Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: A Multiple Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi

Lemondra V. Hamilton

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Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: 
A Multiple Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi 

by 

Lemondra Vanshun Hamilton 

A Dissertation 
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the 
Requirements for the Degree of 
Doctor of Education 

Major: Higher and Adult Education 

The University of Memphis 
August 2015
Dedication

To my mother Ella Hamilton for your eternal love and support

To my sisters Marian and I’sis and brothers Clarence Jr., Alexis, and Trayvion

To my nieces Elisha, Alexia, Traya, and Kor’iel and my nephews Monty, Kimerious, Jackson, Nathan, and Mason

To my pastor Rev. Clifford Wilson and wife Mrs. Cathy Wilson

To the First United Baptist Church, Indianola, Mississippi

To the 103 Historically Black Colleges and Universities

To the participants of my research study

To Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University

Run with the herd and never stop running

In memory of

My father Clarence Hamilton, Sr.

My sister Develyn Hamilton

My maternal grandparents, Ollie Carpenter and Pearlie Brownlow

My paternal grandparents Hilliard Hamilton and WillElla Hamilton

The race is not given to the swift or to the strong,

but to the one that endures until the end.
Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my major professor Dr. Mitsunori Misawa for facilitating my journey through this academic endeavor and the numerous hours he spent in guiding me through the preparation of this document from its beginning to its completion. I would also like to acknowledge my doctoral committee members Dr. William Akey, Dr. Charisse Gulosino, and Dr. Larry McNeal their time, thoughtful consideration and probing questions that helped to make this research more meaningful. Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Katrina Meyer who accepted me into the Higher and Adult Education Department, helped me formulate this research study and guided me through the completion of my residency project, comprehensive examinations and doctoral proposal meeting.
Abstract

Hamilton, Lemondra Vanshun. Ed.D. The University of Memphis. August 2015 Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: A Multiple Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi. Major Professor: Mitsunori Misawa, Ph.D.

The State of Mississippi operated a dual system of higher education for White and Black citizens. The inequitable funding of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) became the central issue in the Ayers lawsuit. The State of Mississippi agreed to pay $503 million for endowments and programs at the three public four-year HBCUs. The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand the impact of the Ayers case on state-supported HBCUs in Mississippi from a Critical Race Theory perspective. The research questions that guided this study: How has the history of higher education in Mississippi affected the way HBCUs operate today? How does the Ayers case affect HBCUs today? What strategies have HBCUs employed to achieve the student diversity measure set forth by the Ayers settlement as a condition for controlling the endowment?

Data collection utilized semi-structured interviews, nonparticipant observation, document analysis, and field notes. Research findings from the cross-case analysis suggest that embedded racism and classism caused White state leaders to form a segregated higher education system. The interests of Whites and Blacks converged when a large portion of funds were used for other-race scholarships and stipends to benefit White students. Control of the endowment was withheld from HBCUs until each university obtained a 10% population of other-race students for three consecutive years. To achieve the diversity measure, athletics departments at HBCUs recruited Caucasian and international students, administrators signed memoranda of understanding with predominantly White institutions (PWIs) and international universities, and academic programs on branch
campuses attracted other-race students. The implications for HBCU administrators include securing maximum funds from the state using the funding formula, generating revenue from outside sources by educating alumni, adequately staffing and funding institutional advancement, and using the institution’s bond rating to build needed facilities when necessary. In conclusion, the Ayers settlement benefitted HBCUs with capital projects and temporary funds that supported new and enhanced academic programs, faculty salaries, and operating budgets, but White students also benefitted from the settlement in the form of other-race scholarships and stipends. HBCU administrators are making plans to subsume Ayers budget costs into their operating budgets.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The United States of America has had a difficult time dealing with the issue of race. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (2006a) the beginning of the racial system of injustice in the United States began with two events: the forcible removal of indigenous people from their land and the enslavement of people of African descent. This reality is very different from the bold vision set forth in the U.S. Declaration of Independence where all men created equally and are endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Among public institutions, this system of racial injustice continues to exist in anti-immigration laws that codify racial discrimination. In housing, people are segregated by class and race. In the criminal justice system, people of color are disproportionately targeted and incarcerated. In education, students of color are confined to racially isolated, underfunded and inferior schools. Generations of civil rights activism have brought about educational, employment, legal, political and social gains for minorities. While the law should provide equal opportunity in theory, it often denies equal opportunity in reality (ACLU, 2006a, 2006b).

From their inception, the education system of U.S. southern states and states that bordered southern states were established, organized and funded according to race. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) fought vigorously in the courts to overturn the discriminatory system with victories that applied to specific institutions and circumstances (Brown, 2001, 2004; Muhammad, 2009; Preer, 1982; Stefkovich & Leas, 1994). It was not until Brown v. Board of Education (1954), or
*Brown I*, that the United States Supreme Court ruled that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court and *Brown II* ordered a year later that integration should occur with all deliberate speed (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1955).

While the journey to desegregate public schools was slow and arduous, the effort to integrate public higher education institutions was even slower. The opposition of White leaders in the South to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision resulted in a policy of massive resistance that encouraged southern states to defy the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling. “The Mississippi legislature passed a resolution directing state agencies and officials to obstruct ‘the implementation or compliance with the Integration Decisions of the United States Supreme Court’” (Muhammad, 2009, pp. 321-322).

Sadler (2011) explored the relationship and the role of African Americans informants and allies of the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, a state-funded agency created in 1956 to uphold state’s rights, prevent federal intrusion and maintain the Southern way of life (Muhammad, 2009; Sadler, 2011). This “segregation watchdog” agency had an investigative division that utilized an informal network of informants, civic and political leaders, private detective agencies located in every county in the State of Mississippi (Sadler, 2011, p. 13). The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission infiltrated the education of African Americans by influencing presidents at historically Black institutions (HBIs) in Mississippi to prohibit civil rights activities on their campuses and dissuade Black students from attending White universities. Presidents of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in Mississippi were employed by the White male College Board to serve as informants for the state agencies (Sadler, 2011). These educated HBCU presidents were both pillars of the African American
community and informants on the community to which they belonged. John Boyd of Alcorn A & M College, Jacob Reddix of Jackson State College, and James White of Mississippi Valley College were called upon to provide a service for the Commission in order to benefit their respective institutions by maintaining the status quo. Intimidated by the White power structure, the all-White segregationist legislature that funded higher education and the governor who was interested in maintaining separate schools, the efforts of HBCU presidents to upgrade and fund their institutions were treated “with suspicion if not hostility” (Sansing, 1990, p. 211). Constrained by their position and the persons to whom they must report, the voices of presidents at HBCUs echoed the separate but equal principle espoused by the Mississippi governor and legislature (Sadler, 2011). In sum, Black college presidents were “forced to serve two masters—their [B]lack constituency, who would no longer accept things as they were, and the [W]hite power structure who would not allow [B]lack colleges to become engines of change” (Sansing, 1990, p. 211).

While the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission disbanded in 1977 (Sandler, 2011), the boards and government agencies to which presidents of HBIs in Mississippi must report have remained the same since 1932 (Sansing, 1990). From its inception, the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), the higher education board in the State of Mississippi, was entirely male and entirely White until 1972 and held its meetings in closed-door sessions until the state legislature passed an open meetings law in the 1970s (Sadler, 2011; Sansing, 1990). For decades, Mississippi higher education officials fought and resisted integration of its colleges and universities. James Meredith integrated The University of Mississippi in 1962 only after a riot
occurred on campus the night before (Sansing, 1990). It was a class-action lawsuit filed by Black citizens of Mississippi that compelled the State of Mississippi to desegregate and remove all remnants of *de jure* segregation, root and branch, from its higher education system once and for all.

Jake Ayers, the father of student at Jackson State University, believed the fiscal and physical plant conditions were reprehensible. Joined by 20 co-plaintiffs, Ayers sued the governor of Mississippi for alleged racial discrimination in the state higher education system (*Ayers v. Allain*, 1987; Williams, 2005). Relief requested by the plaintiffs included the imposition of an equitable distribution of financial support for higher education and dismantling of employment and educational policies that furthered *de jure* segregation, not integration of HBIs (Muhammad, 2009).

When the both sides could not agree on a compromise, the case went to trial in the U.S. District Court in the North District of Mississippi. Judge Neal Biggers ruled that the actions of the defendants demonstrated that the state fulfilled its affirmative duty to disestablish the former *de jure* system of higher education (*Ayers v. Allain*, 1987). The case was appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in 1990. The Fifth Circuit reversed the District Court’s decision and ruled that the state did not satisfy it affirmative duty to remove all vestiges of *de jure* segregation, root and branch. The Fifth Circuit remanded the case back to the U.S. District Court, North District of Mississippi (*Ayers v. Allain*, 1990). The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court where the justices agreed to hear the case. In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court remanded the case back to the U.S. District Court, required the State of Mississippi to shoulder the burden of proof and ordered the state to remove policies traceable to *de jure* segregation regarding
unnecessary program duplication, different admissions criterion for universities, institutional mission designation and the number of institutions (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a).

The State of Mississippi agreed to pay $503 million to the three HBIs over 17 years to remedy the effects of past segregation policies (Ayers v. Barbour, 2004). In the Ayers settlement, the State of Mississippi provided $245.880 million in funds to HBCUs to enhance academic programs and establish new programs to attract White students and improve the educational offerings not duplicated at HWIs for current students. The settlement also provided funds for capital improvements, public and private endowment and the summer enhancement program. Jackson State University received 43.4% of the funds, and Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University both received 28.3% of the funds. Most importantly, the settlement provided through the Ayers case forced the State of Mississippi to strengthen historically Black institutions (Joint Legislative Committee 2009).

