

**EMORY UNIVERSITY. PRESIDENT'S  
COMMISSION ON RACE AND ETHNICITY.  
President's Commission on Race  
and Ethnicity records, 1978-2006**

Emory University  
Emory University Archives  
Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library  
Atlanta, GA 30322  
404-727-6887  
rose.library@emory.edu

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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Emory University. President's Commission on Race and Ethnicity.  
**Title:** President's Commission on Race and Ethnicity records, 1978-2006  
**Call Number:** Series No. 106  
**Extent:** 2.5 linear ft. (5 boxes)  
**Abstract:** The President's Commission on Race and Ethnicity was created in 1979 as the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities by then Emory President James T. Laney to address issues of racism and discrimination at Emory University and to encourage the recruitment and retention of minority faculty. Records in the collection include Executive Committee and subcommittee minutes and annual reports, travel fund applications, and items related to campus events and symposiums sponsored by the commission. There are also some materials related to a racially motivated grievance including an incident involving Emory professor C. M. Worthman.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### **Administrative Information**

#### **Restrictions on Access**

Unrestricted access.

#### **Terms Governing Use and Reproduction**

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

#### **Source**

Transfer

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**Citation**

[after identification of item(s)], President's Commission on Race and Ethnicity records, Emory University Archives, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

**Processing**

Processed by Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, October 2010.

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**Collection Description****Administrative History**

In 1979, Emory University President James T. Laney created the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities (PCSM) an organization that included Emory University faculty, students and staff on its membership roster. In the same year Laney also created the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services. The PCSM grew out of the affirmative action programs the University began to implement in 1969 and the efforts of the Emory Black Caucus founded in 1977. The Commission sought to identify and address ongoing race-related problems at Emory just as its counterpart the President's Commission on the Status of Women sought to challenge sexism, chauvinism, and gender discrimination. They were joined in 1995 by the President's Commission on Sexuality, Gender Diversity and Queer Equality.

A significant issue for the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities at Emory University was the recruitment and retention of minority faculty. In the latter half of the 1980s repeated allegations were made that Emory's campus climate was inhospitable to minorities, that racism persisted, and that minority faculty and students were not treated equally. In 1989, the University commissioned a report by a private consulting firm, the McClain group, to study these allegations. The extensive and contentious report offered recommendations towards altering the University's dismal record in minority faculty recruitment. Its findings were thoroughly and critically discussed by the PCSM. The following year on April 11, 1990, the issue of racism on campus came to the fore again as an African American pre-med student, Sabrina Collins, was hospitalized after an alleged string of racially-motivated vandalism to her property and residence room. Though an investigating committee later concluded that the incident was a hoax perpetrated by Collins, the resulting media coverage, student, faculty and administrative responses brought racial tension once again to the forefront.

In the years following the Commission's establishment, several subcommittees were also created as the Commission's initiatives and responsibilities expanded. These included a Travel and Faculty Conference Fund, a Data Committee, separate Student, Faculty and Staff Concerns Committees and a Historical Records Committee. The Data Committee evidenced a broader trend towards the quantitative analysis of racial diversity, conducting surveys and gathering data on representation and diversity at Emory. The Travel and Faculty Conference fund, which later became the Professional Development fund sought to improve quality of life and support scholarly activities of minority faculty at Emory.

Each of these committees, in addition to the executive committee, met frequently and published annual reports detailing their progress and making recommendations to the President. The Commission also sought to educate the student body about diversity, sponsoring and promoting

numerous events and symposiums (including the Symposium for Issues of Race and Diversity at Emory in 1998) and speak out against incidents of racism on campus.

In 2004 the PCSM changed its name to the President's Commission on Race and Ethnicity (PCORE) in the wake of a highly-publicized incident in the Anthropology department involving the use of a racial slur by Professor Carol M. Worthman. On the one hand this shift reflected a "cultural turn" in American academia. Previously, the focus had been on ending racial discrimination by implementing progressive social policy like affirmative action. New academic trends were centered on a critique of the ideological constructions of race and the politics of identity. On the other hand, the name change reflects a response to an increasing popular criticism of affirmative action and "special interest group" politics which the term minority was seen to connote. In the same year PCORE finally received support to conduct an extensive Campus Climate Survey, an initiative they had been advocating for over the past several years.

Past Chairs of the PCSM have come from across the University departments and administrative units. A significant number have come from the schools of Law and Medicine as well as from the College of Arts and Sciences and Campus Life.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The archives of the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities and the President's Commission on the Race and Ethnicity span the period from the Commission's creation in 1979 to the most recently archived materials in 2005 with a few documents from 2006. The records in this collection measure 2.5 linear feet. The collection is organized under a single series as "Administrative Materials."

Within the Administrative Materials series folders are arranged into categories described in the arrangement below. Materials in the archive include the agenda, minutes and, reports and correspondence of the executive committee, and the various subcommittees (Data Committee, Student, Faculty and Staff Concerns Committee). They also include the annual membership nominations and appointments to the Commission as well as the records of award applications to the Travel and Faculty Conference Fund (later known as the Professional Development Fund). The Annual Reports to the Presidents and their response as well as specially commissioned reports also occupy a significant portion of the content. Other materials include event notifications and correspondence and media coverage relating to specific issues and incidents that the Commission faced.

There are some gaps in the record, particularly in the mid-to-late 1990s. The sub-committees minutes and reports are largely incomplete for the 1980s. The Travel and Faculty Conference Fund is poorly documented from its establishment in 1983 until the early 1990s when the record improves. It then decreases in volume in the early 2000s. Correspondence is not grouped separately but with the material to which it pertains (i.e. Letters from President Laney in response to annual reports are filed alongside those reports).

### **Arrangement Note**

Arranged by record type.

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## Container List

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
1	1	Budget Materials
1	2	Bylaws
1	3	Executive Minutes, 1979-1986
1	4	Executive Minutes, 1987-1989
1	5	Executive Minutes, 1990-1992
1	6	Executive Minutes, 1993-1995
1	7	Executive Minutes, 1996-1999
1	8	Executive Minutes, 2000-2002
1	9	Executive Minutes, 2003-present
2	1	Membership, Appointments, 1984-1990
2	2	Membership, Appointments, 1991-1993
2	3	Membership, Appointments, 1994-1997
2	4	Membership, Appointments, 1998-2000
2	5	Membership, Appointments, 2001-2006
2	6	Sub-Committees, 1983-1991
2	7	Sub-Committees, 1992
2	8	Sub-Committees, 1993-2005
2	9	Historical Records Committee, 2002-2006
3	1	Travel and Faculty Conference Fund, 1983-1984, 1991-1992
3	2	Travel and Faculty Conference Fund, 1993-1994
3	3	Travel and Faculty Conference Fund, 1995-1996
3	4	Professional Development Fund, 1997-1999
3	5	Professional Development Fund, 2004-2005
3	6	Events Notifications
4	1	Reports and Responses, 1978-1982
4	2	Reports and Responses, 1983-1985
4	3	Reports and Responses, 1986-1990
4	4	Reports and Responses, 1991-1993
4	5	Reports and Responses, 1994-1999
4	6	Reports and Responses, 2000-present
5	1	McClain Report, 1989
5	2	Campus Climate Survey, 2004
5	3	Grievances, 1983-2000
5	4	Grievances (Carol Worthman incident), 2003

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