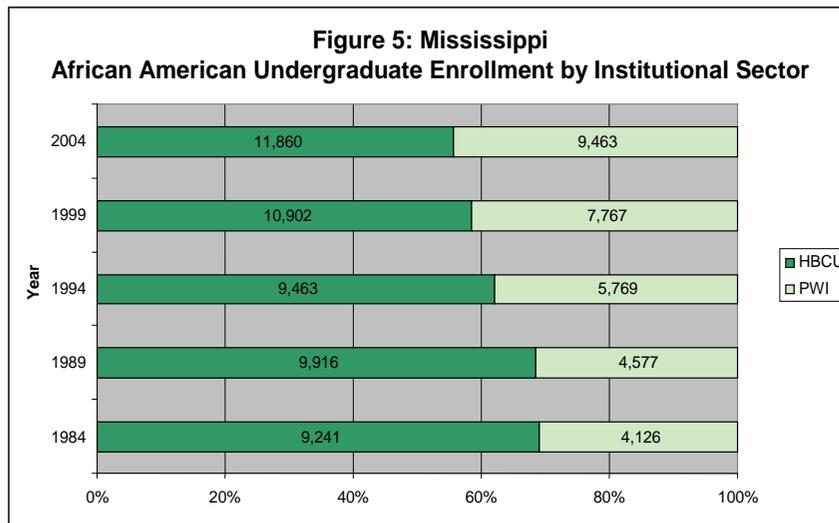
fewer actual students compared to twenty years ago. They also enroll a significantly smaller proportion of African American students. Figures 3 and 4 show enrollment trends by institutional sector in Louisiana. These declines were exaggerated by the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. In 2004 Southern University at New Orleans enrolled 2,664 undergraduates; in the fall of 2006 that number fell to 1,719. Similar to Alabama, Louisiana's public HBCUs are enrolling a decreasing proportion of African American undergraduates.



MISSISSIPPI

The public system of higher education in Mississippi includes eight four-year institutions and a medical center governed by a single board. Three are HBCUs and five are PWIs. The twelve members of the Board of Trustees for the State Institutions of Higher Learning are appointed from each of the three Mississippi Supreme Court districts; there are four members from each district. New academic programs and budget requests are managed centrally by the board.

Enrollment has grown across all public universities in Mississippi. Evidence also exists in Mississippi of decreases in the proportion of African American students enrolled at HBCUs. In recent years Mississippi has shown one directional movement—a sharp increase in the number of African American students attending PWIs. Between 2000 and 2005 the percentage of African American students attending PWIs increased by 20 percentage points (IHL, 2006).

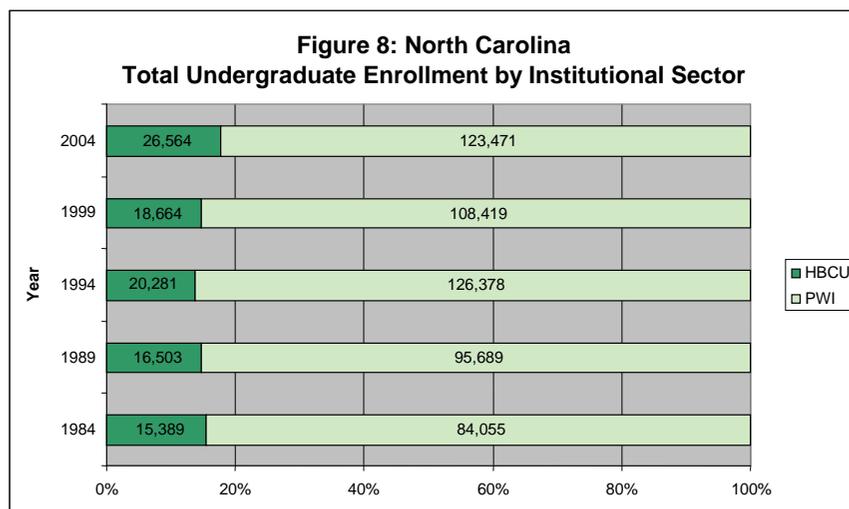
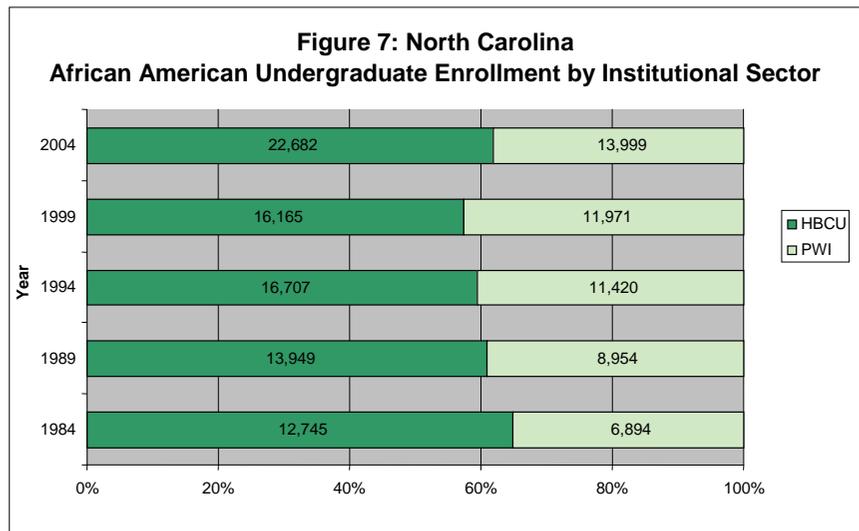