Table 1 lists the academic programs funded under Section VI of the Settlement Agreement. From Fiscal Year 2002 to Fiscal Year 2014, Alcorn State University received $41,523,000 for academic programs and program enhancements. Jackson State University received $137,411,847 for academic programs and program enhancements. Mississippi Valley State University received $42,018,796 over the same period for academic programs and enhancements. Up to Fiscal Year 2014, the State of Mississippi has spent $220,953,643 for academic programs and program enhancements at four-year public HBCUs because of the Ayers case and settlement (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009).
Table 1

**Ayers Academic Programs and Program Enhancements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcorn State University</th>
<th>Jackson State University</th>
<th>Mississippi Valley State University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Business Administration</td>
<td>Urban and Regional Planning</td>
<td>Distinguished Visiting Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education Program</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Institute for Effective Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Greenwood Center Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion Ayers</td>
<td>Communicative Diseases</td>
<td>History Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Program</td>
<td>Health Care Administration</td>
<td>Other Race Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancements</td>
<td>Allied Health Services</td>
<td>Special Education Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Professional Program Enhancements (Math, Program Science and Chemistry)</td>
<td>School of Engineering</td>
<td>Industrial Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Networking and Science</td>
<td>Ayers Related Reserves</td>
<td>Chemistry Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and Image Building Education</td>
<td>Ph.D. in Higher Urban Health Policy and Management</td>
<td>Biology Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistant</td>
<td>School of Health Sciences</td>
<td>Graduate Special Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASU Family Clinic Information</td>
<td>Behavioral and Environmental Health</td>
<td>Computer and Science Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Biotechnology Library and Academic Technology Enhancements</td>
<td>Epidemiology and Health</td>
<td>Mathematics Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College of Public Service</td>
<td>Master in Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provost’s Library and Scholarship Pool</td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Leadership Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bioinformatics Program</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 2 lists the 17-year appropriation schedule for the disbursement of $245,880,000 to Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University for academic programs (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009). The State of Mississippi agreed to spend $75,000,000 for capital improvement projects at four-year public HBCUs because of the Ayers case and settlement (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009).
Table 2

Schedule of Disbursements for Academic Programs

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASU</td>
<td>$3,112,000</td>
<td>$4,350,000 yearly</td>
<td>$2,900,000 yearly</td>
<td>$1,450,000 yearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSU</td>
<td>$10,485,000</td>
<td>$11,500,000 yearly</td>
<td>$7,667,000 yearly</td>
<td>$3,833,000 yearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVSU</td>
<td>$3,349,000</td>
<td>$4,350,000 yearly</td>
<td>$2,900,000 yearly</td>
<td>$1,450,000 yearly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 lists the capital improvements funded under Section V of the Settlement Agreement. From Fiscal Year 2002 to Fiscal Year 2014, Alcorn State University received $25,100,000 for capital improvement projects. Jackson State University received $23,300,000 for capital improvement projects. Mississippi Valley State University received $26,600,000 over the same period for capital improvement projects. Although the Ayers Accountability Manual lists 12 total projects, only nine projects were totally funded. Two projects were cancelled at Alcorn State University, 1 project was cancelled at Mississippi Valley State University, and Phase III of a project at Alcorn State University was cancelled (Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, 2014a).

Table 3

Ayers Capital Improvement Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcorn State University</th>
<th>Jackson State University</th>
<th>Mississippi Valley State University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biotechnology Building, Drainage Lorman</td>
<td>Allstate Building Purchase Engineering School</td>
<td>Landscaping and Library Enhancements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumas Hall Renovation, Lorman</td>
<td></td>
<td>Science and Technology Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts Facility, Lorman</td>
<td></td>
<td>Improvements to Approved Projects as Needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts Facility, Natchez (cancelled)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(cancelled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Equipment for MBA program, Natchez (Phase I and II-complete)</td>
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</tr>
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Table 3

*Ayers Capital Improvement Projects*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mississippi Valley State University</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcorn State University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase III-cancelled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Property to Improve Security and Access, Lorman (cancelled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The U.S. District judge also approved the State’s plan to admit undergraduate students to four-year colleges with a certain grade point average and specific scores on standardized tests to gain admission. Students who do not meet these requirements would be required to attend summer remedial courses (Jaschik, 1995; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2010c). The successful completion of the intensive program will result in students receiving full admission and receive academic support for one year (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2010c). HBI s must also attract 10% other-race student enrollment for three consecutive years to collect the public and private endowments intended to remedy desegregation at the institutions (Muhammad, 2009). The *Ayers* case was decided in 2002 and settled in 2004 after all appeals were exhausted. Table 4 list the disbursement table for the Summer Enhancement Program (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2014a).

Table 4

*Disbursement Table for the Summer Enhancement Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2002-2012</td>
<td>$5,000 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2013-2015</td>
<td>$5,000 per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The State of Mississippi also agreed as part of the settlement to establish both public and private endowments for Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. A $70 million public endowment was funded by the Mississippi Legislature over 14 years and the state pledged to raise $35 million for the private endowment (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009). As of 2012, the State of Mississippi had not raised the $35 million private dollars for endowment it promised, but nothing happened after The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation gave $1 million when the campaign was first announced. Higher education officials have recently pledged to develop new ways to raise the money (Jaschik, 2012). In 2013, the Institutions of Higher Learning added the Ayers Private Endowment Development Director under the employment opportunities section of its website to “coordinate and seek major gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations” (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013a, para. 1). Table 5 lists the private endowment raised, public endowment raised and income distributed funded under Section IV of the Settlement Agreement.
Table 5

*Amount of Endowment and Income Distributed*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Endowment</th>
<th>Principal Raised</th>
<th>Trust</th>
<th>Distributed</th>
<th>Earned</th>
<th>Distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Endowment</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$717,000</td>
<td>$283,000&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>$246,751</td>
<td>$204,617&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Endowment</td>
<td>$30,000,000</td>
<td>$21,510,000</td>
<td>$8,490,000&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>$3,340,421&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>$4,821,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Earnings</td>
<td>$6,334,056</td>
<td>$6,168,060</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* <sup>a</sup> Amounts only apply to FY 2006. No other endowment principal raised, principal trust or principal was distributed from FY 2007 to FY 2014.<br><sup>b</sup> No interest was distributed in FY 2006. Amounts apply to FY 2007 to FY 2014.<br><sup>c</sup> Amount only applies to ASU Only. ASU met 10% other race enrollment. Principal amount of $1,415,000 was dispersed by the Board in September 2006.<br><sup>d</sup> Amount applies to JSU and MVSU.<br><sup>e</sup> Ayers endowment trust established prior to FY 2002 from $15 earmarked in Working Cash Stabilization Reserve Fund managed by the Mississippi State Treasury. Allocation from FY 2006 through FY 2011 based on percentages stipulated within the Ayers Agreement: 28.3% for ASU, 43.4% for JSU, 28.3% for MVSU. Otherwise, distributions are same for each university.

According to the Ayers settlement, every historically Black institution in Mississippi must maintain 10 percent other-race student enrollment for three consecutive years before the State relinquishes control of the endowments and transfers them to the individual institutions (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009; McBride, 2003a; Muhammad, 2009; Snowden, Jackson, & Flowers, 2002). In this era of race-neutral admissions, colleges and universities are seeking to diversify their student body. As remnants of the bygone era of segregation, institutions once established for educating Blacks are instructed by the courts to diversify their student body by seeking other-race students to attend their institutions. This research will understand the impact of the Ayers case on state-supported HBCUs in Mississippi.
Background of the Study

Africans were brought to the United States in slave ships and were forced to work on plantations in the southern United States. A debate over how to count slaves for the purposes of representation in the U.S. House of Representatives erupted during the Constitutional Convention and resulted in the Three-fifths Compromise, which counted slaves as three-fifths of a White person (U.S. Constitution Article I, Section 2, Clause 3). In 1861, southern states seceded from the Union and fought the northern states over the issue of slavery. After the U.S. Civil War ended, the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ended involuntary servitude in the United States in 1865, but newly freed slaves were not truly free. Their status as second-class citizens was cemented in the U.S. Supreme Court ruling of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) which declared segregation legal under the “separate but equal” doctrine. Further, the Morrill Act of 1890 provided federal funds to states that either admitted newly freed Blacks to their universities or provided separate facilities for the education of Black citizens. As a result, a dual higher educational system was established in the South separating Black and White citizens. The Freedman’s Bureau, Black churches, northern missionaries, governmental initiatives, and private philanthropists founded HBIS after the Civil War to educate the masses of freed African Americans (Palmer & Gasman, 2008).

