

**QUEENS UNIVERSITY**  
*of*  
**CHARLOTTE**



**Queens Taskforce on the History of Slavery and Its Legacies**

**Final Report**

**Spring 2021**

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## I. Executive Summary

In early March of 2020, Queens University of Charlotte President Daniel Lugo commissioned a task force consisting of faculty, staff, students, and alumni to examine and report on the university's historical relationship to slavery and its legacies. This course of action was prompted when library staff members shared with Provost Sarah Fatherly concerns regarding documentary material indicating that the Charlotte Female Institute's initial directors, Reverend Robert and Margaret Anna Burwell, had direct connections to slavery. Other members of the campus community, including faculty and students, also began raising questions about this historic link. Provost Fatherly reviewed the material and shared the concerns with President Lugo. In consultation with the Board of Trustees in February 2020, he determined the need for a taskforce.

The Taskforce was commissioned in the days just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which altered the anticipated timeframe and mode for the group to begin and complete its work. The group's charge denoted the Taskforce commencing in March with a report to be complete in fall of 2020; the Taskforce first convened virtually in May of 2020 and continued meeting throughout the following summer and fall. In early 2021, the group compiled this final report that summarizes the Taskforce's approach to its task, its key areas of focus and action, and its recommendations to university leadership.

The group was guided in its work by its charge, resources from the Universities Studying Slavery consortium, and primary and secondary source research. For multiple reasons, the Taskforce focused primarily on two areas: examining named campus buildings/entities and the university's public digitized historical materials. The group's findings included a determination that four of five initial directors of the Charlotte Female Institute were slaveowners (including director Reverend Robert Burwell); documented connections between founders Robert and Margaret Anna Burwell and slavery, including the ownership and brutal treatment of enslaved persons; confirmation that documentary evidence does not directly link the namesakes of twenty-seven other campus spaces/entities with slavery or white supremacy activities; and the conclusion that the public digitized yearbook collection contains numerous instances of images, textual items, and campus activities that depict racial and racist perspectives and prejudices.

The Taskforce makes a series of initial and future recommendations. Overarchingly and altogether, they call on the institution to make an on-going commitment to the work of understanding, sharing, and growing from a fully recovered knowledge of the institution's past on its own terms and how it shapes the present. There is significant work to be done in order to recover the racial history of Queens particularly in terms of deeply examining and reconstructing the institution's post-nineteenth century history.

## II. Taskforce Charge and Membership

In early March of 2020, Queens University of Charlotte President Daniel Lugo commissioned a task force consisting of ten faculty, staff, students, and alumni to examine and report on the university's historical relationship to slavery and its legacies. Its charge and membership were as follows:

### Charge:

How we understand, share, and represent the history of Queens is essential to our ability to live out its institutional values. This taskforce is charged with examining and reporting on the university's historical relationship with slavery and its legacies. In undertaking its critical task, the group will:

- familiarize itself with the best practices of the Universities Studying Slavery Consortium
- develop a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which the Queens has been connected with slavery
- make recommendations for how the university can best share its fully recovered history with internal and external constituencies
- engage the experience and expertise of members of the campus community as needed
- provide updates on their work to the campus community
- submit a report of taskforce findings and recommendations to the President by September 30, 2020

### Membership:

The following individuals were appointed to the Taskforce by President Lugo:

- Tim Brown, Dean of the Knight School of Communication and Professor of Communication
- Taylor Cruz, '22
- Sarah Fatherly, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of History (co-chair)
- Suzanne Watts Henderson, Professor of Religion and Dean of Belk Chapel
- Carolyn Radcliff, Director of Everett Library
- LeAnna Rice, Associate Dean of Students
- Sue Ross, '61
- Becca Sobus, '20
- Bob Whalen, Professor of History
- Darryl White, Sr., '92, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (co-chair)

The Taskforce received administrative support from Keesha Walker, Assistant to the Provost/VPAA. Additionally, it should be noted that Ms. Cruz stepped down from the Taskforce during summer 2020 due to other obligations; Ms. Sobus graduated while the Taskforce was active and stepped down in late fall 2020; and Ms. Ross joined the Taskforce during fall 2020.

### III. Timeline of Institutional Names

The institution currently known as Queens University of Charlotte has had multiple different names since its founding. In order to provide context for the discussion and recommendations that follow in this report, we offer here a timeline of the organization's many names:

<b>Historical Period</b>	<b>Institutional Name</b>
1857 - 1891	Charlotte Female Institute
1891 - 1896	Seminary for Girls
1896 – 1912	Presbyterian Female College
[1912]	[move to Myers Park location]
1912 - 1929	Queens College
1930 – 1939	Queens-Chicora College
1940 - 2002	Queens College
2002 – Current	Queens University of Charlotte

## **IV. Taskforce Approach and Findings**

Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift of university operations to virtual modalities during March of 2020, the Taskforce deviated from the anticipated schedule and mode of its work; it began meeting virtually in May of 2020 and continued its work virtually throughout the rest of that calendar year.

### **Approach**

As the Taskforce began our work, we started by setting key foundations in place. First, we reviewed the charge from President Lugo to affirm a shared understanding of our work. Second, we developed a set of guidelines to guide how our conversations would be conducted. Those conversation principles included confidentiality, respect, patience, authenticity, empathy, and accountability. Third, we familiarized ourselves with the Institutions Studying Slavery consortium and its resources. This consortium was formed as a direct result of dozens of American higher education institutions seeking to understand and reconcile with their historical connections to slavery and racism; it has emerged as the national and international network supporting universities as they begin and sustain this important work.<sup>1</sup> And fourth, the group identified our initial priorities.

Overall, the Taskforce felt it had to be realistic about what a small group of individuals could accomplish over a limited period of time in the midst of a global pandemic causing unprecedented challenges to campus operations. As a result, the group decided to focus its work largely in two areas:

- 1) examining named campus buildings and entities and
- 2) exploring the university's public digitized historical materials, particularly student yearbooks.

