

Report and Recommendation of the Special Committee

April 13, 2022

I. Introduction

On February 16, 2022, Grove City College's ("GCC" or the "College") Board of Trustees ("Board") appointed the ad hoc Special Committee ("Committee") to review allegations of mission-drift.¹ The Committee has completed its work.² We identified some specific instances of misalignment. Below, we identify concrete steps that President McNulty is taking to prevent similar occurrences.

Grove City College has not changed. It remains a Christ-centered, conservative institution. GCC's Board and president are firmly committed to its historic vision, mission, values, and character.

II. Background

The Committee's appointment is extraordinary. We cannot recall a similar action at GCC. It was prompted by persistent reports of actions allegedly indicating creeping "wokeness"³ at the College, particularly through the introduction of critical race theory ("CRT").⁴ Those allegations are provocative because they conflict with Grove City College's well-earned reputation as a conservative, independent, and Christ-centered college standing athwart the increasingly progressive higher-education environment.

¹ See Statement from the Grove City College Board of Trustees. (Exhibit A.)

² Though the Committee was short-lived, its work was extensive. We interviewed twenty-five administrators, faculty, and employees, and reviewed twelve videos of selected chapel services and two TED Talks used in chapel services or Resident Assistant training. We also reviewed relevant College documents and read numerous books, academic articles, and popular articles. A list of the materials reviewed is attached as Exhibit B.

³ "Wokeness" refers to increased awareness of, and political grievance relating to, alleged racism and inequality.

⁴ Our references to CRT include popular "CRT-adjacent" advocacy cloaked in the secular or religious language of "social justice."

The Committee members are:

- David J. Porter ('88), Committee Chair; Secretary of the Board. Judge Porter joined the Board in 2006. He currently serves on the Executive Committee, Governance Committee, and the Enrollment & Student Affairs Committee.
- Alice M. Batchelder. Judge Batchelder joined the Board in 2006. She currently serves on the Governance Committee and the Academic Program Committee.
- Deborah K. Holt ('84); Treasurer of the Board. Ms. Holt joined the Board in 2012. She currently serves on the Executive Committee, Academic Program Committee, Finance & Audit Committee, and Retirement Committee.
- Anne M. McClelland ('81). Ms. McClelland joined the Board in 2014. She currently serves on the Executive Committee, Development Committee, and is Chair of the Library & Technology Committee. She received a Jack Kennedy Memorial Alumni Achievement Award in 2008.
- David R. Rathburn ('79), Chair Emeritus. Mr. Rathburn joined the Board in 1992. He was Board Chair from 2003 to 2020. He was recognized with a Jack Kennedy Memorial Alumni Achievement Award in 2001 and received the Jack Kennedy Memorial Distinguished Service Award in 2021.
- John A. Sparks ('66). Dr. Sparks is the retired Dean of the College's Calderwood School of Arts & Letters. A GCC faculty member for thirty-seven years, he received the Professor of the Year award in 2001 and was recognized with a Jack Kennedy Memorial Alumni Achievement Award in 2002.

III. Our Audiences

The controversy has drawn widespread attention, so we assume that this Report will be of interest to varied constituencies. The immediate audience is our fellow trustees because the Board is responsible for safeguarding the College's mission and reputation. Additional interested constituencies include GCC's leadership, faculty, and employees; alumni;

current and prospective students and their parents; friends and supporters of Grove City College; others in higher education; and thoughtful people concerned about the direction of our national culture.

IV. Grove City College's Mission and Identity

Not everyone shares the same familiarity with Grove City College. So before summarizing our findings and recommended actions, we think it would be helpful to frame the controversy by discussing the College's vision, values, and tradition.

What follows is the standard by which we conducted our review, evaluated our findings, and recommend further action.

The College's stated mission is to "equip students to pursue their unique callings through a Christ-centered, academically excellent, and affordable learning and living experience." "Grounded in permanent ideas and traditional values," GCC is "committed to the foundations of free society."⁵ In pursuit of that mission and vision, the College emphasizes the values of faithfulness, excellence, community, stewardship, and independence. Those values are explained more fully on the College's website⁶ and in the "History and Purpose" section of the College Bulletin.