NORTH CAROLINA

The University of North Carolina (UNC) system has sixteen constituent institutions. North Carolina has the largest collection of public HBCUs of any state. Of the state's sixteen four-year institutions, five are HBCUs, representing about a third of the public four-year sector in North Carolina. All public universities in North Carolina are governed by the UNC system office. The UNC Board of Governors is the policy-making body legally charged with the general determination, control, supervision, management, and governance of all affairs of the constituent institutions. The thirty-two voting members of the Board of Governors are elected by the General Assembly for four-year terms. Additionally, each institution employs a Board of Trustees.

North Carolina's public universities enroll the most students of the four states under discussion, serving more than 150,000 students. As in Alabama and Mississippi, enrollment has grown at both public HBCUs and

PWIs. In North Carolina, however, virtually no movement has taken place across sectors. That is, the proportion of African American students enrolled in HBCUs versus in PWIs has remained relatively constant over a twenty-year period. This is despite a consent decree intended to desegregate enrollment at North Carolina's public universities (Dentler, Baltzell, & Sullivan, 1982). As a result, the proportion of African American undergraduates enrolled at HBCUs has remained relatively stable in North Carolina.



THE ENROLLMENT PICTURE

Generally, African American enrollment has grown in both sectors of public higher education. However, overall enrollment at HBCUs tends to be relatively modest given the populations they serve. Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi are three of the four states in the nation with the highest concentration of African American citizens (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). The average total enrollment for all HBCUs across the four states is approximately 5,791 students. The largest institution among this collection of HBCUs is North Carolina A&T State University, which enrolled 11,098 students in the fall of 2006. The smallest is Southern University-New Orleans, which enrolled 2,197 students in the fall of 2006. In Mississippi, the average enrollment at the state's three four-year public HBCUs is approximately 3,000 students, compared to 10,000 at its PWIs. Given the enrollment and degree attainment gap for African Americans in these states, successfully expanding institutional capacity seems paramount to addressing public needs.

Despite the wave of desegregation litigation, court rulings, mandates, and decrees, student movement across sectors has been in only one direction: a greater percentage of African American students enrolled in public universities now attend PWIs. Generally, White enrollment at HBCUs remained small over the last twenty years. For example, in 1972 North Carolina A&T State University (an HBCU) enrollment was 5 percent White. By the fall of 2005 it had grown to 7 percent. The purpose here is not to determine the appropriate racial mix of

students on each campus, but to consider the effectiveness of policies intended to create more desegregated and equitable systems of public higher education.

One result of desegregation policies has been that public HBCUs now enroll a smaller portion of African American undergraduates. In many respects this could be viewed as a positive trend resulting from large increases in African American enrollment in all sectors of postsecondary education. HBCU enrollment or the actual number of students attending HBCUs in three of the four states under discussion has also increased. The proportion of African American students attending PWIs versus HBCUs is what requires explanation. Some critics of desegregation litigation warned that policies granting African Americans greater access to PWIs would weaken enrollment at HBCUs. Because the actual number of students attending HBCUs has increased, this prediction has not proven entirely true. At the same time, certain desegregation policies have clearly influenced enrollment trends. Mississippi experienced the greatest growth of African American enrollment at PWIs, likely the result of the 1995 remedial decree that mandated admission criteria for all public universities be uniform (IHL, 2005). As a result, students who previously qualified only to attend the state's least selective universities could now attend any of them. Additionally, minimal cost differentials exist between institutions: there is less than a \$400 difference in tuition between the most expensive and least expensive public four-year institution in



Mississippi. It is also important to consider these trends in relationship to academic program offerings. In a system where a student can attend any public university

because selectivity and cost have been eliminated as barriers, academic program offerings become a higher priority.