We emphasized these two areas for multiple reasons. Concerning information regarding the institution's connections to slavery and white supremacy related to both areas had surfaced. Both areas visibly represented Queens to internal campus constituencies as well as external stakeholders. And, since both areas were tied to the nineteenth and early twentieth century history of Queens, the group felt that examining this early history would be a fruitful use of our collective efforts. We believed as such, our work could provide a needed foundation for further and future endeavors that could take on a significant consideration of the history of Queens in the mid- to late twentieth century.

### **Findings**

#### **1. The Burwells and Slavery**

Given that concerns about links between founders Robert and Margaret Anna Burwell and slave owning helped spur the Taskforce's creation, the group gave immediate priority to examining that issue. The Taskforce began this endeavor by reviewing and discussing key primary and secondary historical resources related to the Burwells and slavery.

Based on that work, we determined that Burwell Hall (completed in 1914) recognized Margaret Anna Burwell through the building's name plus an engraved plaque and portrait prominently

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of current member institutions, see Appendix A.

displayed in the building. These memorializations were connected to her contributions to white women's education through her leadership at the Charlotte Female Institute, a forerunner to Queens University. However, it was also clear that Margaret and her husband Robert were not only slaveowners but that they engaged in brutal treatment of enslaved persons. An 1868 memoir by Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley, an enslaved woman who eventually bought her freedom, includes damning descriptions of the harsh and brutal treatment she endured at the hands of both Burwells. Other documented aspects of the couple's commitment to slavery and white supremacy were also deeply troubling. For example, as a Presbyterian minister, Robert was called to serve at a parish in Hillsborough in the 1830s because he was an advocate for the position of the Southern Presbyterian Church which held that "slaves should not preach, be congregants of the church, be educated, nor be baptized." In contrast, his predecessor, the Reverend John Knox Witherspoon, had advocated for the education and baptism of slaves.<sup>2</sup>

In the course of researching the Burwells, the Taskforce found that four of the Charlotte Female Institute's initial five directors were listed as slaveholders in the Slave Schedules of the 1860 United States Census. Those directors were Reverend Robert Burwell, William Johnston, William R. Meyers, Joseph H. Wilson, and John A. Young.<sup>3</sup> The Taskforce found no buildings or other campus features associated with any of the four directors who owned enslaved people except for Burwell.

After careful review and due deliberation, the Taskforce made a multi-part recommendation that the university should:

1. remove the name Burwell Hall from the administrative building;
2. temporarily remove from Burwell Hall the portrait of Margaret Anna Burwell and the plaque to her memory;
3. reinstall the portrait and plaque when they can be accompanied by interpretive materials that place Burwell, her ties to slavery, and connection to Queens in historical context;
4. and use a temporary name for the administrative building.

The Taskforce's recommendation to rename Burwell Hall was discussed and endorsed by the Queens Board of Trustees on June 25, 2020 (see Appendix C). As a result, the Burwell name was removed from the building, signage, and campus materials; the portrait was placed in storage; the plaque was temporarily covered (as it proved difficult to remove); and the name of Queens Hall was given to the structure. Following the endorsement and enactment of the Taskforce's recommendation, the offices of the President and Provost jointly sponsored a series of processing and listening sessions for campus constituents about this important change.

As will be discussed in the recommendations section of this report, there is one important part of the Taskforce Burwell recommendation that remains to be enacted: reinstalling the Margaret Anna Burwell portrait and plaque accompanied by interpretive materials that place Burwell, her ties to slavery, and connection to Queens in historical context.

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<sup>2</sup> See "Antebellum Hillsborough, Slavery, and Enslaved and Free People of Color who Worked at the Burwell School--1837-1857," p. 7. See also Appendix B: Summary Report on Presbyterian Church USA, Charlotte Presbytery, and Race.

<sup>3</sup> See Catalogue of the Charlotte Female Institute 1860-1861. Charlotte Female Institute Box. Queens University of Charlotte Archives, Everett Library. Available: <http://queens.sobeklibrary.com/AA00000442/00001/pdf?search=catalog>. See also 1860 U.S. Federal Census--Slave Schedules. Available: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7668/>.

**2. Other Named Campus Buildings/Entities**

The Taskforce examined the names attached to numerous other named buildings on campus to determine whether the individuals memorialized had direct ties to the institution of slavery or white supremacy. The group conducted research themselves and as well as receiving research assistance from Cindy Manshack, Executive Director of Research and Advancement Services.

The buildings researched were as follows:

Albright Hall	Barnhardt Hall
Belk Chapel	Belk Residence Hall
Byrum Hall	Dana Building
Everett Library	Hall Brown Overcash Hall
Harris House	Hayes Hall
Jernigan Hall	Levine Center for Wellness and Recreation
McEwen Building	Sarah Morrison Hall
Rogers Hall	Sykes Learning Center
Sarah Belk Gambrell Center for the Arts and Civic Engagement	Tillet Building
Wireman Hall	Withers House

The Bissell Lobby and Sandra Levine Theatre within the Gambrell Center and Curry Arena within the Levine Center were also researched. As were the Andrew Blair College of Health, James L. Knight School of Communication, McColl School of Business, and Wayland H. Cato, Jr. School of Education.

In reviewing these twenty-seven named spaces, the Taskforce did not find evidence directly connecting the individuals memorialized by these named campus spaces/entities to slavery or white supremacy activities. Therefore, there are no recommendations to rename spaces in the recommendations section of this report, outside of the Burwell Hall renaming actions that have already taken place.

There were two findings, however, that resulted from this research that need to be acknowledged. In particular, the Taskforce spent time deliberating findings related to Morrison Hall and Withers House research.