All programming at GCC must further the College's mission and values. Programs that fail to advance the College's mission and values are presumptively suspect. Actions that detract from its mission and values are counter-productive at best.

Grove City College is more than a few propositions articulating its vision, mission, and values. It is a living, dynamic institution with a cherished legacy. GCC's character reflects the ideas, mores, relationships, customs, affections, and traditions of its founders, leaders, faculty and employees, students, alumni, and donors spanning generations.

From these historical aspects of GCC proceed three traits that are part of the College's self-identity and public reputation. First, GCC is a Christian college; its community is Christ-centered and pursues biblical truth.⁷ Second,

⁵ Grove City College 2022-2026 Vision Statement.

⁶ See <https://www.gcc.edu/home/our-story/faith-freedom/vision-mission-values>.

⁷ Board Chair J. Howard Pew said his "great hope" for Grove City College was that "first of all, we might inculcate in the minds and hearts of our

as a corollary to the first trait, GCC has a conservative disposition and perspective.⁸ Third, GCC appreciates many contributions of classical liberalism, so it actively encourages religious liberty, free political institutions, and a free society.⁹

It is entirely appropriate for GCC faculty and students to engage any issues relating to the fallen human condition—including problems associated with racial discrimination.¹⁰ We agree that a college or university:

is a place to fit [students] of the world for the world. We cannot possibly keep them from plunging into the world, with all its ways and principles and maxims, when their time comes; but we can prepare them against what is inevitable; and it is not the way to learn to swim in troubled waters, never to have gone into them.¹¹

This controversy has arisen, however, because in certain instances engagement and discussion have allegedly drifted into CRT advocacy. The Board has already said that it “categorically rejects Critical Race Theory and similar ‘critical’ schools of thought as antithetical to GCC’s vision, mission, and values.” That, too, is part of GCC’s character.

In light of GCC’s mission and identity, we briefly mention a few points that bear on the controversy. First, all humanity descends from Adam; we are

students those moral and Christian principles which alone constitute the foundation for the development of a country in which we might all well be proud.” J. Howard Pew to College president, J. Stanley Harker, November 2, 1964.

⁸ See, e.g., Young America’s Foundation Top Conservative College List (<http://students.yaf.org/top-conservative-colleges/>; Newsmax’s 40 Best Colleges for Conservative Values (<https://www.newsmax.com/TheWire/best-colleges-conservative-values/2016/02/17/id/714718/>).

⁹ See, e.g., The Institute for Faith & Freedom at Grove City College (<https://www.gcc.edu/Home/Our-Story/The-Institute-for-Faith-Freedom>).

¹⁰ “The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection.” John Milton, *from* Of Education.

¹¹ John Henry Newman, *THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY*, 160 (1996 Yale University Press).

“in his own likeness, according to his image.”¹² Second, because all are made in the image of God, we have equal dignity by virtue of our humanity. Third, invidious racial discrimination is evil. Fourth, the gospel overcomes sinful distinctions based on race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, class, wealth, and similar features because “you are all one in Christ Jesus.”¹³ Fifth, our striving after justice and its object, the common good, should be rooted in divine revelation and natural law—not in critical theory or its popular variants.

CRT is incompatible with GCC’s vision, mission, and values for many reasons. Here are a few:

CRT evaluates people on the basis of race, alleged racial traits (e.g., so-called “whiteness”), and the sufficiency of their “antiracist” works. The Bible rejects such biological distinctions and focuses on the heart. And it describes justice primarily in terms of our relationships with one another.

CRT condemns people according to their alleged complicity (conscious or otherwise) with racism or racist policies and institutions. But its sweeping definitions of racism indict many people solely on the bases of skin color, economic status, and religious or political differences. GCC rejects CRT’s determination to view human behavior through the lens of race.

CRT uncharitably detects aggression where none is intended, breeds resentment, and stokes recrimination. It impedes genuine repentance and forgiveness. So it corrodes the loving, unified, “close-knit family environment” that GCC seeks to encourage on its residential campus.¹⁴

CRT is inseparable from its political activism. And CRT’s “intersectionality” variant combines race with sex, sexual orientation, gender, economic status, and other so-called “structural hierarchies” to make its political agenda comprehensive. While CRT is an appropriate subject of academic study and critical analysis, it is antagonistic to basic American principles that GCC values, such as First Amendment liberties, equality, federalism, separation of powers, the rule of law, race neutrality, private

¹² Genesis 1:26, 27; 3:20, 5:3.