The watershed ruling that changed the “separate but equal” doctrine in the United States was *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). The U.S. Supreme Court overturned previous precedent and declared the “separate but equal” doctrine unconstitutional. Primary and secondary schools slowly began to desegregate, but southern states had no impetus to desegregate their systems of higher education. In *Adams v. Richardson* (1973),
the NAACP sued the federal department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) for allowing states who allowed segregation to continue to receive federal funds in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Brown, 2001, 2004; Byrd-Chichester, 2000; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009; Marcus, 1981). Mississippi was one of five states that ignored the request of HEW by refusing to submit a plan to the Office of Civil Rights to dismantle their dual system of higher education (Adams v. Richardson, 1973). In 1973, the IHL Board hastily submitted a plan to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. That desegregation plan was rejected (Sansing, 1990; Williams, 2005). The State of Mississippi drafted a new proposal for compliance that was accepted after two years of suits, countersuits, pleadings and legal maneuverings in 1976 (Sansing, 1990). Even though the HEW rejected the plan of compliance, IHL “considered its plan in compliance with [T]itle VI despite minimal changes in racial character of the institutions” (Williams, 2005, p. 2).

**Statement of the Problem**

The State of Mississippi maintained and financed a dual system of higher education. From the inception of its system of higher education, the State of Mississippi maintained public universities according to race and gender as designated by the Mississippi Legislature (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). Of Mississippi’s eight higher education institutions, three institutions are historically Black and five are historically White. Among the HBIs are Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. The HWIs include The University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University, Mississippi University for Women, The University of Southern Mississippi, and Delta State University. In Meredith v. Fair (1962), the State of
Mississippi conceded to maintaining segregative policies regarding student enrollment, branch centers of HWIs in close proximity to HBCUs, employment of faculty and staff, allocation of financial resources, academic program offerings, and the racial composition of the IHL Board that oversees higher education.

After *Brown I* and *Brown II*, the State of Mississippi delayed integration of its primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. Until October 1962, no African Americans attended any HWIs and no Whites attended HBIs (Williams, 2005). It was only after a court order that The University of Mississippi was forced to admit James Meredith, the first African American male to attend a HWI in Mississippi (*Meredith v. Fair*, 1962; Pettus, 2012; Sansing, 1990). A year after Meredith’s admission to The University of Mississippi, admission to public four-year institutions was based only on the American College Test (ACT) scores. HWIs required higher ACT scores than HBIs required at a time when African American students scored significantly lower than Whites. As a result, this policy had the effect of restricting educational access for African Americans by controlling the types of institutions they could attend (*U.S. v. Fordice*, 1992a).

Since the completion of the *Ayers* case, HBIs are actively recruiting other-race students. Only Alcorn State University has successfully maintained 10% other-race enrollment for three consecutive years and collected its share of the funds in as a remedy to the case (Associated Press, 2005). Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University have yet to attract and retain 10% White student enrollment at its institutions to receive its financial remedy from the settlement. According to Muhammad (2009), more than 45% of the *Ayers* settlement or $246 million was designated for black
colleges to attract White students to their campuses. Critics of the settlement view this provision as a punishment for Black colleges which were neglected by the state which made these institutions unattractive to serious students regardless of color (McBride, 2003a). The truth of the matter is that HBIs are still unequal to HWIs. As a result of the historic funding inequities, HBIs may never be as attractive to White students as HWIs.

Mississippi was not the only state that was sued by its constituents for not segregating its system of higher education (Davis, 1993; Holley & Weedon, 1997; Patterson, 1994; Sellers-Diamond, 2008; Tollett, 1994). Other states with court ordered higher education desegregation rulings included Sanders v. Ellington (1968) and brought to summary judgment as Geier v. Alexander (1986) in Tennessee that reached the Sixth Circuit (Connell; 1993; Davis, 1993), United States v. the State of Louisiana (1993) that reached the Fifth Circuit (Connell, 1993; Sellers-Diamond, 2008), and Knight v. Alabama (1995) that reached the Eleventh Circuit (Connell, 1993; Morris, Allen, Maurrasse, & Gilbert, 1995). U.S. v. Fordice (1992a) has been used by the Office of Civil Rights and the Department of Education to enforce the compliance of states whose collegiate desegregation plan had expired (Palmer, Davis, & Gasman, 2011; Palmer & Griffin, 2009; Palmer, Wood, & Spencer, 2013).

There are numerous educational policy and legal interpretations which focus on the landmark higher education desegregation case. Blake (1991) used historical analysis and statistics to show that policies enacted as a result of the Ayers case resulted in a decrease in African American access to higher education from 1976 to 1986, a decrease in graduation rates for African Americans attending four-year HBCUs from 1981 to 1990 and an increase in numbers of African Americans at the state’s community colleges.
during the same period from 1976 to 1986. Lee (2010) examined the impact of closure, merger or mandated enrollment of public HBCUs in Mississippi by using 11 years IPEDS data and the Box-Jenkins Auto-Regressive Integrated Moving Averages models for analysis. In their analysis of the Ayers case, Palmer, Wood, and Spencer (2013) examined the diverging interests of implementing racially diverse universities in the pace of policies that attack and prohibit the use of affirmative action and offered recommendations to universities that are legally able to diversify their campuses using affirmative action to avoid possible litigation. Muhammad (2009) examined the legal history of the Ayers case from its inception to the end using Critical Race Theory. Muhammad found that White students are the primary beneficiaries of the settlement, thus violating the law of remedies and equal protection doctrine. The failure of HBCUs to meet White enrollment targets will cause them to suffer as endowments will not be granted and will stymie the fiscal, programmatic and physical improvements of the institutions. The settlement, according to Muhammad (2009), was decided in this manner due to the weariness of the parties involved in the 29-year lawsuit, the cost of further delaying any remedy, and the lack of public attention paid to higher education. Unfortunately, Muhammad’s article is one of very few studies that used Critical Race Theory to analyze the Ayers desegregation case and settlement.

The use of Critical Race Theory is ideal for this study because segregation according to race is the reason the Mississippi legislature established a dual system of higher education according to race (Ayers v. Allain, 1990; Sansing, 1990; U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). First, an implicit hierarchy was established among institutions in which the state university and comprehensive universities were first and the rural HBCUs were last.
Second, the State of Mississippi established an out-of-state scholarship program for Black students to attend graduate and professional programs in other states that were not available at Mississippi HBCUs during segregation to keep Blacks from applying to HWIs for graduate study, (Sansing, 1990; Williams, 2005). After integration, ACT scores were used to reduce the number of African American students from attending HWIs (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). Third, White citizens in Mississippi had the unalienable right to attend one of five White institutions, three of which offered doctorate degrees, more specialized programs, a more varied curricula and better facilities (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). White students also enjoyed the right of use and enjoyment for the social, cultural and economic privileges by attended these institutions. The right of reputation and status property elevated HWIs over HBIs because the presence Black students would denigrate the institution (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004). Whites also enjoyed the absolute right to exclude the contaminating Black influence from these institutions (Bell, 1980; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Fourth, the use of counterstories in higher education provides faculty, staff and students of color a voice to tell about their marginalized experiences, assists in analyzing the climate of a campus and provides opportunities that can examine ways the institution can become inclusive, not just diverse (Hiraldo, 2010). Not prominent in the cultural meta-narrative of higher education desegregation are the voices of African American administrators at HBIs. “A rediscovery of voice is especially significant for those whose ethnic or racial backgrounds leaves them feeling particularly misunderstood, voiceless or overwhelmed” (Mattingly & Lawlor, 2000, p. 12).
While other-race enrollment at public HBCUs in Mississippi can be readily assessed, the Ayers settlement and the implementation of diversity metrics at the affected universities has not been assessed. This study will offer a counternarrative to the issue of desegregation provided by the courts, legal analysis and state policy makers, as it gives a voice to the administrators charged with implementing integration policies at three public four-year HBCUs in Mississippi.

**Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand the impact of the Ayers case on state-supported HBCUs in Mississippi from a Critical Race Theory perspective. The research questions that guided the case study were

1. How has the history of higher education in Mississippi affected the way HBCUs operate today?
2. How does the Ayers case affect HBCUs today?
3. What strategies have HBCUs employed to achieve the student diversity measure set forth by the Ayers settlement as a condition for controlling the endowment?

**Significance of the Study**

Although the Ayers case was initially litigated in Mississippi, the case was heard, adjudicated, settled and affirmed in the U.S. District Court and U.S. Court of Appeals several times and once before the U.S. Supreme Court. The *U.S. v. Fordice* (1992a) decision is the landmark higher education desegregation lawsuit which has become the law of the land for higher education and is relevant for public higher education officials, researchers and administrators throughout the United States. First, studying how HBIs
negotiated and implemented the settlement will help higher education policy makers understand how the policies set forth in the settlement applicable for these three institutions and consider whether current policies need to be modified. The decision in the *Fordice* case enlightens higher education policy officials about arguments that will not pass constitutional muster and policies that must be addressed. Second, findings from this study can allow university officials to reflect on recruitment policies to achieve diversity in staff, students, faculty, and administrators. Third, this study will offer the perspectives of university officials at similarly-situated institutions in states that also maintained dual systems of higher education according to race as they conform to desegregation policies set forth by the courts and the state.

Other disciplines may also be interested in how HBIs negotiate the ruling of the settlement. Sociologists can examine whether diversity is being achieved at HBIs by recruiting White students, whether the institutional missions of HBIs still reflects historical inequities of the past and what is the social impact of closing and merging higher education institutions. Economists can investigate the economic impact of higher education institutions to their communities, the economic impact of closing and merging higher education institutions to achieve diversity and whether the current funding formula is equitable to historically Black and White institutions. Legal analysts can determine whether the settlement rectifies that issues that were brought forth in the original lawsuit and whether the settlement does enough to remedy the decades of unequal funding and neglect suffered under the dual *de jure* system of higher education.