As the documentary record confirms, Morrison Hall was built in 1927 and named in honor of Sara Watts Morrison. Morrison served as a trustee of Queens from 1929 through 1940, and she gave the funds for construction of that building.<sup>4</sup> The concerning connection we discussed relates to her second marriage to Cameron Morrison in 1924, who had long and significant career in North Carolina politics and government including serving as a governor of North Carolina as well as U.S. senator and congressional representative for the state. Cameron had a complex political career. It is clear from the historical record that early in his political career he utilized white supremacy as a tool to garner support, most infamously as a leader in the Red Shirt movement that engaged in systemic intimidation of and violence against Black voters and Republican candidates in the late

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<sup>4</sup> See Mildred McEwen, *Queens College: Yesterday and Today*, pp. 101 and 203.



1880s. By 1920, he had changed his political position; as governor he convened what became the North Carolina Commission on Interracial Co-operation and took a clear stance against lynching. All of these activities were prior to Cameron's marriage to Sara in 1924.<sup>5</sup> As Morrison Hall is named in honor of Sara Watts Morrison, and not Cameron Morrison, the Taskforce decided not to propose a renaming in this instance. However, we did note that on campus, this building is typically simply called "Morrison Hall" and that it would be helpful and important to support more common knowledge and usage of the full name of "Sara Morrison Hall."

The second building that elicited further examination was Withers House (also known as the Withers-Efird House), built in 1904 as the home of Benjamin Withers, a prominent Charlotte building supply merchant. The structure has been relocated twice prior being set at its current location on the corner of Selwyn and Wellesley Avenues. Benjamin Withers was the son of Isaac Withers, who was a planter and owner of more than thirty enslaved persons. Isaac died in 1865 when Benjamin was nine years old.<sup>6</sup> This connection between the eponym of a campus building and slave owning resulted in deliberation on the part of the Taskforce regarding the degree to which the university should recognize individuals based solely on their own personal actions and merits versus their familial connections to slavery. Benjamin's young age at his father's death combined with no documentary evidence that Benjamin himself supported slaveholding or white supremacy led to the Taskforce deciding there were insufficient grounds to consider a renaming proposal for Withers House.

### 3. A Renaming Principles Statement

Engaging in significant examination of dozens of named campus buildings led the Taskforce to explore how other higher education institutions engaged in historical racial reckoning work are approaching guidance for decision-making about naming spaces/campus features for individuals. Based on that work, we drafted a Renaming Principles Statement for Queens. If this statement is adopted by the university, it could be used as a guide for considerations that involve removing or adding names on campus features or buildings.

The four principles articulated in this statement are interrelated and therefore all should be considered as part of university deliberations regarding naming a campus space or feature:

- ∞ **Values:** When a campus feature or building is named for an individual or a group, that person's/group's actions and demonstrated values should align with the mission and values of the University. They should also align with the spirit and content of the Honor Code. When considering removing a name, the past intention of the naming should be examined alongside current interpretations of that naming. When the building or feature is named after an individual, any reconsideration of that honor should be based on a thorough and careful examination of that individual's past and present actions and whether or not they align with the values of Queens.

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<sup>5</sup> "Morrison, Cameron," NCPedia.org at: <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/morrison-cameron> citing William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 6 volumes (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979).

<sup>6</sup> See 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census slave schedules; Queens History Campus Architecture Collection <http://queens.sobeklibrary.com/arch>; NCPedia.org at <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/efird-joseph-bivens>; and Christina A. Wright, *Survey and Research Report: Withers-Efird House* (Landmarks Commission: 2000), available at <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Withers-Efird-Hse-SR.pdf>

- ∞ **History:** Careful deliberation should be given to the historical context and intent of the naming. As historical understandings connect meaningfully to current and future realities, it is important to engage in careful, deep, and ongoing inquiry about the eponym in question. It is paramount that the university preserve historical artifacts, and not destroy or “erase” them. The focus should be on continually recovering, studying, and learning from the university’s past and being transparent about our successes and shortcomings as an institution. Further, renaming or retaining a name should never restrict free and open inquiry.
- ∞ **Inclusion:** Named spaces or campus features should reflect our commitment to ensuring that all students, faculty, and staff feel included and have a sense of belonging on our campus. As a university that strives to be an inclusive and equitable community, Queens should be particularly attuned to the views of those members who may feel alienated based on historical marginalization and/or underrepresentation. One important way to accomplish this goal is to continue to deepen our collective understandings of the university’s past and to be in dialogue about where that past supports or exists in tension with current experiences.
- ∞ **Transparency:** When considering renaming, it is important to practice transparency and openness about the deliberation with the Queens community. It is equally vital that the university take all reasonable efforts to communicate with donors and/or descendants of those for whom a feature/building has been named.

#### 4. Public Digitized Queens Archival Materials

By the time that the Taskforce convened in spring 2020, concerns had surfaced about potentially racist and racialized content in the university’s collection of yearbooks. These materials are digitized and publicly available via an open web access project called the Digital NC Collection.<sup>7</sup> As noted above, given articulated concerns combined with the public nature of these materials, the Taskforce felt it was imperative that we examine this area as well as the named buildings.

The Taskforce received assistance in researching these digitized materials from a member of the Everett Library staff, Hugh O’Connor. A limited term employee working with the university’s archival materials, O’Connor was able to conduct a review of all student yearbooks that are part of the Digital NC collection before the end of his employment contract (see Appendix D). The earliest digitized yearbooks are from 1902 and continue with some gaps until 2010. The student produced materials have a variety of different title names based on the year and the particular iteration of the institution’s name at that time. The Taskforce reviewed and discussed O’Connor’s report in addition to examining digitized yearbook content themselves.