FUNDING



ALABAMA APPROPRIATIONS

Higher education appropriations in the state of Alabama are made to each individual institution by the legislature with the advice of House and Senate higher education committees. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education makes a recommendation based on data and analyses from public universities. The Commission’s recommendation is merely advisory, and the legislature does not use funding formulas. During the 2006–2007 fiscal year, Alabama appropriated \$1.25 billion to its public universities. Additionally, the *Knight v. Alabama* settlement funding represents the October 13, 2006, desegregation resolution reached after twenty-six years of litigation. The state

of Alabama agreed to create line-item budgeting for initiatives intended to “redress historical discrimination in higher education against African Americans” (*Knight v. Alabama*, 2006).

Table 1: Alabama 2007 Higher Education Appropriations (in millions)

University of Alabama, System	\$532.6
Main campus	
Birmingham	
Huntsville	
Auburn University	\$228.0
University of South Alabama	\$120.3
Troy University, System	\$52.0
Main campus	
Dothan	
Montgomery	
Alabama A&M University	\$44.3
Jacksonville State University	\$42.7
Alabama State University	\$42.5
University of North Alabama	\$30.1
University of Montevallo	\$21.2
University of West Alabama	\$14.3
Athens State	\$13.4
Knight vs. Alabama settlement	\$56.7
* HBCUs are highlighted in green	



LOUISIANA APPROPRIATIONS

The funding formula for Louisiana’s public colleges and universities is comprised of four major categories: (a) the number of doctoral or advanced degrees offered, (b) the cost to administer academic programs, (c) enrollment, and (d) a line for special programs and nonformula items. For example, Louisiana’s higher education desegregation settlement was a line item under special programs. The desegregation settlement agreement expired in June 2006, and the funding formerly dedicated to those purposes is now considered general funding.

“The structure of most desegregation settlements in higher education are finite, meaning once payments have been made or certain benchmarks are met, the funding is concluded.”

**Table 2: Louisiana
2007 Higher Education Appropriations (in millions)**

Louisiana State University	\$204.8
University of Louisiana Lafayette	\$67.7
University of New Orleans	\$65.1
Southern A&M University (and Southern Law)	\$55.8
University of Louisiana at Monroe	\$52.3
Southeastern Louisiana University	\$51.4
Louisiana Tech University	\$47.9
Northwestern State University	\$34.5
McNesse State University	\$32.2
Nicholls State University	\$30.1
Grambling State University	\$29.2
Southern University at New Orleans	\$15.1
Louisiana State University-Shreveport	\$14.7
Louisiana State University-Alexandria	\$8.6

* HBCUs are highlighted in green

MISSISSIPPI APPROPRIATIONS

In August of each year, all state agencies in Mississippi submit budget requests to the legislature for consideration during the following year. At the beginning of each calendar year, the Legislative Budget Office provides a recommendation to the legislature. Then, in the first quarter of each calendar year, appropriations are made to each agency. The higher education appropriation is made to the Board of Trustees, which then divides it among four-year institutions based on a formula. The formula is made up of four main categories: (a) FTE/credit hours, (b) variations in program costs, (c) capital renewal and maintenance, and (d) supplemental funding for institutions

that enroll fewer than 5,000 students. The total 2007 appropriation for Mississippi's three public HBCUs includes \$20.2 million (across all three) from the Ayers desegregation settlement (IHL, 2005).

**Table 3: Mississippi
2007 Higher Education Appropriations (in millions)**

University of Mississippi Medical Center	\$182.6
University of Mississippi	\$76.2
Mississippi State University	\$161.5
University of Southern Mississippi	\$86.9
Jackson State University	\$48.9
Alcorn State University	\$26.0
Delta State University	\$22.6
Mississippi Valley State University	\$18.3
Mississippi University for Women	\$14.7
Ayers funding	\$20.2
* HBCUs are highlighted in green	



NORTH CAROLINA APPROPRIATIONS

Budget allocations for North Carolina’s public universities are decided annually by North Carolina’s General Assembly. The president of the UNC system receives instructions from the State Budget Office based on availability of general funds. Budget workshops are then conducted with three main groups: (a) an administrative council from the UNC system office, (b) chancellors from each institution, and (c) the Board of Governors. Based on the outcome of the workshops, each institution receives feedback to assist with budget requests made to the president of the system. Next,

the requests are reviewed by the UNC system administration. The president then submits a system request to the Board of Governors; the board approves it and forwards the request to the governor, who in turn sends it to the General Assembly for deliberation and legislative action.