This study encourages policy makers, college administrators, and students of higher education to examine the findings of the landmark higher education discrimination
lawsuit to see if the “one size fits all” principle of achieving diversity in the settlement helps or hinders HBIs in state-supported system of public higher education. The Mississippi settlement should not be viewed as a template, but as one example of how diversity may be achieved in higher education.

**Definitions of Terms**

*Admissions policy.* Admissions policy refers to a set of prospective criteria applicants to a college or university must meet to become a student. The previous university admissions policy in Mississippi required higher American College Test (ACT) scores for admission to the five historically White institutions than the three historically Black institutions and did not take into account high school grade point average or course of study. This policy enacted in the 1970s to remedy student unpreparedness can be traced to a similar policy originally enacted in 1963 by three White universities to discriminate against Black students whose ACT scores were well below the required minimum score of White students (*U.S. v. Fordice*, 1992a).

*De jure.* *De jure* is a Latin adjective that means “lawful.” It is often distinguished from *de facto* that means “actual” or “in fact.” (*de jure*, 2008, para. 1). According to Merriam-Webster, *de jure* is “based on the laws or actions of the state” (*de jure*, 2013, para. 2) According to *West’s Encyclopedia of American Law*, the term *de jure* segregation “refers to the intentional actions of the state to enforce racial segregation” (*de jure*, 2008, para. 4).

*Equal Protection Clause.* The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution grants citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States and of the state in which they reside. The Amendment
makes it illegal for states to enforce any law that will deprive any citizen of life, liberty or property without due process (U.S. Const., amend. XIV).

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities.** Historically Black colleges and universities are those 103 institutions mostly founded before 1964 for the express purpose of educating former slaves, newly freed African Americans, and African American citizens before and after the Civil War (Higher Education Act, 1965). In the Ayers case, these institutions are referred to as historically Black institutions (HBIs). In higher education, these institutions are often referred to as historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). These two terms are interchangeable and refer to the same set of institutions charged with educating African American citizens.

**Historically White institutions.** Historically White institutions (HWIs) are institutions with White student enrollment of 50% or greater. This term is used to contrast these institutions from other minority-serving institutions that serve students from other cultures, ethnic and/or racial backgrounds. HWIs supported the binary that supported White privilege and excluded and segregated Blacks and other ethnicities (Brown & Dancy, 2010). Other interchangeable terms include traditional White institutions (TWIs) and predominantly White institutions (PWIs).

**Institutional mission.** Institutional mission classification refers to how the State of Mississippi assigned certain missions to public universities. In 1981, the IHL Board of Trustees classified The University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University and The University of Southern Mississippi as comprehensive universities because they offered various degree programs and graduate degrees. Alcorn State University, Delta State University, Mississippi University for Women, and Mississippi Valley State University
were designated regional universities with a focus on undergraduate education. Jackson State University was designated an urban university whose mission was defined by its urban location. However, the U.S. Supreme Court found that the inequality among institutions largely followed institutional missions that were to a lesser degree followed historical racial assignments. From their inception, the three flagship institutions received the most funds, initiated advanced and specialized programs and developed a wide range of curricular offerings for the education of White students. Delta State University and Mississippi University for Women were limited to a liberal arts education for White undergraduates and the HBCUs were even more limited in their academic missions. Alcorn State University was established as an agricultural college for Mississippi’s Black youth and Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University were established to train Black teachers (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a).

Number of institutions. The number of institutions refers to the State of Mississippi continuing to maintain and operate eight institutions of higher education as the result of the legislature creating laws that forbid the mingling of races. The number of higher education institutions was considered irrational and wasteful when 25 miles separate Delta State University and Mississippi Valley State University and 20 miles separate Mississippi State University and Mississippi University for Women. To decrease the discriminatory effect of the current system, IHL could close or merge higher education institutions, eliminate program duplication, or revise the admission policy to make closing or merging institutions unnecessary (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a).

Program duplication. Unnecessary program duplication refers “to those instances where two or more institutions offer the same essential or noncore program”
Duplication of nonbasic liberal arts and science coursework at the bachelor’s level and all duplication at the master’s level and above were unnecessary. The “separate but equal” doctrine required the duplication of all systems, including the educational system. The current practice of program duplication was a continuation of the segregative practice and lacked educational justification (*U.S. v. Fordice*, 1992a).

**Thirteenth Amendment.** The Thirteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution makes slavery or involuntary servitude in the United States illegal except as a punishment for a crime (U.S. Const., amend. XIII). Ratified December 6, 1865, Section 2 of the Amendment gives Congress the power to enforce the article through legislation.

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 restricted the distribution of federal funds to segregated schools and prohibited the exclusion and discrimination of persons under any program or activity receiving federal assistance on the basis of race, color or national origin (Harper et al., 2009). “Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination, which is violative of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment” (*Ayers v. Fordice*, 1995, p. 2).

**Study Overview**

The current chapter covered the role race played in the United States, in the higher education system in the State of Mississippi and in the efforts of state officials to maintain segregation and defy the federal mandate to integrate its higher education institutions. This chapter also introduced the Mississippi higher education discrimination lawsuit from its inception through the federal court system to its eventual settlement.

After the statement of the problem, Critical Race Theory was justified as the theoretical
framework for the study. The significance of the study and definitions of terms followed the research questions.

Chapter 2 will begin with the nature, scope and limits of the literature review followed by a discussion of the relationship between higher education and the law. After a brief discussion of HBCUs, the history of higher in education in Mississippi will be followed by legal responses to affirmative action in higher education and Critical Race Theory higher education. Chapter 3 will delineate the theoretical framework, research design and data collection methods that will guide this qualitative case study. Procedures for data analysis, representation of the findings, trustworthiness and subjectivity statement will conclude the chapter. The themes that emerged from data collection will be discussed in three chapters. Chapter 4 will uncover the emergent themes at the urban institution Jackson State University. Chapter 5 will focus on the research findings at the land grant institution Alcorn State University. Chapter 6 will reveal the research findings at the regional institution Mississippi Valley State University. Chapter 7 will provide a cross-case analysis and discussion of emergent themes from Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Chapter 8 will answer the research questions from a Critical Race Theory perspective, discuss the implications for professional practice, make recommendations for further study and conclude the research study.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The nature of this research will focus on desegregation in the higher education system in the State of Mississippi. The dismantling of the Mississippi’s dual system of higher education began when Jake Ayers and 20 co-plaintiffs filed suit against the State of Mississippi alleging that its dual system of higher education violated the Equal Protection Clause, Amendment Fourteen of the U.S. Constitution and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). Prior to this, the Office of Health, Educational and Welfare (HEW) required Mississippi and nine other states to submit a suitable plan to segregation (Byrd-Chichester, 2000; Harper et al., 2009; Marcus, 1981; Richardson & Harris, 2004; Williams, 2005). When the HEW deemed Mississippi’s plan to desegregate higher education unacceptable, the state initially responded by refusing to submit a plan (Adams v. Richardson, 1973; Williams, 2005).

This researcher asked how historically Black institutions (HBIs) have been affected by higher education history in Mississippi, policies that were intended to promote integration and diversify their institutions via the Ayers settlement, and the strategies HBCUs employed to achieve the diversity metric. The researcher examined the perspectives of current administrators at three public HBIs in Mississippi of how each university implemented and fared under the Ayers settlement. Although the scope of the case pertains to one state, U.S. v. Fordice (1992a) has implications for all public higher education institutions in the nation. After delineating the background of the study and the limits of the literature review, the literature review will discuss the relationship between higher education and the law in the United States. After brief discussion of historically
Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), a history of higher education in Mississippi will encompass pivotal eras in U.S. history. Next, the discussion will enumerate how federal higher education lawsuits impact affirmative action and admissions decisions, how the judicial branch defines who may be admitted for study in colleges and universities and what criteria can be used to admit students to higher education. The chapter will end with a discussion on the use of Critical Race Theory in higher education.

**Background**

“In each generation, new tactics have been used for achieving the same goals—goals shared by the Founding Fathers. Denying African Americans citizenship was deemed essential to the formation of the original union” (Alexander, 2010, p. 1). The United States has been described as a melting pot of people from different ethnicities, religions, races, colors, political affiliations, and creeds. On the surface, it would seem that everyone is cordial, ideas are respected and differences are accepted. The fact is that since the *Brown I* decision in 1954, integration is a relatively young concept in American jurisprudence. On the other hand, segregation in the United States is as old as the country itself. From the time the first slaves were brought from Africa to the United States to meet the growing demands for labor on plantations in the South, Whites protected their interests by driving a wedge between poor Whites and slaves by extending special privileges to poor White planters (Alexander, 2010). From the inception of the United States of America until the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment, African slaves were counted as three-fifths of a White person for the purposes of taxation and representation (U.S. Const, art. I, § 2). While the Civil War ended slavery, it did not end the segregation of the races. The Black Codes restricted the civil liberties of African Americans. During
the Reconstruction Era, the Black Codes were overturned by constitutional amendments. Federal law, federal troops, and federal organizations like the Freedman’s Bureau assisted former slaves, but this was short lived. After Reconstruction, southern Whites abolished the Freedman’s Bureau, revived the Ku Klux Clan, forced federal troops to withdraw from the South and enacted Jim Crow laws to maintain *de jure* segregation in all public facilities in former Confederate states (Alexander, 2010). After the Freedmen’s Bureau was dissolved in 1873 and funds from wealthy Northerners were exhausted, education for African American suffered a severe setback. Historically Black universities were changed to “normal” and “industrial” institutions and focused more on teacher training and trades rather than the classical liberal arts education favored by the northern missionaries. Eighty-three of the 108 HBCUs then in existence were established by the turn of the century. Fifty of the 83 institutions were chartered after the dissolution of Freedmen’s Bureau in 1873 (Williams & Ashley, 2004).