The Taskforce found that the yearbooks are a very rich and important documentary source about student and campus culture at Queens through the decades of the twentieth century. We also found that there are numerous instances of campus organizations, images, and textual items that

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<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.digitalnc.org/collections/yearbooks/>

depict racial and racist perspectives and prejudices that are today considered offensive and injurious. Examples of such material include:

- Cartoons drawn by student artists that include racist depictions of African American figures
- Photographs documenting student “minstrel” shows with participants in blackface
- Photographs of a college celebration with the theme of “Life in the Old South” that shows participants in blackface and “mammy” costumes
- A student organization called the Ku Klux Klan in 1907 and 1908
- Student authored text in the category of “plantation fiction” which idealizes slavery in the antebellum era of the South
- Photographs of student shows and gatherings using cultural appropriations of Native American and Asian origin.

Given these findings, the Taskforce considered how other institutions are approaching their relationships to such archival materials. We consequently drafted a prefatory statement to be included in the Digital NC Collection as well as the Queens Digital Archive. The statement reads:

Queens University of Charlotte has a long history of service to its communities. The 1930 adoption of the motto, “not to be served, but to serve,” underscores the commitment to service as a way of life by the entire Queens community. The history of the University is reflected in materials from the University’s archives, which span many decades and perspectives, and which show how the campus and students have changed over the years. Archival materials are presented in a form that is unredacted and uncensored. They are historical documents and will remain available for research purposes and as aids to understanding the history of the University. Some material, including a number of images and text in the university’s yearbooks, is racist, prejudiced, dehumanizing, and derogatory. Such content is not condoned by the University and is not reflective of our mission and values nor our commitment to ending systemic racism.

This statement was presented to President Lugo and the Queens Senior Leadership Team in August 2020. Following their endorsement of this statement in September, Everett Library Director Carolyn Radcliff posted it on the Queens Digital Archive and the Digital NC collections related to Queens.

It should be noted that it was beyond the ability of this Taskforce to conduct research into student newspapers, of which issues from 1931 – 1951 are also publicly available through Digital NC.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.digitalnc.org/collections/newspapers/>

## V. Recommendations

Based on research and deliberation, the Taskforce offers here a series of recommendations to President Lugo and the university leadership for their consideration. Some of these recommendations are of a short-term nature and can be quickly accomplished. Others are of a longer-term nature and encourage the institution to make an on going commitment to the work of understanding, sharing, and growing from a fully recovered knowledge of the institution's past on its own terms and how it shapes the present.

### 1. **Join the Universities Studying Slavery Consortium (USS)**

As indicated in section IV of this report, USS is a multi-institutional higher education collaboration that aims to facilitate mutual support in the pursuit of common goals around the core theme of "Universities Studying Slavery." USS allows participating institutions to work together as they address both historical and contemporary issues dealing with race and inequality in higher education and in university communities as well as the complicated legacies of slavery in modern American society. USS hosts semi-annual meetings to discuss strategies, collaborate on research, and learn from one another. There is no cost to join; however, institutions must commit to sending one or two representatives to yearly meetings. More information is available on the USS web site: <https://slavery.virginia.edu/universities-studying-slavery/> and the current list of member institutions is located in Appendix A.

Joining USS would provide multiple benefits to Queens including a way to learn from the work of others on these important issues as well as to signal to internal and external stakeholders the university's commitment to continuing this work beyond convening this initial Taskforce.

### 2. **Develop an interpretative display that tells the story of the transition from Burwell Hall to Queens Hall and incorporates the plaque and portrait of Margaret Anna Burwell**

The Taskforce repeatedly discussed the need for the renaming of Burwell Hall not to be seen as a simple act of "deleting" part of the university's history. This last part of our multi-prong recommendation is crucial in that it is indeed this part of the recommendation that calls for interpreting, including, and sharing the complex aspects of our early history as part of our organizational story.

### 3. **Endorse the proposed "Renaming Principles Statement"**

Adopting this proposed statement would demonstrate to our campus community and external communities that the university is committed to a thoughtful and reflective approach to the complexities that can accompany having structures/features memorialize individuals and that this approach is consistent with our organizational values.

### 4. **Create opportunities for campus and community constituents to learn about the Taskforce's report and recommendations**

It is essential that the work of this Taskforce, particularly its findings and recommendations, be shared with the campus community and other key constituents. This step is crucial as Queens begins to reconcile its past relationships to slavery and racism with the ways those histories impact the present. There are many ways in which this sharing could occur ranging from passive means, such as email communication and website content, to more active methods including campus sharing sessions in face to face and virtual settings.

**5. Partner with the Charlotte Racial Justice Consortium (CRJC) to conduct further research on key aspects of the university's history**

The Taskforce engaged in substantial inquiry and research to better understand Queens' relationship to slavery. And yet, as we engaged in such research, more questions surfaced. We quickly realized the breadth of work needed fully to understand Queens' history in context of slavery and ultimately, race and racism, required structures committed to the research beyond the work of the Taskforce. This type of work will require dedicated resources and people to realize the more complete history of Queens. The CRJC Fellows program is one way to accomplish that goal.

The CRJC is comprised of student fellows from five area universities (Queens University, Johnson C. Smith University, Central Piedmont Community College, Johnson & Wales University, and UNC-Charlotte) who are dedicating to understanding their respective institution's history of race and racism and its relationship to the broader Charlotte and United States history of race and racism. To accomplish this goal, each cohort is tasked with researching and building a foundational timeline on race and racism for their institution. Each new cohort will add to and refine the existing timeline. The CRJC is in a unique position to partner with Queens to continue the research necessary to contribute to the history of the university. Given that each year will bring dedicated, paid fellows to the project, the work can continue with engaged students and staff who are dedicated to this type of research. It is also important to engage groups on campus already doing similar work to align, highlight, and strengthen the work done previously.