¹³ I Corinthians 12:12,13; Galatians 3:27-29; Colossians 3:11; Revelation 7:9,10.

¹⁴ See <https://www.gcc.edu/Home/Our-Story/Our-Distinctives/Student-Community>.

property, and free markets. Were CRT permitted to obtain a foothold at GCC, it would create a house divided.¹⁵

CRT's worldview is impervious to rational argument and lacks analytical rigor. Indeed, CRT sometimes demeans rational argument as itself racist and oppressive. "It allows every piece of evidence that might refute one's theory to be transformed into further evidence of how deep and comprehensive the problem of oppression is."¹⁶ In this respect, CRT directly challenges GCC's academic mission.

V. Academic Freedom

As the Committee began its review, some individuals expressed concern about potential infringement of academic freedom. Academic freedom in higher education is necessary, and we have thought about it deeply. We agree that academic freedom is important for individuals, institutions, and society.

Here, the complaints discount our shared history. The Board has never interfered in the work of any current faculty member. The longest-serving trustee or trustee emeritus began service in 1977. During that time, the Board has been unfailingly respectful of individual academic freedom. It has given wide berth to faculty expression, including by occasional dissidents who regularly share contrarian views—sometimes to the embarrassment of the College.

There are two types of academic freedom: individual and institutional. Individual academic freedom is especially necessary at public institutions where employees may be susceptible to political pressure, implicating First Amendment concerns. It is also important at private institutions such as GCC because it allows faculty and students the freedom to teach, study, research, opine, debate, and pursue knowledge without unreasonable interference. That freedom, in turn, benefits the scholarly community and society by advancing knowledge.

Institutional academic freedom is no less important. It ensures institutional independence, a value that Grove City College holds dear and has litigated all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States.¹⁷ It

¹⁵ Matthew 12:25.

¹⁶ Carl R. Trueman, *Evangelicals and Race Theory*, 310 *First Things* 19, 20 (February 2021).

¹⁷ See *Grove City College v. Bell*, 465 U.S. 555 (1984).

promotes pluralism in higher education and serves the antidogmatic principle of academic freedom itself.¹⁸ And it protects religious autonomy and associational freedom.

Individual and institutional academic freedom are occasionally in tension. But they coexist comfortably at institutions that attract faculty and students precisely because of the institution's religious mission and values. At such places, freedom of contract and unwritten norms create ample room for both types of academic freedom. That is why the College's annual faculty contracts include robust, unambiguous limitations-clause provisions.

GCC enjoys a happy tradition of cooperation and comity between trustees, administration, and faculty. The Board and president have not dictated how faculty should pursue their work. And to date, the Board has not promulgated a confessional statement to which all must subscribe. There is room aplenty for differences of opinion and personality as faculty pursue their own scholarly interests while seeking to advance the College's mission and vision.

At GCC, this "presumption of freedom within defined limits"¹⁹ occurs in an atmosphere of mutual trust. That trust is rooted in love for each other and our unity in Christ. It is an expression of gratitude for each member's respective gifts, contributions, and professional expertise. Our trust is also sustained, in part, out of gratitude for the patrimony transmitted by our College forebears. And it deliberately honors other important constituencies who share GCC's values: students, parents, alumni, and donors.

This atmosphere of mutual trust presumes that all employees will faithfully pursue the College's Christ-centered mission and embrace—or at least respect, its conservative character. It requires that they carefully discern and critique hostile philosophies, cant, and empty deceit.²⁰

¹⁸ This principle assumes that education is value-free. But "[i]t is quaint that people talk about separating dogma from education. Dogma is actually the only thing that cannot be separated from education. It is education. A teacher who is not dogmatic is simply a teacher who is not teaching." G.K.

CHESTERTON, *WHAT'S WRONG THE WORLD*, 60 (2009 Feather Tail Press).

¹⁹ George M. Marsden, *THE SOUL OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY*, 434 (1994 Oxford University Press).

²⁰ Colossians 2:8.