In the 1940s and 1950s, the NAACP used the court system to overthrow segregation and the “separate but equal” principle of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) (Brown, 2004). The organization had some success in higher education with cases like *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), *Sipuel v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma* (1948), *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1950) and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), but the rulings applied only to each individual case. It was not until the U.S. Supreme Court decided in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) that dual system of education according to race was unconstitutional and segregation in the field of education began to dismantle.
Limits of the Literature Review

The *Ayers* case addressed not only public four-year institutions, but also community colleges and graduate admissions. However, the literature review will focus primarily on the undergraduate and graduate functions for each public four-year institution in the State of Mississippi. The federal lawsuits that have a direct impact upon higher education in Mississippi include cases that were heard in the U.S. Supreme Court as well as the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit that affects Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The Relationship between Higher Education and the Law in the United States

It is the business of a university to provide that atmosphere which is most conducive to speculation, experiment and creation. It is an atmosphere in which there prevail “the four essential freedoms” of a university—to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study. (*Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 1957b, Frankfurter, F., concurring)

Since the founding of the United States, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches have charged colleges with the power to make decisions about higher education practices and principles. The system of higher education in this country has always been decentralized and administrative judgments are left to individual institutions. This has resulted in a system of diverse public and private, four-year and two-year, small liberal arts and large research colleges and universities (Meloy, 2012).

The U.S. Supreme Court has granted colleges the authority to make educational and academic judgments (Meloy, 2012). In 1819, the Supreme Court ruled that the State
of New Hampshire could not force Dartmouth College to become a public institution and deferred decision-making ability to the institution’s Board of Trustees better suited to govern the college (Dartmouth College v. Woodward, 1819). Chief Justice John Marshall explained that educators, not legislators, should make key decisions in educational matters. For two centuries, the U.S. Supreme Court reinforced the educational authority of colleges (Meloy, 2012). “The four essential freedoms” exposed by Associate Justice Felix Frankfurter in Sweezy v. New Hampshire (1957b) stated that a university may determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught and who may be admitted to study (Stoner & Showalter, 2004).

Byrd-Chichester (2000) noted that federal courts supported and continued discrimination in higher education by protecting the racial hierarchy in the United States while Congress sought to correct these injustices. For example, the Dred Scott v. Sandford decision of 1857 stated that the framers of the U.S. Constitution did not intend for Africans or Blacks to become citizens and could not sue in federal court. The rights of the slave owners were protected by the Fifth Amendment because slaves were categorized as property. After the Civil War, Congress and the states abolished slavery with the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 and repudiated the Dred Scott decision of 1857 with the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868. Congress also passed Reconstruction Era Civil Rights Acts of 1866, 1870, 1871, and 1875. By early 1873, the courts began applying a narrow and restrictive interpretation of the Civil Rights Amendments and Reconstruction Era Civil Rights Statutes, thus invalidating an entire section of civil law, the right of citizenship, and equal protections established by the Fourteenth Amendment (Byrd-Chichester, 2000). According to Williams and Ashley (2004), Reconstruction ended
when wealthy planters gained control of local and state governments and the lands seized during the Civil War. By 1873, federal funds intended to educate all the South’s residents were funneled to White institutions. In 1882, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Civil Rights Act of 1864 was unconstitutional and that the Fourteenth Amendment could only be violated if a state directly discriminated against individuals. The Hatch Act of 1887 initially gave $15,000 to each state land grant college founded under the Morrill Act of 1862, with few exceptions, to create a series of agricultural experiment stations to benefit PWIs. These experiment stations became the foundation of the state cooperative extension service under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (Williams & Ashley, 2004).

In 1862, the first Morrill Land Grant Act provided funds and 30,000 acres of land for the establishment of public institutions in each state and began the agricultural and mechanical arts education movement (Rudolph, 1990). Passed by Congress and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln when many of the southern states had seceded from the Union, the Act enacted a land grant bill to fund a system of industrial colleges in each state. A provision was added that any state that rebelled against the U.S. government would be entitled to receive the provisions provided under the Act. After the U.S. Civil War ended, the Act was extended to former Confederate states and extended to every state and territory created after 1862. Also called the National Land Grant Colleges, federal funds from the Morrill Act of 1862 Act were distributed to make higher education available to everyone, especially freed slaves, but states did not admit Black students to these new land grant institutions. Alcorn State University in Mississippi founded in 1871 was the only Black school started under the first Morrill Act. Blacks would have to wait
another 28 years before they could participate in state-funded educational institutions (Williams & Ashley, 2004).

The Morrill Act of 1890 sought to redress the failings of the first Morrill Act by requiring states to provide land grant institutions that benefited both races in the segregated educational system (Williams & Ashley, 2004). Southern states that were not willing to integrate historically White institutions were allowed to establish separate institutions for Black citizens (Gasman, 2009b). The second Morrill Act aimed at former Confederate states required each state either to admit students to their higher education institutions regardless of race or designate a separate land grant institution for persons of color in order to receive federal higher education funds (American Association of University Professors, 1995; Gasman 2009b). It granted cash instead of land and gave colleges the same legal standing as the first Morrill Act (AAUP, 1995). The passage of the Morrill Act of 1890 was the major impetus for the public education of Blacks. Southern states either established new land grant institutions for Blacks or took over existing public or private Black institutions as land grant colleges (AAUP, 1995). Consequently, 19 HBCUs were founded but none granted college degrees (Williams & Ashley, 2004). The Act also mandated that higher education funds be distributed annually, justly and equitably to African Americans institutions in 17 states (Harper et al., 2009). White institutions benefitted greatly from funding supplied by the second Morrill Act. Inadequately funded from their inception, historically Black institutions faced a long hard struggle (Delauder, 1990) and received far less funding than White institutions (Byrd-Chichester, 2000). White land grant institutions received 26 times more in appropriations than Black colleges and Black colleges received one-fourth the per pupil
expenditure rate as White colleges (Harper et al., 2009). Roebuck and Murty (1993) concluded that public HBCUs were created “to get millions of dollars in federal funds for the development of White land-universities, to limit African American education to vocational training, and to prevent African Americans from attending [W]hite land-grant colleges” (p. 27).

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the precedent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) that racial segregation including the operation of “separate but equal” facilities in public education was no longer legal (Brown, 1999; Byrd-Chichester, 2000). The *Brown* decision refused to articulate the purpose underlying segregation, that is the subjugation of African Americans in a society dominated and controlled by Whites, and focused instead on the effect of legally enforcing segregation on African Americans. The ruling implied that Blacks must be in the presence of Whites in order to learn or progress further (Byrd-Chichester, 2000).

Dudziak (2009) examined the political context of the *Brown* decision and found evidence that the desegregation ruling was motivated more by foreign policy concerns than by moral obligation. With technological advances at the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union, China, and India regularly showed startling images of racial abuses throughout the world and the vivid pictures of lynchings and deplorable living conditions of chain gangs and sharecroppers in the U.S. These reports threatened to undermine America’s image as a model democracy positioning itself against communism. As such, “the U.S. Justice Department filed an amicus brief asserting that because of foreign policy concerns, desegregation was in the national interest” (Taylor, 2009, p. 6). The news of the unanimous decision was broadcast within an hour to Eastern Europe on the
Voice of America broadcast as a strike against communism around the world (Horne, 1986). Despite the public relations benefit to the U.S. government, there was no end to segregation in education and no enforcement provisions in the ruling (Ogletree, 2004). *De jure* segregation had been replaced by *de facto* segregation (Orfield, Losen, Wald, & Swanson, 2004).

Although the U.S. Supreme Court stated that desegregation was to proceed “with all deliberate speed” in *Brown II*, it was not until President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that higher education institutions began to integrate and eliminate discrimination against Blacks and other racial and ethnic groups. Title VI of the Act restricted the distribution of federal funds to segregated schools and prohibited the exclusion and discrimination of persons under any program or activity receiving federal assistance according to race, color or national origin. The Act also mandated that 26 federal programs that dispersed funds to design regulations to implement the statute (Brown, 1999; Harper et al., 2009). In 1965, Title III of the Higher Education Act provided subsidies to historically Black colleges and universities for faculty and curricular improvement, student services, exchange programs for faculty and students, and various administrative and improvement policies (Harper et al., 2009).

Twenty-five years after *Sweezy v. New Hampshire* (1957a), Justice Lewis Powell in *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* (1978b) alluded to giving academics deference when using race as one of many factors in student admissions decisions. Administrators enjoy unique judicial deference recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court when applying their educational judgment in situations involving college students (Stoner & Showalter, 2009). Justice Sandra Day O’Connor reiterated that college administrators
are presumed to act in good faith in matters of educational importance. For the first time in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003b), a majority of the court extended the same judicial deference to higher education administrators when using their educational judgment to consider race as one of many factors in admissions decisions (Stoner & Showalter, 2009).