**Table 4: North Carolina
2007 Higher Education Appropriations (in millions)**

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill	\$490.3
North Carolina State University	\$428.0
East Carolina University	\$213.9
University of North Carolina-Charlotte	\$156.3
University of North Carolina-Greensboro	\$138.6
Appalachian State University	\$113.5
University of North Carolina-Wilmington	\$91.4
North Carolina A&T State University	\$88.1
Western Carolina University	\$80.4
North Carolina Central University	\$73.8
Winston-Salem State University	\$65.4
University of North Carolina-Pembroke	\$50.0
Fayetteville State University	\$48.7
University of North Carolina-Ashville	\$32.6
Elizabeth City State University	\$31.4

* HBCUs are highlighted in green



THE FUNDING PICTURE

An examination of funding equity across the four states reveals consistent patterns indicating the tendency of legislators and higher education leaders to invest significant portions of funding in flagship institutions. Base budget processes and traditional funding patterns perpetuate existing trends that limit the ability of states to narrow degree attainment disparities. The lion's share of state support is given to institutions where the majority of students who attend are overrepresented in public higher education. Institutions with large enrollments and vast degree offerings receive significantly larger portions of appropriations with base budget funding formulas. In North Carolina, for instance, both the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University independently receive more of the state's appropriation than all five of the HBCUs combined. Together, UNC-Chapel Hill and North Carolina State enroll approximately 4,145 African American students. North Carolina A&T State University (an HBCU) alone enrolls twice as many African American students but receives a fraction of the state's appropriation. These data take on meaning in light of equity indices for North Carolina, which show that African Americans are underrepresented in public four-year institutions and Whites are overrepresented (Perna et al., 2006). Many proponents of HBCUs claim such funding patterns represent a form of discrimination against African Americans and the institutions most willing to serve them. Similarly, in the state of Alabama, African Americans make up 26.5 percent of the population and also experience disparities in degree attainment; however,

African American students make up just 8 percent (1,883) of the enrollment at Auburn University, which received \$228 million in state support in 2007. In the same year, Alabama State and Alabama A&M (the state's two public HBCUs) collectively enrolled 11,641 African Americans and together received \$87 million.

Certainly, states must appropriately support institutions with vast operations. One might argue that larger institutions should receive a larger share of appropriations: an institution that must support 3,000 faculty members should receive more than one with only 300. Still, when comparing state funding, per-student inequities become evermore apparent. For example, UNC-Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University receive approximately \$15,700 in state funding per student. In comparison, students at North Carolina A&T and Fayetteville State University receive approximately \$7,800 each in state appropriations.

State higher education leaders must be more conscious of how funding patterns might actually counter the goal of expanding access and, perhaps, threaten the semblance of equity. Current appropriation processes essentially ignore institutions most capable of educating those least likely to receive postsecondary degrees. There are few instances where state appropriations are directly used to narrow gaps in degree attainment by investing in institutions most capable of serving underrepresented populations. Of the four state appropriation processes reviewed, there was no clear indication of such goals. Aside from settlement



funding, North Carolina was the only state of the four showing evidence of voluntary action (and public funding) especially intended to increase institutional capacity with the expressed purpose of expanding access and degree attainment.

In North Carolina, the UNC system recently conducted an analysis of each public four-year institution to determine which had the most capacity to grow. Of the sixteen institutions in the UNC system, seven universities—including all five HBCUs—were identified as institutions that could expand enrollment, facilities, and academic programs. The UNC Board and the legislature deliberately funded the “Focused Growth” initiative, which designated more than \$420 million for new academic programs, construction of new classrooms, residence halls, operating infrastructure, and information technology at public HBCUs (UNC, 2005). This represents one model of funding higher education that more directly targets needs of a particular state.

Across each of the states, funding processes do not necessarily allow for consideration of how well (or poorly) specific institutions serve public needs. This does not suggest that states should treat each institution the same by creating an “across the board” or generic funding model. Instead, the assertion is that states, for example, invest more strategically in institutions where growth of degree attainment among citizens is more possible, assuming this is a worthwhile goal. This allows states to more fully consider balancing educational inequities that have been recently associated so closely with

economic and social benefits for states (NCHEMS, 2007; National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2005).

Historically, the federal government has recognized the need to support institutions that serve underrepresented students. The Higher Education Act signed in 1965 generally sought to increase support for colleges and universities and to increase resources available to students. Title III-Part B of the act specifically targeted increasing capacity at HBCUs. Funds are provided as grants to institutions for physical plant improvements, financial management, academic resources, and endowment-building capacity. In 2006 \$238 million was allocated to more than 90 HBCUs. With the average grant award of approximately \$2 million per institution, the funding disparities between HBCUs and PWIs were not significantly narrowed.