Like faculty, GCC’s trustees are deeply and personally invested in the College. They are not potted plants. The Board is eager to promote and protect the College’s vision, mission, and values. Consistent with our policy-making responsibility, that includes speaking into the life of the College when necessary, as we have been asked to do here.

Consistent with past experience, the Committee respects individual academic freedom while reinforcing GCC’s institutional academic freedom. We do not recommend imposing a speech code, banning books, or cancelling speakers. This report, while extraordinary, is respectfully intended to provide clarity regarding the College’s mission and values, and to suggest reasonable boundaries.

VI. The Committee’s Jurisdiction

We focused on concerns raised in the petition dated November 10, 2021, in the petitioners’ reply to President McNulty dated December 6, 2021, and widely repeated thereafter in publications and social media. We also considered the anonymous “An open letter to the Grove City College Board of Trustees” dated February 7, 2022, a response thereto published in *The Collegian* on February 18, 2022, and other communications offering varying perspectives on these issues.

We condensed the allegations and concerns into six categories: (1) EDUC 290—Cultural Diversity and Advocacy; (2) Resident Assistant Training and Oversight; (3) the Advisory Council on Diversity (“Advisory Council”); (4) the Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives (“OMEI”); (5) certain chapel programs; and (6) the 2021 revision to the College’s vision statement.

VII. Factual Findings

A. EDUC 290—Cultural Diversity and Advocacy

EDUC 290 is a two-credit course without prerequisites. It was first offered during the Spring 2021 semester; seven students enrolled. The class was offered again during the Spring 2022 semester; eight students enrolled.

EDUC 290 was conceived and designed during the Fall of 2020 by a professor in the Department of Education. In that professor’s opinion, a similar course that she teaches, EDUC 203—Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, does not spend sufficient time discussing racism and racial relations for

teachers. The professor was also inspired by a petition circulated in 2020 attacking GCC's allegedly inadequate treatment of racial issues.

EDUC 290 is a "studies course." At GCC, studies courses are offered as a kind of test run, often covering new material. In order to encourage innovation and exploration of new subjects, proposed studies courses undergo an abbreviated and less rigorous approval process. This abbreviated process has been in place for approximately ten years.

The 2021 design and content of EDUC 290 was ideologically one-sided and effectively promoted pop-CRT. For example, assigned readings included *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates, *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo, *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi, and similar books—but none from a critical or opposing perspective. At the direction of the President, Provost, and Dean of the Calderwood School, the course content was modified by the addition of new readings in 2022, but it still suffers from the same fundamental flaws.

During the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters, the College offered 1,369 classes and taught 25,906 students. EDUC 290 represented 0.07% of all classes taught and 0.03% of all students taught at GCC during this academic year.

B. Resident Assistant Training and Oversight

In August 2021, the two-week orientation for Resident Assistants ("RA") included a one-hour presentation by the Director of Multicultural Education and Initiatives ("DMEI") offering suggestions for how to understand and support minority students. His presentation included a TED Talk video focusing on "whiteness," criticizing the concept of race neutrality, and advocating positive race identity.

The DMEI's supervisors did not preview or pre-approve the content of his presentation because they trusted the DMEI's judgment in these matters. They were aware of the DMEI's work on racial issues and viewed his activities as an attempt to carry on a "conversation" about a challenging subject of interest to some students. They did not understand that he was parroting CRT concepts. These supervisors uniformly say that they would not have approved that. Immediately after the DMEI's presentation, his supervisors recognized that the TED Talk video was problematic. They say that in hindsight it should not have been used in the RA training.

The DMEI's one-hour presentation was the only time that race was highlighted during the two-week RA training program. Other special topics covered during that RA training included subjects such as ministering to "Nones," "religious others," and students with mental health needs.

The Resident Director of Colonial Hall ("RDCH") oversees the Resident Assistants in the Colonial Hall apartment building. In that capacity, the RDCH meets weekly with the Colonial Hall RAs to stay abreast of the living environment in that space.

During the Spring 2021 semester, the RDCH began using weekly meetings with Resident Assistants to discuss racial issues. The RDCH's discussions and handouts promoted CRT-related ideas about race and racism.

The RDCH's supervisors were vaguely aware of the RDCH's race-focused activities during the Spring 2021 semester. But as with the DMEI's controversial actions, they viewed the RDCH's actions as a well-intended but ill-considered attempt to initiate a conversation about a challenging subject that college students should consider before entering the workplace. They did not preview or pre-approve the content of the RDCH's presentations and materials.