**6. Examine Charlotte's history and how key leaders of the community were connected to the University**

Examining the connections between leaders in Charlotte and Queens is important for multiple reasons. First, doing so will permit the Queens community to gain an understanding of how it has been impacted or shaped by the local environment and various movements throughout history. It might also bring to light the university's stance on important historical matters. Examining major players will also reveal whether prominent figures within the local community, or their descendants, have been memorialized by the University or whether such individuals have made contributions. Such information is increasingly significant given the efforts underway in our city, state, and nation to know and rectify the effects of racism and exclusivity.

Exploring the relationship between Charlotte's history and prominent figures and Queens' history has the potential to reveal both positive and negative findings. While many have impacted the university in a positive manner, the Taskforce's research has revealed the existence of others whose impact has been less than favorable, including the University's founders, Robert and Anna Burwell. Other notable figures have been found to have backgrounds with complex legacies, such as Sara Morrison's association with second husband Cameron Morrison whose political career capitalized on racism and white supremacy. Knowing these connections is important because that understanding impacts the Queens community today and our relationships to the institution. It is important to bring acts that are rooted in racism and exclusivity to the surface, as what serves as an offense against some members of the community essentially affects us all. We hope that examining local history will allow the University to gain a greater understanding of its journey and its own history, specifically in

connection to slavery. We also hope that the University will better understand its values and its identity--past, present, and future --with the ultimate outcome of developing a greater sense of transparency, unity, and inclusivity.

**7. Establish an initiative that explores the twentieth and twenty-first century racial history of Queens**

For the United States, slavery was rooted in the notion of racial inferiority which continued beyond the abolishment of slavery and infiltrated every aspect of modern life. To study the relationship of slavery to Queens without investigating the twentieth century and contemporary racial history of Queens misses an opportunity to broaden our understanding and provide a more inclusive history of Queens.

Exploring the twentieth century racial history of Queens allows us to celebrate pivotal moments of success and opportunities to correct past mistakes. Understanding when we made great strides to increase racial equity and the pioneers associated with such changes could be a source of celebration and pride. Additionally, including more historically marginalized narratives in the shared history of Queens allows us to understand the experience of Queens' community members in a more comprehensive and justice-oriented way. This exploration of history also provides a chance to ensure that we are making informed decisions as we move forward. Exploring where we made choices reflective of our present-day values and morals and where we have opportunities to grow and learn from our racial history presents an opportunity to understand how such moments in history may have influenced the campus we are today. For example, it can help us understand how our history has influenced other institutional aspects such as curriculum, structure, operations, hiring practices, etc. This reflection allows us to use that knowledge to make decisions that truly build more inclusive campus practices, policies, and culture. It also provides a ripe opportunity for increased dialogue, inquiry, and engagement with our students, alumni, faculty, and staff, further strengthening our community.

**8. Launch a project focused on researching the persons of color who worked at Queens during its first century and more of operation**

The impacts that people of color have made to the early success of institutions usually go unnoticed. This project would help identify the people of color who worked at Queens during the first century and beyond, the roles that they played, and offer ways that some of them may be recognized for their contributions to Queens' success.

**9. Ensure that the university has comprehensive information on all university features/components that memorialize individuals/groups by naming**

Although the Taskforce was very appreciative of the research help that it received from staff in the library and advancement office, it became clear that the information we needed was scattered, incomplete, and in some cases absent. We believe that it is in the interest of the university to ensure that it has a complete record of all things that are memorialized for individuals and that an examination is conducted of those campus features that we did not review for potential ties to slavery or white supremacist activities.

**10. Invest in the university archives**

University archives are the linchpin of an institution's ability to recover, understand, interpret, and share its past. Queens has a significant amount of archival material that spans from 1857

to the present, most of it housed in Everett Library. These materials include official university administrative and committee records, publications and reports, photographs, audio-visual materials, and many types of memorabilia. At present, archival materials are in physical jeopardy due to significant deferred maintenance issues in the facility. They are also organizationally in fragile shape. A portion of the collection has been inventoried but much remains uncataloged. Only a small percentage of items have been digitized and made available in a [Digital Archive](#). In short, it is very difficult for interested members of the campus or local community to access the collections or research the university's history.

We recommend that the university hire a professional archivist to oversee the creation of inventories, the digitization of materials, and the ongoing management of the archives. Once those initial steps are taken, then ideally the materials would be relocated to a more appropriate physical environment.

**11. Integrate understanding of the university's history into student and employee orientation experiences**

The Taskforce's charge states that "understanding, sharing, and representing the history of Queens is essential to our ability to live out its institutional values." In line with that conviction, we feel it is important to recommend that new members of the Queens community are provided historical information in an intentional and thoughtful manner. Integrating this information into orientations ensures that all new members receive the information early in their engagement with the university which helps to create the culture of transparency and commitment to learning and growing. This approach also reduces the likelihood of repeating those parts of our history of which we are less proud.

**12. Create mechanisms for campus and local community members to engage in dialogues about the complex histories of inherited wealth in Charlotte**

Besides a charge to examine Queens' relationship to slavery, the Taskforce was asked to consider the role slavery's legacy has played in our institution. That legacy is long and complex, spanning more than one hundred and sixty years of social history that, in our context, has been shaped by segregation and systemic inequities that persist to this day. While we understand that family wealth accumulation can be generated through various means, we must also consider the family wealth that was generated through enslaved labor. In many cases, Queens has benefited from that wealth. Thus, part of our institutional reckoning with slavery and its legacy entails deliberate consideration of inherited wealth and its by-product: inequitable economic opportunity.

We believe that, as an institution of higher education dedicated to serving the common good, Queens is well-positioned to foster dialogue and deepen understanding about the role that inherited wealth plays in our community. Oftentimes that inherited wealth was rooted in the economics of slavery but in many cases, that wealth has been used to foster growth and provide opportunities that would otherwise not be available to underserved communities. It is important to engage a variety of perspectives in a spirit of deliberative inquiry about inherited wealth so that we equip Queens to serve as a catalyst for creating a more equitable world.