In sum, the federal government gave higher education the authority to make decisions about educational practices and principles by leaving the business of educating to educators. Unfortunately, the issue of slavery and the subjugation of Blacks, one of the major reasons the Civil War was fought, was never resolved after the war. In fact, the same hegemonic beliefs were reified in federal laws and in judicial interpretations of federal civil rights statutes that rolled back any strides made towards the equal opportunity of newly freed Black citizens. During this period, academic deference was extended again to colleges and universities regarding the racial composition of persons included in higher education, what institution they will be allowed to attend and what they will be allowed to learn at the institutions designated for them. It was not until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that restricted government funds from entities that practiced discrimination according to race, color or national origin that the strides made for people of color and minorities finally became realized in federal law. Years later, *Bakke* (1978), *Grutter* (2003a), and *Gratz* (2003) extended the same judicial deference in allowed college administrators to use race as one of many factors when making admissions decisions.

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities**

With the exception of Cheyney University founded in 1937, Lincoln University founded in 1956 and Wilberforce University founded in 1854 (Harper et al., 2009;
Gasman, 2009b), historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were created in the decades after the Civil War to educate the newly freed population. The Freedman’s Bureau, Black churches, northern missionaries, governmental initiatives, and private philanthropists created HBCUs after the Civil War to educate the masses of emancipated African Americans (Palmer & Gasman, 2008; Williams & Ashley, 2004). The majority of private HBCUs were established by missionary organizations aimed at converting former slaves to Christianity (Gasman, 2009b). Northern churches and White missionary groups, like the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the Freedman’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the American Missionary Association provided funds and teachers to establish more than 200 private institutions for African Americans in the South (Brown, 1999; Harper et al., 2009; Painter, 2006). These institutions founded in haste with limited financial backing were largely elementary and secondary schools that included “college,” “normal” and “university” in their titles (Roebuck & Murty, 1993, p.25).

According to Williams and Ashley (2004), various denominations and Black leaders formed the majority of HBCUs during this period. In 1877, Black clergy leaders lead by H. P. Jacobs with the help of the American Baptist Home Baptist Missionary Society founded Natchez Seminary that became Jackson State University. In addition to Jackson State University, The American Baptist Home Mission Society also founded and supported Shaw University in 1865, Virginia Union in 1865, Morehouse College in 1867, Benedict College in 1870, Florida Memorial College in 1872, and Spelman College in 1881. The Catholic Church founded Xavier Academy in 1915 that is now Xavier University. The American Missionary Association founded the following institutions:
Atlanta University, Avery Institute now closed, Berea College no longer considered an HBCU, Dillard University in 1869, Fisk University in 1866, Hampton University in 1868, Howard University in 1867, Huston-Tillotson College in 1875, LeMoyne-Owen College in 1862, Talladega College in 1867, and Tougaloo College in 1869. The African Methodist Episcopal Church founded Wilberforce University in 1856, Morris Brown College in 1881, Allen University in 1870, Paul Quinn College in 1872, Shorter Junior College in 1886, Edward Waters College in 1866, and junior colleges Hood Theological Seminary and Livingstone College in 1882. The United Methodist Church, several Baptist denominations, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Christian Methodist Episcopal Church founded Interdenominational Theological Seminary with in 1958 with the Black Methodist Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church also founded Bennett College in 1873, Bethune-Cookman College in 1904, Philander Smith College in 1877, Clark Atlanta University that began as Clark University in 1869, Dillard University in 1869, Meharry Medical School in 1876, and Gammon Theological Seminary. The Presbyterian Church founded Lincoln University in 1854, Johnson C. Smith University in 1867, Barber-Scotia College founded in 1867 as Scotia Seminary, Stillman College in 1874, and Knoxville College in 1875 (Williams & Ashley, 2004). While the colleges listed above do not include every college each organization founded during this period, it should be noted that Fisk University, Morehouse College, Hampton University, Howard University, and Spelman College are among the 40 surviving private African American institutions founded between 1865 and 1890 (Drewry & Doermann, 2001).

“After the Civil War, state government was added to the list of financial patrons of [B]lack education” (Brown, 1999, p. 3). Alcorn University, now Alcorn State
University, became the first land grant institution established for African Americans and only HBCU founded with funds from the Morrill Act of 1862. Despite the challenges, the Morrill Act of 1890 provided an alternative to African Americans enrolling en masse at White institutions by providing “separate but equal” facilities for the two races (Brown, 1999; Harper et al., 2009). Seventeen African American state-supported institutions resulted from the second Morrill Act, which legalized the segregation in higher education according to race and emphasized a curriculum of mechanics, agriculture and industrial arts (Harper et al., 2009). The 18 historically Black land grant institutions include the following universities: Alabama A & M, Alcorn State University in Mississippi, Delaware State University, Florida A & M University, Fort Valley State University in Georgia, Kentucky State University, Langston University in Oklahoma, Lincoln University in Missouri, North Carolina A & T University, Prairie View A & M University in Texas, South Carolina State University, Southern University in Louisiana, Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University in Alabama, University of Arkansas–Pine Bluff, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Virginia State University, and West Virginia State University. The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (2007) adds the University of the District of Columbia and the University of the Virgin Islands to the list.

In June 1898, a group of influential citizens from both the North and South met at Capon Springs, Virginia to plan and develop a segregated system of education for Black and White students in the South. The group explored ways to finance higher education and made curricular decisions. Regarding higher education curriculum, the arts and science curriculum would be taught to White students and industrial training and
vocational education would be reserved for Black students. In the dual system of higher education in the South, public Black colleges had no control over the curriculum and administration (Wennersten, 1991). The majority of the public Black institutions were led by White presidents, governed by White institutional boards of trustees or regents and appropriated funds by White legislators (Brown, 1999). Black institutions were of poorer quality than White public institutions and were forced to operate with inadequately trained faculty and substandard instructional facilities (Harper et al., 2009). Reluctant to trust control of the institution to African Americans, White administrators and teachers governed these institutions, exercised strict control over curricular, governance and leadership and reflected European cultures and values until the 1930s and 1940s (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Gasman, 2007; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). When Whites were no longer unwilling to manage these poorly funded institutions, African American administrators were chosen to lead them (Harper et al., 2009).

HBCUs represent only 3% of all institutions of higher education in the United States. Most are small, lack resources, maintain low tuitions and enroll relatively high percentages of disadvantaged students (AAUP, 1995). Ninety percent of all African American degree holders in the late 1940s were educated at HBCUs (Davis, 1998) and HBIs graduated most of the African American middle class through the 1970s (Gasman, 2009b). Prior to desegregation, historically White institutions (HWIs) educated less than 1% of first-year African American students (Harper et al., 2009). In recent years, enrollment at HBCUs has leveled off as they must compete for students with HWIs that are better funded. Currently, HBCUs educate almost 40% of this country’s Black college graduates at the undergraduate or graduate level (AAUP, 1995). HBCUs enroll 16% of
African American students and graduate approximately 20% of the African Americans who attend college (Gasman, 2009b). Hoffman, Snyder, and Sonnenberg (1992) wrote the following: “Despite their ongoing financial woes, the success rate of historically [B]lack institutions in graduating African-American students with bachelor’s degrees is impressive” (p. 4). Since most HBCUs are four-year institutions, the “drop-out rates for Black students at HBCUs are much lower than rates for Black students at other four-year institutions” (Constantine, 1994, p. 14). Constantine (1994) concluded that HBCUs appear to do the most with limited public dollars when graduation rates and job performance of graduates are taken into consideration. Faculties at HBCUs are good at providing remedial preparation for students who start out with weak high school backgrounds (Palmer & Gasman, 2008). “HBCUs provide a supportive environment where social, cultural, and racial environments enhance students’ successful adaptation to the academic demands of undergraduate life” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 382).

Constantine (1994) reported that students who attend HBCUs are more confident and more involved in campus activities and interact more with faculty.

In sum, HBCUs were founded mostly by private groups or church denominations after the Civil War. State governments did not begin to establish and fund HBCUs until after the passage of the Morrill Act of 1890 that provided for separate institutions for Blacks to prevent them from enrolling in White institutions. Decisions regarding curriculum and funding in southern states and southern border states were made in Capon Springs, Virginia in 1898 in the absence of African Americans. This meeting resulted in dual systems of higher education that were the subject of discrimination lawsuits in higher education. Despite appearing to do more with limited funding, HBCUs graduate
more African American undergraduates and have lower dropout rates for African American students than other four-year institutions. This may be due to the supportive environment and the ability of HBCUs to remediate students in an environment is more conducive to the success of African American students.

**History of Higher Education in Mississippi**

The major periods of higher education in Mississippi encompass the colonial period, the brief period after the Civil War called the Reconstruction, the Jim Crow era, attempts to desegregate historically White institutions and efforts to resist the changing tide in higher education. Within the historical periods will be a discussion of institutions founded and supported by the State of Mississippi, studies of the state higher education system, changes in governance for the higher education system, societal changes and higher education reaction, and the hierarchy of institutions in Mississippi higher education.

**The colonial period.** The Mississippi Territory established its first institution of higher learning on May 13, 1802 when the legislature established Jefferson College located in Washington, six miles east of Natchez. A college for boys, Jefferson College’s failure was attributed to the fact that the college was neither a child of the state or the church. The state did not fund it sufficiently and the church argued that the college neglected the religious education of students. Several times the college suspended operations and the charter was rewritten to repurpose the institution. During the 1925 closure of Jefferson College, Hempstead Academy was established by private citizens in Clinton to educate boys in the state. The next year the curriculum of Hempstead Academy was elevated to collegiate status and Hempstead Academy became Mississippi
Academy. The legislature granted the academy a collegiate charter in 1827 (Sansing, 1990).