C. Advisory Council on Diversity

The Advisory Council was created in 2020. Its sole purpose was to advise the president on matters relating to recruiting and retaining minority students. Much of this work falls under the leadership of the Vice President of Student Recruitment.

The Advisory Council last met in April 2021. President McNulty informed the Committee that the Advisory Council has served its limited purpose and is defunct.

D. Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives

OMEI was created in response to this objective in GCC's 2011-2016 Strategic Plan: "Incorporate and sustain college-wide diversity initiatives that exemplify the mission of the College." OMEI has one employee, the DMEI. During the last three academic years, OMEI's total budget was less than \$55,000 per year. That is approximately 0.08% of the College's annual budget.

Generally, the DMEI understands that the position has two responsibilities: (1) help international and minority students acclimate to GCC; and (2) provide co-curricular education opportunities and programs for the campus at large to think broadly about race and culture.

In his first role (student assistance), the DMEI is available as a resource for international and ethnic minority students. For example, he sometimes assists them with obtaining hard-to-find groceries, shuttles them between the Pittsburgh International Airport and GCC's campus, or advocates for their unique needs or concerns.

The DMEI advises a student group interested in diversity issues. From time to time, OMEI sponsors regional trips to cultural sites and ethnic restaurants. It also holds an annual welcome party on campus for new and returning international students and ethnic minorities, among others. During the last three academic years, the annual cost of these activities has ranged from about \$3,000 to about \$7,000—a negligible fraction of the College's annual budget.

In the second role (co-curricular education), the DMEI sponsors a book club and movie showings for interested students or employees. Participation is entirely voluntary. Book selections have been ideologically one-sided and promoted “woke” concepts. Again, the DMEI views his job as, in part, carrying on a conversation with willing students about racial awareness and racial discrimination—all in the service of “racial reconciliation.”

The DMEI's supervisors did not preview or pre-approve the content of his co-curricular presentations and materials because they trusted the DMEI's judgment in these matters. They are aware of the DMEI's co-curricular activity but view it as a benign attempt to carry on a biblically based conversation about a challenging subject of interest to some students. They do not believe that OMEI exists to engage in politically charged advocacy. Instead, they reckoned that everything occurring under the auspices of OMEI must have been advancing the good that they described as biblical racial reconciliation.

OMEI should be reconstituted and renamed to focus on the important work of student assistance. This change would clarify that the student-assistance function must not stray into co-curricular activity, which is susceptible to mission misalignment and better pursued in the traditional academic setting.

E. Particular Chapel Presentations

On a few occasions, the challenging “conversation” about race that some wanted to pursue moved into GCC’s chapel program. Beginning in the Fall 2020 semester, a handful of chapel services included divisive racial themes. The current Chaplain started working at GCC in August 2020 and inherited the first semester’s chapel programming schedule.

Jemar Tisby’s presentation in October 2020 is the chapel service that has drawn the most attention from critics. Mr. Tisby, who holds an MDiv from Reformed Theological Seminary, was recommended by another guest speaker as an “up and coming” Christian writer who might effectively address the subject of racial reconciliation. He was originally invited in 2019, but due to scheduling difficulties and Covid-induced challenges, was unable to speak at GCC until October 2020.

In March of 2021, Mr. Tisby became Assistant Director of Narrative and Advocacy at Ibram X. Kendi’s Center for Antiracist Research. In 2021, he also published *How to Fight Racism*, a book advocating, among other things, progressive policies relating to voting, immigration reform, criminal justice reform, government funding, political activism, forms of racial separatism, reparations, and other measures portrayed as furthering “racial equity.”

Most of those in GCC leadership with whom we spoke observed that “the Jemar Tisby that we thought we invited in 2019 is not the Jemar Tisby that we heard in 2020 or that we now read about.” They allow that, in hindsight, inviting Mr. Tisby to speak in chapel was a mistake. And they say that in the future, such speakers should be treated as one of the many guest lecturers that visit campus to teach a class or speak in a lecture hall; inviting anyone to speak in chapel appears to place the College’s stamp of approval on the speaker’s message.