**13. Develop a communication strategy to ensure that the recovered history of Queens is told in web, digital, and print media**

The nation's renewed focus on race and equity makes communicating the history of Queens vital. Queens' history in all its complexities needs to be articulated in a manner that teaches, educates, and reminds individuals of how past events impact current events. The goal is for individuals to know and understand Queens' history and the events that have shaped it. Immediate steps could include identifying from the Taskforce's work and CRJC initiative content pieces that can be published/broadcast by local media as well as the development of a digital timeline of the university's history available through the main website.

**14. Support the History Department, along with other interested units, in creating opportunities for student research and collaborative work about the university's past**

As the work of the Taskforce demonstrates, understanding Queens' past is part of understanding Queens' present and future. Our reflection on Queens' past should be on going. One especially effective way to ensure continuing inquiry is to encourage the History Department to engage its students in research on Queens and the wider Charlotte community through the Department's research seminar and/or masterworks/capstone course. To enable such research, the university must expand its corporate memory by not only organizing its archival holdings but also by expanding them through inviting alums to share their experiences of Queens. This research should then be widely shared with the Queens community in an effort to widen and deepen our understanding of Queens' past as well as Queens' present and future.

**15. Host a conversation of the presidents of local higher educational institutions about the work of recovering institutional pasts and the impact on the Charlotte community**

During his inaugural weekend in October 2019, President Lugo invited the leaders from four other Charlotte area academic institutions to Queens to discuss the future of higher education. This event was an important reminder of how integrally connected the institutions are to the city and how much can be gained by having public discussions about issues that concern all of them. Certainly, race and race relations have played a significant part in the history of these institutions, and a discussion of this topic among the leaders would signal the commitment of the institutions to this work and, as a result, also signal their support for similar work being done in the community. Related to this gathering of presidents could be a sharing of findings from their work which could serve as a springboard for helping one other, their campus communities, and the Charlotte community learn from the past, reflect on the present, and plan ways to cooperate more effectively in the future.

**16. Explore opportunities for funding the work and projects recommended by the Taskforce**

If this set of recommendations is embraced by university leadership, funding will be required in order to execute many of them. We suggest an exploration of external funding opportunities that could enhance the range and scope of the research, programming, and initiatives that emerge from the recommendations.



## VI. Appendices

- A. List of Member Institutions: Universities Studying Slavery Consortium
- B. Summary Report on Presbyterian Church USA, Charlotte Presbytery, and Race
- C. Recommendation to Rename Burwell Hall
- D. Report on Digitized Student Yearbooks
- E. Bibliography

**Appendix A**

**List of Member Institutions: Universities Studying Slavery Consortium**

Allegheny College of Maryland	Appalachian State University	Athens State University
Bard College	<a href="#"><u>Brown University</u></a>	Community College of Baltimore County
<a href="#"><u>The Citadel (South Carolina)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Clemson University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>College of Charleston</u></a>
College of William & Mary	Columbia University	<a href="#"><u>Dalhousie University (Canada)</u></a>
Davidson College	<a href="#"><u>Dickinson College</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Elon University</u></a>
Emory University	<a href="#"><u>Furman University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Georgetown University</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>George Mason University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Goucher College</u></a>	Guilford College
Hampden-Sydney College	Hampton University	<a href="#"><u>Harvard University</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Hollins University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>James Madison University</u></a>	John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Johns Hopkins University	Liverpool John Moores University (UK)	Longwood University
McGill University (Canada)	Mercer University	Meredith College
Morgan State University	Norfolk State University	Princeton Theological Seminary
Rice University	Roanoke College	<a href="#"><u>Rutgers University</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Saint Louis University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Salem Academy and College</u></a>	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Southern University Law Center	Stillman College	<a href="#"><u>Sweet Briar College</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Texas Christian University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Tougaloo College</u></a>	Towson University
Trinity College (Connecticut)	Trinity University (Texas)	<a href="#"><u>University College Cork (Ireland)</u></a>
University of Bristol (UK)	University of Cambridge (UK)	University of Cincinnati
<a href="#"><u>University of Georgia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>University of Glasgow</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>University of King's College (Canada)</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>University of Liverpool</u></a>	University of Manchester (United Kingdom)	University of Maryland
<a href="#"><u>University of Mississippi</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>University of New Brunswick (Canada)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</u></a>
University of Nottingham (UK)	<a href="#"><u>University of Richmond</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>University of South Carolina</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>University of the South (Sewanee)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>University of Virginia (PCSU)</u></a>	University of Warwick
Virginia Commonwealth University	Virginia Military Institute	Virginia State University
Virginia Tech	<a href="#"><u>Wake Forest University</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Washington &amp; Lee University</u></a>
Wesleyan College (Georgia)	<a href="#"><u>Xavier University</u></a>	Yale University

## Appendix B

**PC (USA) and Charlotte Presbytery Information on Race**  
**Suzanne Watts Henderson**  
**With thanks to General Presbyter Jan Edmiston**  
**June 2020**

Queens University is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA), a denomination formed in 1983 by the reunion of two denominations that split over the question of slavery in the nineteenth century. The PC (USA) is considered a “mainline” Protestant denomination, with generally progressive views on a range of issues from social practice (ordination of women, LGBTQ full inclusion, etc.) to theology and scriptural interpretation.

Structurally, the denomination resembles American democratic bodies, with the General Assembly serving as the national-level governing body, Synods as regional-level bodies, and Presbyteries as the local-level bodies. The Charlotte Presbytery is comprised of elders (both ordained ministers and church leaders) from congregations in the greater Charlotte area. Elected and appointed officials serve at each level.

The Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities includes more than sixty member institutions, including Davidson, Johnson C. Smith, Rhodes, Macalester, The College of Wooster, Lees-McRae, Trinity, and Warren Wilson.

As a denomination whose demographics are overwhelmingly white, the PC (USA) has taken several steps at the national, regional, and local levels to address systemic racism and the legacy of slavery. What follows offers representative examples of those initiatives and commitments.

People of Color in National Leadership: The Rev. J. Herbert Nelson is Stated Clerk, the denomination’s highest leader who also serves on the World Council of Churches. Diane Moffett is Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the largest of the denomination’s six agencies. Recent co-moderators of the General Assembly (a two-year elected term) include Rev. Gregory Bentley and Rev. Denise Anderson. Other Black Moderators of the General Assembly include the Rev. Joan Salmon Campbell and Elder Patricia Brown.

Denominational Actions: The General Assembly (a biennial gathering of teaching and ruling elders) and various PC (USA) agencies have issued several [statements and various resources](#) that grow out of a commitment to racial justice. Among them, see especially these examples:

- June 2020: Former Moderators/Co-Moderators/Vice Moderators Statement  
<https://medium.com/@breyeschow/a-common-statement-on-racism-advocacy-for-black-women-and-girls-and-the-224th-general-assembly-9dcff36516ea>
- June 2020: A Statement from the Special Committee on Racism Truth and Reconciliation  
<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/6/25/statement-special-committee-racism-truth-and-recon/>
- The Belhar Confession, the 1986 Reformed Church of South Africa’s response to apartheid and added to the PC (USA)’s Book of Confessions in 2016  
[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/theologyandworship/pdfs/belhar.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/theologyandworship/pdfs/belhar.pdf)

Organizational Structure: Two national offices are specifically devoted to promoting racial justice: the [Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries](#) within the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the [Racial Justice Resources](#) group within the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

## Appendix C



To: President Daniel G. Lugo  
From: The Queens History Taskforce on Slavery and its Legacies  
*Dr. Tim Brown, Dean of the Knight School of Communication/Professor of Communication*  
*Taylor Cruz, '22*  
*Dr. Sarah Fatherly, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs/Professor of History (co-chair)*  
*Dr. Suzanne Henderson, Dean of Belk Chapel/Professor of Religion*  
*Carolyn Radcliff, Director of Everett Library*  
*LeAnna Rice, Associate Dean of Students*  
*Becca Sobus, '20*  
*Dr. Bob Whalen, Professor of History*  
*Darryl White, Sr., '92, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (co-chair)*

Re: Recommendation for Removing the Burwell Name  
Date: June 24, 2020

Dear President Lugo:

As you are aware, our taskforce is at work fulfilling our charge to examine and report on the university's historical relationship with slavery and its legacies. Given that concerns over the Burwell name and its ties to slavery helped initiate the formation of this group, the review and discussion of that matter have been amongst our first priorities. At the same time that we have been deliberating about the matter, there has been intense and renewed attention locally, regionally, and nationally to monuments and buildings that commemorate individuals who were complicit in slavery and proponents of white supremacy. With recent protests and calls to action, name changes are in progress or being considered at a range of institutions of higher education.

After careful review of the historical documentary record and thoughtful deliberation, we recommend that we join these institutions by:

1. removing the name Burwell Hall from the administrative building
2. temporarily removing from Burwell Hall the portrait of Margaret Anna Burwell and the plaque to her memory
3. reinstalling the portrait and plaque when they can be accompanied by interpretive materials that place Burwell, her ties to slavery, and connection to Queens in historical context
4. using a temporary name for the administrative building while a renaming process is determined

Burwell Hall was completed in 1914 and dedicated to the memory of Margaret Anna Burwell, with a plaque and portrait prominently displayed in the building. Such memorialization was intended to recognize her contributions to white women's education through her leadership of the Charlotte Female Institute, a forerunner to the current Queens University.

There are a host of factors indicating that it is inappropriate and contrary to our current institutional values to continue such memorialization on our campus:

- It is well documented that Margaret and her husband Robert were not only slaveowners but that they engaged in brutal treatment of enslaved persons. A 1868 memoir by Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley, an enslaved woman who eventually bought her freedom, includes damning descriptions of the harsh and brutal treatment she endured at the hands of both Burwells.
- Other documented aspects of the couple’s commitment to slavery and white supremacy are also deeply troubling:
  - A Presbyterian minister, Robert was called to serve at a parish in Hillsborough in the 1830s because he was an advocate for the position of the Southern Presbyterian Church which held that “slaves should not preach, be congregants of the church, be educated, nor be baptized.” In contrast, his predecessor, the Reverend John Knox Witherspoon, had advocated for the education and baptism of slaves. (See “Antebellum Hillsborough, Slavery, and Enslaved and Free People of Color who Worked at the Burwell School-- 1837-1857,” p. 7.)

It is worth noting that the “Burwell Hall” designation on the Queens campus was not the result of a philanthropic investment from the Burwell family nor one made on their behalf. Neither is there known documentary evidence requiring Queens to continue to use this name to identify the administrative building.

For all of the reasons laid out here, we recommend the removal of the name from the campus building, as well as the accompanying portrait and plaque, as swiftly as possible.

## Appendix D

### Student Yearbooks Report October 28, 2019

Hugh O'Connor, Archives and Special Collections Librarian, Everett Library

Student yearbooks from Queens University of Charlotte range from the days of the Chicora College for Women in 1902 up to the last yearbook published in 2009-2010. All volumes are available online through [Digital NC](#).