From 1993 to 2002 federal funding for all institutions nationally, when adjusted for inflation, increased by 40 percent. Federal funding for HBCUs during the same time period increased 24 percent (White House Report, 2005). Additionally, the amount of funding granted to HBCUs as a percentage of total funding for higher education institutions has remained relatively flat. The White House Initiative on HBCUs was created in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan, following the establishment of an executive order signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1980. This order was intended to create federal programs that would help strengthen the capacity of HBCUs and offset historical discrimination. President George H. Bush upheld the order during his administration and established an advisory

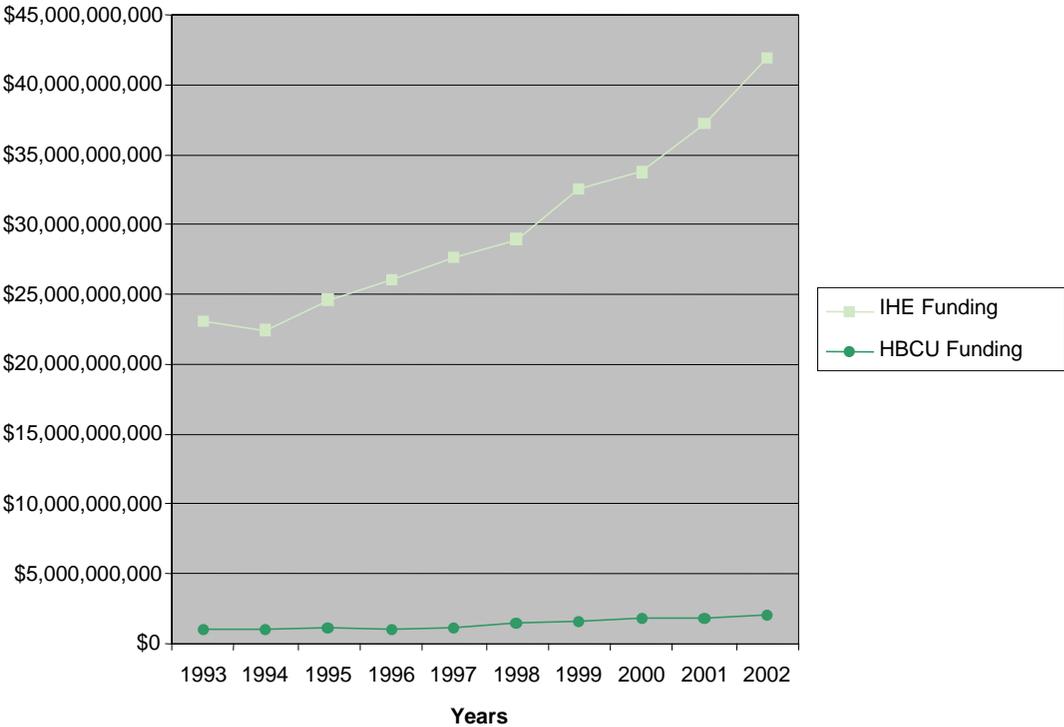


board made up of HBCU presidents to advise the federal government on how best to support HBCUs. President Bill Clinton's version of the executive order attempted to add oversight and accountability by requiring the senior level executives of each federal agency to oversee implementation of the order. Still, the latest report on federal agency support of HBCUs shows a decline for more than half of all federal agencies (White House Report, 2005). More in-depth examinations of the White House Initiative deem it relatively ineffective and dysfunctional.

Supplemental state funding for HBCUs in three of the four states (Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi) is ordered by

legal mandates or settlements related to historical disparities in state funding. After twenty-six years of litigation, the 2006 *Knight v. Alabama* settlement was intended to remove vestiges of desegregation from Alabama's system of public higher education. The settlement designates \$10 million for need-based student aid via the Alabama Student Assistance Program. It also established continual funding for diversity scholarships and a trust fund for educational excellence established in a 1995 remedial decree. In addition, the settlement mandated that the State of Alabama provide \$7.3 million to Alabama A&M and \$28.5 million to Alabama State University in capital funds (*Knight v. Alabama*, 2006). Mississippi, in a similar

Figure 9: Comparison of HBCU Funding to Total IHE Funding 1993 through 2002 (in millions)



fashion, recently settled its desegregation case more than twenty-five years after the initial suit was filed. In 2004, after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal from plaintiffs, Mississippi's three public HBCUs received more than \$503 million to execute their remedial decree (IHL, 2005; Minor, in press). Louisiana's most recent settlement from 1995 to 2005 provided \$125 million for new academic programs at Grambling and Southern universities, scholarships for minority graduate students at PWIs, and a new engineering facility at Southern University. Desegregation settlements are typically not thought of as a contemporary phenomenon, yet they still exist in public higher education, which may be an indication of how slow states have been to reform their dual

systems of public higher education. As a result, the influence of settlement funds on institutional capacity has not been realized. Additionally, none of the settlements were reached with widespread agreement or satisfaction within the HBCU community. In fact, the lead attorney for the Ayers case in Mississippi appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, asserting that the one-time payment of \$503 million for three institutions was insufficient, given the history of discriminatory practice and policy (Mills, 2004). And, as evidenced in Louisiana, these settlements will eventually expire. The structure of most desegregation settlements in higher education are finite, meaning once payments have been made or certain benchmarks are met, the funding is concluded.



ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS



DISTRIBUTION OF ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS

Many higher education institutions have become increasingly dependent on tuition revenue. As a result, academic program offerings and enrollment are essential components of financial solvency. Institutions create, design, and redesign academic programs not only for the sake of institutional quality, but also to sustain and grow enrollment. The proliferation of online course offerings is just one example of measures taken by institutions to grow enrollment and revenue. Historically, the use of duplicate academic programs was one way institutions and state systems effectively maintained segregated or dual systems of higher education. Program duplication generally refers to instances where the same or similar academic programs (other than core liberal arts and sciences) are offered at both an HBCU and PWI in geographic proximity to each other. Many HBCU proponents have identified the issue of program duplication as problematic, claiming it disallows growth and expansion at HBCUs. Academic program equity and duplication were core elements in desegregation litigation. Two engineering programs at two public institutions—one HBCU and one PWI—could operate twelve miles apart with segregated enrollments and minimal, if any, cooperation. Theoretically, an HBCU could run a well-established nursing program with diverse and growing enrollment because of workforce demands. A nearby PWI could then be granted permission to offer a nursing degree, thereby subverting growth at the HBCU. More recently, the climate of accountability and efficiency discourages such arrangements, creating competition for new programs between public institutions. This

is particularly the case in states where new program approval is granted centrally.

In states where program approval is granted centrally—meaning a system board or Commission for Higher Education is the final authority, not the institution—provisional resources are more likely an issue. For example, arguments are sometimes made that it is more cost efficient to grant a new program to an institution that already has sufficient facilities and faculty, thereby lessening the start-up time and cost. Maryland legislators recently introduced Senate Bill 29, designed to subject new academic programs in the state to judicial review to determine whether they disadvantage HBCUs. Additionally, the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, the leading advocacy association for HBCUs, recently announced it is considering recommending legal action against states that continue to disadvantage HBCUs with discriminatory decision making related to academic programs. Much of the contention surrounds where programmatic investments are made across public universities and the establishment of new graduate and professional programs. The distribution of graduate and professional programs is particularly contentious, given their association with prestige, enrollment gains among nontraditional students, and increases in state funding. An examination of the distribution of graduate degree programs across the four states revealed noticeable disparities between HBCUs and PWIs. Graduate degree programs are defined here as masters', specialist programs,



and doctorate offerings. A total of 577 graduate programs are offered across all public four-year institutions in Alabama. The two public HBCUs in the state (ASU and AA&MU) offer a total of fifty graduate programs, which include seven doctoral degree programs. Comparatively, Auburn University, located fifty-five miles away from Alabama State, offers a total of 128 graduate degrees, forty of which are doctoral programs. HBCUs in North Carolina make up nearly a third of its public higher education system but offer just 11 percent of the state's graduate programs. Across the five HBCUs, North Carolina Central University has the most graduate programs, a total of forty-two; two are doctoral programs. UNC-Chapel Hill, which is approximately eleven miles away, offers 189 graduate programs; 108 are doctoral programs. Tables 5-8 show this distribution of graduate programs in each state.

The point here is not to suggest that states grant an equal share of degree programs across universities. Instead, state higher education leaders need to commit to institutional equity in ways that take into account institutional mission, public need, and an acknowledgement

of current disparities in degree program offerings. The thirteen HBCUs across the four states collectively offer just thirty-six doctoral degrees. An emphasis on post-baccalaureate programs does not necessarily place a premium on graduate or doctoral education but illustrates differences in the array of programs offered across institutional sectors. Clearly, not every institution is designated as a place for graduate study. Winston-Salem State University is a liberal arts university and one might expect a limited offering of graduate programs. Still, according to the latest Carnegie Basic Classification of Institutions, eleven of the thirteen HBCUs across all four states are classified as a masters', research, or doctoral university. Across all U.S. universities, approximately 42,155 doctoral degrees were awarded in 2004 (Hoffer, Welch, Williams, Hess, Webber, Lisek, Loew, and Guzman-Barron, 2005). Just 4 percent (1,869) were conferred upon African Americans, further highlighting the question of whether HBCUs could do more if provided sufficient resources. When considering modest undergraduate enrollments, funding disparities, and limited graduate degree offerings among HBCUs, the contemporary picture becomes clearer.