When asked about his vision for chapel speakers who talk about racial reconciliation, the Chaplain said that reconciliation is an important biblical theme and generally defended the selection of speakers.

The handful of controversial chapel services, while concerning, should not be overstated. During those two years, other chapel themes included sermon series on 1 & 2 Peter, Psalms, work and play, the Beatitudes of Jesus,

wisdom literature of the Bible, the Gospel of Mark, equipping the saints, and serving institutions. Other chapel speakers included President McNulty; Provost Peter Frank; Professors Seulgi Byun, T. David Gordon, Carl Trueman, Paul Schaefer, Paul Kemeny, Duffy Robbins; and guest speakers Kevin DeYoung (The Gospel Coalition), Andy Crouch (Praxis Labs), and Ken Pitcher (World Vision).

F. Change to Vision Statement

Some commentators have criticized the College for revising its vision statement in 2021. The changes to the pre-2021 vision statement are reflected in the text below:

Grove City College strives to be ~~the best~~ a highly distinctive and comprehensive Christian liberal arts college in America of extraordinary value. Grounded in ~~conservative~~ permanent ideas and traditional values and committed to the foundations of free society, we develop leaders of the highest proficiency, purpose, and principles ready to advance the common good.

Some view the deletion of the word “conservative” as a betrayal of the College’s historic identity. They appear to blame President McNulty for the change. That is inaccurate. The Board, not the president, made this change when it adopted the 2022-2026 Grove City College Strategic Plan.

By deleting the word “conservative” from the vision statement, the Board did not intend to redirect, let alone betray, the College’s historic identity. Rather, proponents of the change expressed concern about the allegedly shifting meaning of “conservative” in contemporary American political discourse.²¹ We find, however, that although well-intentioned, this Board action has sown confusion and invited misunderstanding.

Grove City College’s conservatism transcends electoral politics and current policy debates. It is rooted in The Great Tradition of Western civilization and draws upon modern sources including Edmund Burke, *The Federalist*, Alexis de Tocqueville, T. S. Eliot, Russell Kirk, Richard Weaver,

²¹ See e.g., *Common-good conservatism, a debate*, 26 *The New Criterion* 13-52 (January 2022); *TAC Symposium: What is American Conservatism*, *The American Conservative*, Volume 19 Number 4 (July/August 2020).

C.S. Lewis, Michael Oakeshott, classical liberals such as F.A. Hayek and Ludwig von Mises, and a host of others.

The insights and affections of the conservative mind correspond to fixed truths and human nature; they are unaffected by shifting political currents. The revised vision statement attempted to communicate that by replacing the word “conservative” with phrases such as “permanent ideas,” “traditional values,” and the “foundations of a free society.” But we believe that something valuable was lost in translation. As a consequence, the College appeared inadvertently to surrender one of its most distinctive features.

VIII. Remedial Actions

President McNulty has already taken numerous steps to ensure closer alignment with the College’s vision, mission, and values. After reviewing and discussing our findings with the Committee, President McNulty advises that he will execute the following additional actions.

A. EDUC 290

1. Questions about racism and CRT continue to arise in government, business, law, economics, education, and the church. Accordingly, GCC will replace EDUC 290 with an elective, interdisciplinary course, designed for all students, and residing in an appropriate department as determined by the administration, that considers this controversial issue in light of the College’s vision, mission, and values.
2. Subject all “special studies” courses to the same review and approval process used for regularly offered courses.
3. Require any faculty member submitting a request for new course approval to explain how the proposed course is consistent with GCC’s vision, mission, and values.

B. Resident Assistant Training and Supervision

1. Subject Resident Assistant training materials to review and approval by Vice President for Student Life & Learning. The Board rejects “CRT and similar ‘critical’ schools of thought as antithetical to GCC’s mission and values.” Accordingly, such

materials shall not promote a CRT-oriented approach to resident life.

2. Require the Director of Residence Life to provide clearer direction—consistent with the College’s vision, mission, and values— for Resident Directors to use in Resident Assistant training and supervision.

C. Advisory Council on Diversity

1. Having served its purpose, the Advisory Council is now defunct.

D. Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives

1. OMEI will be reconstituted and renamed to better fit its student-assistance mission, and to prevent veering into co-curricular activity.