The best evidence of student life and overall campus culture at Queens is found in the student-produced yearbook collection. With the goal of discovering and documenting potentially problematic material in the yearbooks, I examined the university's yearbook collection. I found multiple instances of campus organizations, images, and text that depict prejudices that are considered offensive today. Specifically:

- A number of highly objectionable illustrations, crude cartoons, and some blackface "minstrel" shows, including the 1941 May Day celebration, which featured the theme of "Life in the Old South."
- Three photographs featuring blackface
- Three racial caricatures
- Five racially insensitive student-written texts. These texts are known as "plantation fiction," often idealizing life in the antebellum period of the South. They are sometimes told from the servant's perspective and written in the vernacular of the time, phonetically spelling out the dialogue.
- The 1907 and 1908 yearbooks ("Edelweiss") feature the Ku Klux Klan as a campus organization. See note below regarding this club.
- Starting in the late 1930s there are depictions of cultural appropriation, mostly focused on Asians and Native Americans, related to photos of talent/variety shows as well as social events for clubs.

See year-by-year list below.

Other records relating to the campus community, such as scrapbooks and the online photograph collection, have been examined and revealed no additional items. However, the campus newspaper and operational and administrative records, such as catalogs, personnel files, and memos, have yet to be examined. As the archives are further processed and examined, materials may come to light that reflect the problematic items seen in the yearbooks.

To better understand the complex issues that these items represent, I looked to see what other institutions have done when faced with similar issues. Universities Studying Slavery (USS) is a consortium of colleges and universities in five countries that work together to address historical and contemporary issues dealing with race and inequality in higher education and in university communities. The group organizes collaborations and facilitates mutual support around the study of slavery and its complicated legacy in American society. Universities participating in U.S. range from our colleagues at Davidson, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Clemson to Harvard and University College Cork in Ireland.

#### **The Ku Klux Klan as a Campus Organization**

To gain context and better understand the apparent presence of the Klan at Queens, I reached out to historians who have studied the Ku Klux Klan. Dr. David Cunningham (Washington University in St. Louis)

noted that the KKK was generally not present in North Carolina during this time period and that the campus organization would have been a reflection of the place of the Klan in the fraternal imagination as defenders of the Old South. Dr. Elaine Frantz Parson (Kent State University) said that while not connected with the Klan as we know it today, the Queens club was celebrating racial solidarity and was a type of “advance wave” of the particular form of racial oppression that would plague the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Dr. Linda Gordon (NYU) corroborated the idea that the Ku Klux Klan at this time had a presence on college campuses much like Queens.

**Year-by-Year List**

The list refers to images and text that may be considered problematic. Further study is warranted, particularly to gain context for the material.

		Link
1902	Racial caricature	<a href="#">Page 14</a>
1904	Racially insensitive cartoon	<a href="#">Sheet 38</a>
1906	Student-created racially insensitive text & photographs of African American employees labeled “Scenes on Campus”	<a href="#">Page 77</a> <a href="#">Page 88</a>
1907	Ku Klux Klan	<a href="#">Page 95</a>
1908	Ku Klux Klan	<a href="#">Page 117</a>
1911	Photograph of African American employee acting as “Fortune Teller” and referred to as Aunt Mott	<a href="#">Page 77</a>
1912	Student-created racially insensitive text	<a href="#">“For Love of Marse Bob”</a>
1913	Student-created racially insensitive text	<a href="#">“Mammy Sue’s Story”</a>
1914	Racial slur	<a href="#">Page 32</a> <a href="#">Page 36</a>
1918	Photograph of African American employees labelled "A Dark Page in Our History" & student-created racially insensitive text	<a href="#">No Page Number</a> <a href="#">Page 62</a>
1920	Racially insensitive cartoon	<a href="#">Page 2</a>
1921	Racially insensitive cartoon	<a href="#">Page 114</a>
1922	Racial slur	<a href="#">Page 95</a> <a href="#">Page 98</a>
1923	Racially insensitive cartoon	<a href="#">Page 68</a>
1925	Photograph of African American employee with caption “9238”.	<a href="#">Page 120</a>
1926	Racial slur & reference to minstrel show	<a href="#">Page 161</a>
1928	Racially insensitive cartoons & photograph of African American employee labelled "The Voice of the Southland"	<a href="#">No Page Number</a> <a href="#">No Page Number</a> <a href="#">Page 150</a>
1933	Racial caricatures & photograph of African American employee labelled "At Your Service Jenny"	<a href="#">No Page Number</a> <a href="#">No Page Number</a> <a href="#">No Page Number</a>
1936	Racial caricature & student-created racially insensitive text	<a href="#">Page 13</a> <a href="#">Page 14</a>
1937	Blackface	<a href="#">No Page Number</a>
1938	Cultural appropriation	<a href="#">No Page Number</a>
1941	Blackface	<a href="#">No Page Number</a>

1949	Minstrel show	<a href="#">No Page Number</a>
1959	Blackface & cultural appropriation & racial slur	<a href="#">Page 85</a> <a href="#">Page 107</a>
1961	Cultural appropriation	<a href="#">Page 23</a>
1968	Cultural appropriation	<a href="#">Page 110</a>
1978	Cultural appropriation	<a href="#">Page 137</a>

**Student Yearbooks:**

Chicora Clarion – 1902

Edelweiss - 1903 – 1905, 1907 – 1908, 1910 - 1915, 1918, 1921 – 1934 (*Note: 1909 & 1935 yearbooks are either missing or don't exist. No record or mention in archives.*)

The Clarion – 1906 – 1907

Le Resume – 1913, 1914

College Follies Wisdom – 1914

Yearbook for the College of Women – 1915

The Senior Book – 1916

Queen's Blues – 1917

South Carolina Chicora College Nods and Becks – 1917 – 1918, 1921 - 1922, 1925 - 1926

Queens College Yearbook – 1918, 2002

Wise and Otherwise – 1920

Coronet – 1936 - 1983

Arete – 1984 - 1996

Insignia Regni – 2002

Queens University of Charlotte – 2007 – 2010

No yearbooks were produced after 2010.



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