Table 5: Alabama - Distribution of Graduate Programs

Institution	2007 Appropriation (in millions)	Total # of Grad. Programs (Doctoral Programs)
University of Alabama, System	\$532.6	
Main campus		138 (58)
Birmingham		84 (38)
Huntsville		31 (12)
Auburn University	\$228.0	128 (40)
University of South Alabama	\$120.3	43 (8)
Troy University, System	\$52.0	
Main campus		15 (0)
Dothan		14 (0)
Montgomery		11 (0)
Alabama A&M University	\$44.3	33 (4)
Jacksonville State University	\$42.7	25 (0)
Alabama State University	\$42.5	17 (3)
University of North Alabama	\$30.1	14 (0)
University of Montevallo	\$21.2	10 (0)
University of West Alabama	\$14.3	11 (0)
Athens State	\$13.4	Only BA/BS

* HBCUs are highlighted in green

Table 6: Louisiana - Distribution of Graduate Programs

Institution	2007 Appropriation (in millions)	Total # of Grad. Programs (Doctoral Programs)
Louisiana State University	\$204.8	132 (52)
University of Louisiana Lafayette	\$67.7	37 (9)
University of New Orleans	\$65.1	58 (11)
Southern A&M University (and Southern Law)	\$55.8	32 (7)
University of Louisiana at Monroe	\$52.3	29 (5)
Southeastern Louisiana University	\$51.4	24 (1)
Louisiana Tech University	\$47.9	44 (8)
Northwestern State University	\$34.5	21 (0)
McNesse State University	\$32.2	21 (0)
Nicholls State University	\$30.1	11 (0)
Grambling State University	\$29.2	21 (3)
Southern University at New Orleans	\$15.1	5 (0)
Louisiana State University-Shreveport	\$14.7	10 (0)
Louisiana State University-Alexandria	\$8.6	No data

* HBCUs are highlighted in green



Table 7: Mississippi - Distribution of Graduate Programs

Institution	2007 Appropriation (in millions)	Total # of Grad. Programs (Doctoral Programs)
University of Mississippi Medical Center	\$182.6	No data
University of Mississippi	\$76.2	66 (23)
Mississippi State University	\$161.5	95 (38)
University of Southern Mississippi	\$86.9	94 (28)
Jackson State University	\$48.9	54 (11)
Alcorn State University	\$26.0	13 (0)
Delta State University	\$22.6	20 (1)
Mississippi Valley State University	\$18.3	9 (0)
Mississippi University for Women	\$14.7	7 (0)

* HBCUs are highlighted in green

Table 8: North Carolina - Distribution of Graduate Programs

Institution	2007 Appropriation (in millions)	Total # of Grad. Programs (Doctoral Programs)
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill	\$490.3	186 (108)
North Carolina State University	\$428.0	232 (62)
East Carolina University	\$213.9	96 (16)
University of North Carolina-Charlotte	\$156.3	79 (18)
University of North Carolina-Greensboro	\$138.6	89 (23)
Appalachian State University	\$113.5	52 (1)
University of North Carolina-Wilmington	\$91.4	28 (1)
North Carolina A&T State University	\$88.1	38 (5)
Western Carolina University	\$80.4	40 (1)
North Carolina Central University	\$73.8	42 (2)
Winston-Salem State University	\$65.4	9 (0)
University of North Carolina-Pembroke	\$50.0	17 (0)
Fayetteville State University	\$48.7	13 (1)
University of North Carolina-Ashville	\$32.6	1
Elizabeth City State University	\$31.4	4(0)

* HBCUs are highlighted in green



LOOKING FORWARD

Today one might be hard pressed to proclaim that institutional equity within public systems of higher education exists across the four states examined in this report. There remains a significant gap in educational attainment for African Americans in southern states, where they are most concentrated. At the same time, southern states have the greatest collection of public HBCUs with distinguished records for educating African American students. During this era of increased calls for postsecondary access, a diverse workforce, and global competitiveness, HBCUs appear underutilized. The need to increase support of HBCUs now extends beyond issues of equity, social justice, or remediation for past discrimination. It is now a matter of meeting public needs and producing educated citizens that contribute to advancing communities. In the last decade business leaders and policy makers have become more appreciative of the need to educate a greater percentage of citizens because of the benefit to their local economies (Business–Higher Education Forum, 2004). State economies are now more reliant on the production of college-educated citizens not only to create new industries but also to fill positions that require postsecondary education (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2005). Each of the states discussed here would benefit from a study of the effectiveness, efficiency, and outcomes that could result from increasing the capacity at HBCUs to educate a greater percentage of all citizens.