E. Chapel Programming

1. President McNulty is adequately addressing concerns about chapel programming through increased oversight.
2. Exercise increased scrutiny when determining whether a guest speaker should speak in chapel or elsewhere on campus, keeping in mind that chapel speakers appear to receive the College’s imprimatur.

F. Personnel Actions

1. The Committee and President McNulty agree that it is critically important for College faculty, staff, and administrators to embrace GCC’s vision, mission, and values. To the extent they demonstrate misalignment, the president will take appropriate actions.

IX. Additional Actions

A. College Vision Statement

1. We respectfully recommend that the Board consider restoring the College's self-description as a "conservative" institution in the vision statement and 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

X. Closing Remarks

This Committee was given a specific task: to review allegations of mission-drift in the form of CRT advocacy. Some of our findings and recommendations may provoke disagreement and distress. If so, we hope that our report will be received in the spirit of Proverbs 27:6—"Faithful are the wounds of a friend...."

The Committee wishes to communicate its respect and appreciation for every member of the GCC community. It is a remarkable collection of Christian scholars and administrators working individually and collectively in pursuit of the College's mission. Under President McNulty's faithful, steady, and tireless leadership, the state of the College is in many ways healthier than ever. His tenure as president has been a source of joy for each of us.

To the petitioners and outside observers who may have wondered if Grove City College is going "woke," the answer is emphatically no. We are grateful for the concern of kindred spirits who share our love for the College and want it to stay the course.

By any standard, GCC remains one of the most conservative colleges in the country. We regret that we cannot expand this report to highlight the evidence in support of that statement. But we commend the many employees and trustees whose teaching, writing, speaking, administration, and leadership continue to make "Freedom's College"²² a unique institution in American higher education and in the conservative firmament.

²² Lee Edwards, *FREEDOM'S COLLEGE: THE HISTORY OF GROVE CITY COLLEGE* (2000 Regnery Publishing, Inc.).

GCC is a human institution. We have identified instances where the College's vision, mission, and values were not well-represented. Even Homer nods. This is but more evidence that the Fall confuses man's best efforts and impedes human flourishing. Our appropriate response is to maintain vigilance in reliance upon God's grace.

Finally, we wish to emphasize our wholehearted agreement with the goals of recruiting and caring for students of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.²³ In particular, we encourage "the development of genuine unity among the entire campus community rooted in the biblical vision of Revelation 7:9, in which 'every nation, tribe, people, and language' worship God in everlasting fellowship."²⁴

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Porter ('88), Committee Chair
Alice M. Batchelder
Deborah K. Holt ('84)
Anne M. McClelland ('81)
David R. Rathburn ('79)
John A. Sparks ('66)

²³ Ephesians 2:11-22.

²⁴ Tactic 2.2B of the 2022-2026 Grove City College Strategic Plan.

Exhibit A

Statement of the Grove City College Board of Trustees

February 16, 2022

The Board of Trustees is aware of recent commentary questioning whether Grove City College may be changing its mission, vision, or values. Our duty of care and loyalty includes stewardship of the College's mission—an honor and responsibility that we take most seriously.

We unqualifiedly reaffirm GCC's Christ-centered mission and commitment to a free society, traditional values, and the common good. That has not changed one iota and will not change on our watch. Fidelity to the College's founding principles secures GCC's unique place as an oasis in American higher education. In particular, the Board categorically rejects Critical Race Theory and similar "critical" schools of thought as antithetical to GCC's mission and values.

In his written statement addressing the matter, President McNulty attempted to balance confidential personnel matters with assurances that remedial steps would be taken and more may be appropriate.

To that end, and with the encouragement of President McNulty, the Board has established a special committee to review alleged instances of mission-drift, summarize facts, identify remedial actions already implemented by President McNulty, and recommend any additional measures that may be appropriate.

David Porter, Secretary of the Board, will chair the special committee. The other committee members are Alice Batchelder; Deborah Holt, Treasurer of the Board; Anne McClelland; David Rathburn, former Board Chair; and John Sparks, Professor Emeritus and former Dean of the Calderwood School of Arts and Letters.

We anticipate that the special committee will complete its work by approximately the end of March.