In 1829, the Mississippi Governor Gerard C. Brandon recommended that Mississippi Academy become the state university and recommended Jefferson College trustees return its charter to the state. In anticipation of this change, Mississippi Academy changed its name to Mississippi College. But instead of using seminary funds to upgrade Jefferson College or designate Mississippi College the state university, the legislature chose to establish a new state university. Seeing as neither institution would no longer received funds from the state, Mississippi College became briefly associated with the Clinton Presbytery before becoming affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention and Jefferson College continued as a military academy (Sansing, 1990).

**The University of Mississippi.** The University of Mississippi was founded in 1848 as the state university and opened its doors to 80 students (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Sansing, 1990; The University of Mississippi, 2015). On February 24, 1844, the law chartering The University of Mississippi selected Oxford as the location of the university and established a 13-member board of trustees appointed by the governor to govern, but not finance, the institution (Sansing, 1990). A preparatory program or a subfreshman class at the college was necessary since public schools in Mississippi were not established until 1870 (Sansing, 1990). After Mississippi seceded from the Union on January 9, 1861, the university board of trustees decided to close the institution instead of repurposing it as a military academy. In 1882, the state university became coeducational and in 1889, The University of Mississippi reorganized the curriculum, introduced the elective system and restructured the academic departments. By 1893, The University of Mississippi
discontinued its subfreshman class and began admitting students with 10 prescribed high school credits (Sansing, 1990).

For 23 years, The University of Mississippi was the only public institution of higher learning in the state and for 110 years, it was the state’s only comprehensive university. In 1854, the university established the fourth state-supported law school and was the first college in the nation to offer engineering education. In 1882, The University of Mississippi was the first university in the South to admit women and the first to hire a female faculty member in 1885. In addition, it has established the state’s first College of Liberal Arts; schools of Education, Engineering, Law and Nursing; accredited School of Business Administration; Graduate School; accredited bachelors’ and master’s accountancy programs; and the only schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Health Related Professions in Mississippi (The University of Mississippi, 2015).

**Reconstruction.** “From slavery through Jim Crow, African Americans were categorically excluded from collegiate participation save a few northern liberal arts institutions,” namely Berea and Oberlin (Brown, 1999, p. 2). Southern Blacks were uneducated due to laws that made it illegal to teach slaves how to read and write. In 1860, ninety percent of the adult Black population was illiterate. As a result, education became one of the first priorities of newly freed slaves (Painter, 2006). After the loss of the Civil War, the newly established Republican Party brought about the Reconstruction, a new order that included Black elected officials (Sansing, 1990). During Reconstruction, masses of poor Black and White men participated in the political process and made polices in the interests of poor people (Painter, 2006).
Alcorn State University. Alcorn University located near Lorman, Mississippi was founded 1871 as the first African American land grant institution in the United States and the second oldest state-supported institution of higher learning (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Sansing, 1990). In May 1871, the state legislature used Morrill land grant funds to purchase the old campus of Oakland College, a school established by Presbyterians for the education of White males in 1828, for $42,000 and established Alcorn University for the purpose of educating the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Posey, 1994). Alcorn University was allocated three-fifths of the land grant funds and The University of Mississippi was allocated two-fifths. The state legislature allocated $50,000 annually, awarded four-year scholarships of $100 annually from the common school fund to one student from each legislative district based on competitive examinations (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). Hiram Revels, the first Black Republican appointed to the U.S. Senate from Mississippi, resigned from his seat in Congress to become the institution’s first president. Revels suggested the college not be named after him, but after Mississippi’s first Republican governor James L. Alcorn. At its inception, Alcorn University began with eight faculty members and 179 students and offered a four-year college track English, Latin, mathematics, and industrial education, a two-year preparatory track, and a three-year graded track. Initially accepting only male students, women were unofficially admitted in 1884 and officially admitted in 1903 (Posey, 1994; Sansing, 1990; Williams & Ashley, 2004). The board of trustees for Alcorn University was initially composed of Black citizens. In 1876, the faculty and students were
monolithically Black and the board of trustees had both Black and White members (Williamson, 2008). In 1974, Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College became Alcorn State University when Governor William L. Waller signed House Bill 298 granting university status (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Posey, 1994).

**State Normal School.** During the Reconstruction era, two private Black institutions Shaw University and Tougaloo College started receiving state subsidies to support their teacher training or normal departments. Shaw University in Holly Springs was founded in 1866 by the Freeman’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North later became Rust University and is now Rust College. Tougaloo College in Jackson was founded in 1868 by the American Missionary Society and Freedman’s Bureau. In 1873, the normal department at Shaw University was separated from the institution to become State Normal School, a state-supported normal school for Blacks (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008).

**Jim Crow before 1900.** After Reconstruction, southern states operated according to the mandate of the elites and championed White supremacy as the means to keep the poor divided among racial lines (Painter, 2006). In 1878, the state legislature revoked Alcorn University’s original charter and reestablished it as Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College to align the school with the legislature’s goal of the college to train rather than educate African American students. The campus expanded from 225 acres of land to over 1,700 acres (Posey, 1994; Sansing, 1990). The Democratic legislature reduced Alcorn’s share of the land grant funds from three-fifths to one-half, abolished the
$100 stipends for scholarship students and drastically reduced annual appropriations over the next two decades (Sansing, 1990).

**Mississippi State University.** The 1878 statute also established Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College as a land grant institution after the Morrill Act of 1862 (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Sansing, 1990). The University of Mississippi School of Agriculture was transferred to Mississippi A & M College in Starkville now called Mississippi State University. The college received its first students in the fall of 1880. The location was chosen because Governor John M. Stone resided in that area of the state (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Sansing, 1990). Three pieces of legislation have defined the mission of the university. First, the Hatch Act of 1887 established the Agricultural Experiment Station. Second, the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 created the state-wide effort which led to extension offices in every county of the state. Third, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 ensured the training of teachers in vocational education. In 1926, the college was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1932, it was renamed Mississippi State College and in 1958 it was renamed Mississippi State University (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f).

**Mississippi University for Women.** While struggling to meet the needs of its four existing institutions of higher learning, the state legislature yielded to public pressure to establish the first state-supported multipurpose college for White females in the United States in 1884—the Industrial Institute and College, now called Mississippi University for Women, at Columbus (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Sansing, 1990). The college was founded for the dual purpose of providing a liberal arts education and preparing women
for employment. The college occupied the campus of Columbus Female Institute, a private college founded in 1847. On October 22, 1885, Industrial Institute and College opened its doors to approximately 250 students (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f). While there were no normal schools for White teachers, the mission statements of the Industrial Institute and College, The University of Mississippi and Mississippi A & M College were expanded to include teacher training (Sansing, 1990). In 1920, the name was changed to Mississippi State College for Women to reflect its collegiate emphasis and not vocational education. In 1974, its name was changed to Mississippi University for Women. In 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the university to admit a male student to the nursing program in *Mississippi University for Women v. Hogan*. After the ruling, IHL instructed the institution to change its policies to allow for the admission of qualified males to the university. In 1988, the Board of Trustees affirmed the university’s mission of quality academic programs while emphasizing distinctive opportunities for women (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f).

By the end of the 19th century, “Mississippi’s system of higher education included five state-supported institutions, several privately owned and short-lived normal schools, and several denominational colleges” (Sansing, 1990, p. 70). In the late 19th century, “each of Mississippi’s five public institutions of higher learning was autonomous and governed by a separate board of trustees. The governor appointed the members of all five boards; as *ex officio* chairman of each board, he was the only link between them” (Sansing, 1990, p. 76).
Jim Crow after 1900. By 1900, state Senator Frank Burkitt and Governor James K. Vardaman stated that the State of Mississippi was not getting a good return on its higher education investment due to wasteful duplication at the state colleges. The state spent eight times more on higher education than private schools and four times more per student than public schools (Sansing, 1990). Although Governor Vardaman could not influence the legislature to dismantle the Black school system, he did weaken it by vetoing the appropriation to the State Normal School in Holly Springs forcing it to close in 1904 and by forcing a reduction in the salary of Alcorn’s academic faculty and raising the salary of its vocational teachers (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). According to Vardaman: “There is no need multiplying words about it, the [N]egro will not be permitted to rise above the station he now fills” since education only “renders him unfit for the work which the [W]hite man prescribed” (Sansing, 1990, p. 79; Williamson, 2008, p. 25).

The University of Southern Mississippi. On March 30, 1910, the legislature established Mississippi Normal College in Hattiesburg, the first state-supported teachers’ training school (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Sansing, 1990; The University of Southern Mississippi, n.d.). Now known as The University of Southern Mississippi, the five-building campus opened in 1912 to 227 students and 17 faculty members on 128 acres of cutover timber land donated by H. A. Camp, A. A. Montague and Dr. T. E. Ross. In 1922, Mississippi Normal College was authorized to confer bachelor’s degrees and in 1924 its name was changed to State Teachers College. In 1929, State Teachers College was approved for membership and accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1940, the college’s name was changed to Mississippi Southern
College. In 1962, the name was changed to the University of Southern Mississippi. In 1993, the University of Southern Mississippi named its student services building Kennard-Washington Hall to honor two African American men. Clyde Kennard attempted to enroll at Mississippi Southern College during the 1950s and Walter Washington was the first African American to receive a doctoral degree from the university (The University of Southern Mississippi, n.d.). Walter Washington served as the president of Alcorn State University from 1969 to 1994 (Posey, 1994).