It is true that large and continual investment in public HBCUs is necessary to bring about institutional equity and to narrow the gap

in degree attainment. There is widespread belief in the HBCU community that the resources from settlement agreements alone are insufficient to completely redress the many years of discrimination. Furthermore, it appears that the concerns about state funding and program distribution expressed by the HBCU community have merit. It is a disservice to all involved to have such noticeable gaps in resources between public HBCUs and PWIs. Institutional diversity is a hallmark of American higher education. In the public sector, the assumption is that each institution, regardless of its mission, provides high quality educational experiences. Today, however, there remain clear signs of division based on institutional type. Higher education leaders and legislators must face this reality and act. Traditional funding formulas that appropriate resources based on size and numbers of academic programs effectively maintain system inequality. Additionally, though the supplements from desegregation settlements will provide HBCUs a much-needed boost, they will eventually end. Responsive resource redistribution is necessary to sustain the development of HBCUs. Federal initiatives on behalf of HBCUs are peculiar. Although federal support is vital to the operation of many public HBCUs, it has not been enough to effectively expand institutional capacity. It might be better to characterize these contributions as financial aid for HBCUs rather than purposeful investment. The White House Initiative on HBCUs was intended to strengthen the capacity of HBCUs via supportive partnerships with federal agencies. Funding data suggest that federal support of HBCUs is flat

and has been of minimal effectiveness in achieving its mission. The following are a few recommendations for higher education leaders and policy makers to consider:

Looking from the inside out, institutional leaders at HBCUs must take on the responsibility to create conditions that invite investment of additional resources.

Financial integrity, sound governance practices, and imaginative thinking are necessities. HBCU leaders must also be willing to accept the challenge of repositioning their institution without forsaking its history. This recognizes that students and the factors that determine where they attend college are different today compared to previous generations.

- The White House Initiative on HBCUs should be reorganized and reconstituted. The Executive Director must be given authority and leverage with federal agencies to encourage cooperation. As a federal initiative, this might also serve as an opportunity to establish a national agenda for HBCUs that might include a few strategic directions and benchmarks shared by different states. The annual reports from this initiative could then be used to determine progress and to quantify how federal agencies have contributed to achieve particular goals. Reorganizing and reconstituting the White House Initiative on HBCUs is critical if it is to be effective.
- Higher education leaders and legislators must honestly evaluate state funding trends to determine the extent to which public funding effectively maintains the status quo or actually helps achieve particular goals of public higher education. Commissioned studies that explore cost-benefit analyses on specific issues such as access, degree attainment, or workforce development would be useful when considering adjusting state funding formulas or processes.
- If state leaders proclaim that a major goal for their public higher education system is to increase the percentage of citizens with postsecondary degrees, then funding, policy initiatives, and related objectives must reflect that proclamation. While respecting institutional mission and diversity, state higher education leaders must seek opportunities to make the most of their resources by increasing investment in institutions most likely to have the greatest impact on expanding degree attainment.

HBCUs must also now be promoted as an excellent educational opportunity for any student who attends. They must be viewed (by themselves and by others) as a partner in public systems of higher education rather than a separate sector. Based on the examination of these four states it is evident many of the complaints registered during the March 2007 meeting are legitimate. It is now time to marshal evidence and collective effort toward creating public systems of higher education

that represents comprehensive quality and balance. Today there remain too many reminders of a dual system of public higher education. HBCUs continue to play a critical role in public higher education systems but could contribute more with adequate support. Higher education leaders and policy makers must recognize that increasing support of HBCUs only raises the tide of success for our nation. They must also understand that support in the form of action, not rhetoric, is what is necessary.

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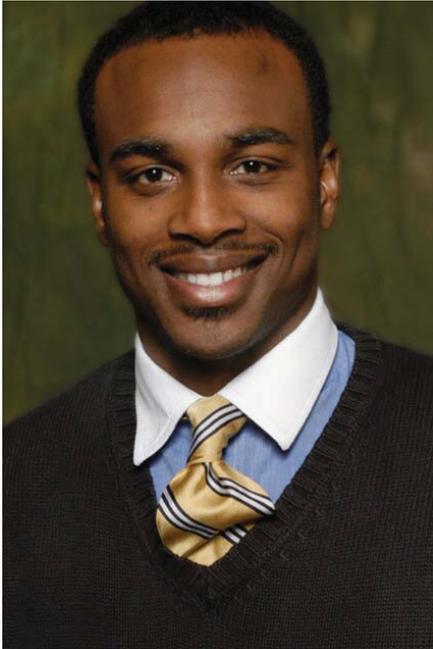
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