Exhibit B

Materials Reviewed and Interviews Conducted by the Committee

The Committee interviewed twenty-five administrators, faculty, and employees. We also watched fourteen videos: selected chapel services and TED Talks used in chapel services or Resident Assistant training.

The Committee reviewed these materials:

I. Petition, Related Documents, and Public Commentary

- 11/10/21 Petition—"Save GCC from CRT"
- 11/18/21 Paul J. McNulty, A Response to the CRT Petition
- 11/29/21 Josh Abbotoy, *Wide Awake at Grove City College?*, American Reformer
- 12/6/21 Petitioners' Reply to President McNulty
- 12/06/21 Carl R. Trueman, *Do I teach at a Woke School?*, Institute for Faith & Freedom
- 12/15/21 Douglas Wilson blog post, *Does Grove City Have Worrisome Dark Spots on Her Lymph Nodes?*
- 12/16/21 Megan Basham, *How Woke Interlopers Are Transforming Christian Higher Education*, The Daily Wire
- 12/16/21 Joshua Abbotoy, *Big Sort U*, The American Mind
- 12/27/21 Douglas Wilson blog post, *On Getting Your Grove Back*
- 01/02/22 Isaac Willour, *Grove City College's Supposed 'Wokeness'*, National Review
- 01/14/22 SMH in Ohio, *The Culture Warriors Come for GCC*, Substack
- 02/07/22 *Anonymous*, An Open Letter to the Grove City College Board of Trustees
- 02/11/22 Brad Littlejohn, *Are universities really the enemy?*, WORLD
- 02/14/22 Julia Duin, *An Angry Debate Over Critical Race Theory Splits Christian College*, Newsweek
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- 02/18/22 *Faculty address letter claims*, The Collegian
- 02/22/22 Paul C. Kemeny, *Grove City College as a Christian Liberal Arts College*, Institute for Faith & Freedom
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- 03/14/22 Kathryn Post, *Grove City College Caught in Crossfire of Evangelical CRT Battles*, MinistryWatch
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- 04/10/22 David French, *How the Fight Over Critical Race Theory Became a Religious War*, The Dispatch

II. College Documents

- EDUC 290 Syllabus, Spring 2021
- EDUC 290 Syllabus, Spring 2022
- EDUC 290 Class List, Spring 2021
- EDUC 290 Class List, Spring 2022
- EDUC 290 Midterm Exam, Spring 2021
- Multicultural Education & Initiatives presentation, dated October 2, 2013
- 2014 Request to Fill a Non-Faculty Position (Interim Coordinator of Multiethnic Education and Initiatives)
- 2015 Request to Fill a Non-Faculty Position (Coordinator of Multiethnic Education and Initiatives)
- 2017 Request to Fill a Non-Faculty Position (Director of Multicultural Education and Initiatives)
- Director of Multicultural Education and Initiatives job descriptions
- 2021 Resident Assistant training session notes
- Powerpoint deck used in RA meeting: "Cross Cultural Issues in Social Work Practice"
- Budget documents relating to Office of Multicultural Education and Initiatives
- Overview of OMEI
- Grove City College Strategic Plan for 2011–2016
- Summary of chapel programming for 2020–2022
- Speaking request form—Jemar Tisby
- Speaking engagement contract—Jemar Tisby
- GCC Itinerary for Jemar Tisby—October 19-20, 2020

Emails relating to the subjects of the Committee’s review
Core Curriculum Review Subgroups list
GCC Faculty Handbook, September 2021 Edition

III. Background

A. Books

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Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility* (2018 Beacon Press)
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Owen Strachan, *Christianity and Wokeness* (2021 Salem Books)
Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise* (2019 Zondervan)
Jemar Tisby, *How to Fight Racism* (2021 Zondervan)
Carl R. Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self* (2020 Crossway)

B. Articles

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The New Republic, March 21, 2022
Peter H. Schuck, *What Systemic Racism Systematically Downplays*, 51
National Affairs (Spring 2022)
Nate Hochman, *What Academic Freedom Is For*, Claremont Review of Books
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Jonathan Butcher and Mike Gonzalez, *Critical Race Theory, the New Intolerance, and Its Grip on America*, The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 3567 (December 7, 2020)

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John McWhorter, *The Dehumanizing Condescension of White Fragility*, The Atlantic (July 15, 2020)

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