**A single Board of Trustees.** The legislature abolished the four existing boards at Alcorn A & M College, Mississippi A & M College, the Industrial Institute and College, and The University of Mississippi and established a single Board of Trustees to shield the trustees of various college boards from factional politics, to ensure greater coordination among the state schools, and to eliminate costly duplication. This had the injurious effect of terminating Black trusteeship at Alcorn (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). The board of primarily White businessmen would reorganize the four separate institutions into a coordinated state system and attempt to base its assessments on Mississippi’s immediate and long range educational needs. However, this central board did not govern Mississippi Normal College in Hattiesburg and Delta State Teachers College in Cleveland. In January 1912, the legislature completely reorganized the board and reinstated the governor as *ex officio* president (Sansing, 1990).

**Delta State University.** In 1924, the legislature established Delta State Teachers College in Cleveland to serve White students (*Ayers v. Allain*, 1987; Sansing, 1990). Known as Delta State University, the college opened on September 15, 1925 with 11 faculty and staff members and 97 students. Delta State Teachers College was built on the
site of the closed Bolivar County Agricultural High School on land that was donated by Bolivar County (Delta State University, 2015a; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f). In 1930, Delta State Teachers College was granted full membership in Southern Association of Universities and Colleges and received full accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1963 (Delta State University, 2015b). Its name was changed to Delta State College in 1955 to reflect its academic offerings, and in 1974 its name was changed to Delta State University. Delta State University offers 13 baccalaureate degrees in 40 majors, nine master’s degrees, an Educational Specialist degree, a Doctor of Education degree, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Eighty percent of the university’s population comes from a 20-county area in the northwestern region of the Mississippi Delta (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f).

**The O’Shea study.** Conducted under the supervision of Professor Michael V. O’Shea from the University of Wisconsin and published in 1927, the O’Shea study found that Mississippi’s higher education system had resisted modernization and was clinging to the “Genteel Tradition” that emerged more than 50 years before. If the institutions did not modify their programs to meet the needs of the state, the educated men and women who graduated from state institutions would move to other states. The O’Shea study recommended that the state establish a single state board of education with authority over public and higher education, appoint a commissioner of higher education, merge the three White institutions of higher learning into one University of Mississippi by maintaining three separate campuses, and assigning and limiting each campus to specific degree programs, limit the two teachers colleges to teacher education and retract their expanded
liberal arts curricula. The University of Mississippi was singled out for significant curriculum revision, more research activity directed toward solving Mississippi’s economic and social problems and toward its faculty because many faculty members received their degrees at the institution. The O’Shea study spent little time studying Alcorn A & M College and included few recommendations about higher education for Blacks (Sansing, 1990).

**Governor Bilbo’s recommendations and reorganization.** In 1927, Governor Theodore G. Bilbo recommended a new eight-member state board of education of eight members to replace the three existing college boards and the state board of education to include the governor, secretary of state, attorney general and superintendent of education. This board would appoint the state supervisor of public schools and the commissioner of higher education and coordinate the state’s entire education system from kindergarten to graduate school. The Brookings Institution study in 1931 endorsed most of Governor Bilbo’s recommendations with slight modifications (Sansing, 1990).

Governor Bilbo was most famous for his efforts to reform higher education by dismissing presidents, faculty and staff at state universities once he had control of the central board and the board of trustees at the normal schools. Bilbo replaced presidents at State Teachers College in Hattiesburg, Mississippi State College for Women in Columbus, Mississippi A & M College in Starkville, and The University of Mississippi in Oxford over a three-year period. Bilbo did not control Delta State’s Board of Trustees so he failed in his attempt to remove its president (Delta State University, 2015a, Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). Governor Bilbo was not interested in removing the president at Alcorn College. The Bilbo purge gained national attention and resulted in the removal of
10 faculty from Mississippi State College for Women, approximately 20 or 25 faculty at Mississippi A & M College, 18 faculty at The University of Mississippi, and 125 clerical, staff and support personnel. In December 1930, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools suspended The University of Mississippi, Mississippi A & M College, Mississippi State College for Women, and State Teachers College. Alcorn A & M College, unaccredited at the time, was spared the governor’s wrath because “[t]here are no Negro voters in Mississippi to be punished or rewarded” (Williamson, 2008, p. 25). Other professional organizations dismissed, expelled or placed universities on probation without conducting a thorough investigation. For reaccreditation, SACS required the reinstatement of administrators and faculty who were dismissed during the Bilbo purge of 1930 (Sansing, 1990).

**Statutory Board of Trustees.** In 1932, the state legislature passed a statute consolidating the three boards of trustees into one ten-member board with governance over all state institutions of higher learning, including the teachers colleges. Trustees who served 12-year terms with one-third of the members rotating off the board every four years could not succeed themselves. The governor remained *ex officio* president of the board, but the state superintendent of education was not a member. Instead of establishing a commissioner of education, the statute authorized the board to appoint an executive secretary to employ any clerical staff deemed necessary. The law did not consolidate the junior college system with the senior institutions as recommended by the Brookings Institutions and the subsequent Peabody study (Sansing, 1990).

Presidents were required to prepare detailed budgets estimating expenditures at their institutions to the executive secretary. The executive secretary would present a
combined budget for all institutions and submit it to the legislature 30 days before the opening session. The board also had to submit a biennial report of expenditure of public funds and detailing the condition of campus buildings, enrollment and faculty workloads. The statute mandated a mission for each institution of higher learning and required the board to make academic program adjustments at each institution to conform to their assigned role and scope function (Sansing, 1990).

*The Peabody study.* By 1932, Mississippi wrestled with financial exigencies and the problem of institutional autonomy and program coordination. The top priority of the Board of Trustees was to establish a role and scope function for each institution. The board abolished the engineering program at Ole Miss because it was a costly duplication of the program at Mississippi State College. The board asked the Division of Surveys and Field Studies at George Peabody College to study Mississippi higher education and formulate a role and scope function for each of the state’s six public institutions. The Peabody study declared that Mississippi was supporting more institutions of higher learning per capita than any other southern state and a larger percentage of White students attended college than any other southern state in the region. Colleges were forced to lower admissions standards to expand course offerings and popular degree programs to attract greater numbers of students. The Peabody study reiterated the major recommendations of O’Shea, Bilbo and the Brookings Institution, specifically the assignment of specific missions to each institution and the establishment of a commissioner of higher education. The Peabody study cautioned the Board of Trustees against expanding graduate education and repeated the Brookings Institution recommendation to consolidate the junior and senior colleges into a single state system of
higher education. Similar to the O’Shea study, the Peabody study did not include Alcorn College in its purview and made no recommendations regarding the higher education of Blacks in Mississippi. Instead of establishing a single administrative officer for higher education, the state created a President’s Council and directed the presidents to “stimulate thoughtful cooperation on the part of the colleges” (Sansing, 1990, p. 115). The Board of Trustees created role and scope functions for White institutions. Unfortunately, the lay trustees proved to be no match for college presidents, academics, rhetoricians, and mathematicians who convinced board trustees to keep old programs and add new ones thus sustaining the tradition of institutional autonomy. Both teachers colleges and Alcorn A & M College were allowed to add programs and expand existing ones. The legislature was dissatisfied that the board could not coordinate the state colleges into a unified system (Sansing, 1990).

In subsequent election years, college officials and board members did not learn their lesson and remained involved in state politics by endorsing candidates for governor. Mississippi governors who won their election would petition the legislature to raise the number of trustees on the state board in order to replace his political opponents. In 1936, the legislature raised the number of trustees from 10 to 13 allowing the governor to appoint seven new board members. In 1940, the legislature raised the number of trustees to 15 allowing the new governor to appoint nine board members. Keeping politics out of higher education appeared to be a lost cause. Soon after his election, Governor Paul B. Johnson, Sr. removed the president and faculty members from State Teachers College in Hattiesburg. SACS quickly placed the college on probation and threatened to withdraw accreditation from the state’s other institutions of higher learning (Sansing, 1990).
A constitutional Board of Trustees. To prevent the loss of accreditation, a small group of men proposed a constitutional amendment creating a politically independent Board of Trustees instead of the existing statutory board. Any change in the organization of a constitutional board would require an amendment to the state constitution, a much longer and involved process than a statutory revision. In 1942, a constitutional amendment was introduced creating a new Board of Trustees. Ratified during the general election in 1943, the law created a 13-member Board of Trustees, all appointed by the governor. It was not approved prior because the legislature did not want to give a governor the power to appoint an entire board. Twelve of the trustees would serve 12-year staggered terms with four members rotating off every four years. Trustees would be appointed from the seven congressional districts, the three Mississippi Supreme Court districts and two from the state at large. The thirteenth member, the LeBauve Trustee of DeSoto County, would serve a 4-year term and could only vote on matters pertaining to The University of Mississippi. The first constitutional Board of Trustees met for the first time on May 19, 1944 (Sansing, 1990).

Jackson State University. In 1869, the group of Black ministers led by Rev. H. P. Jacobs who organized the Baptist Mississippi Convention discussed the formation of a theological school to “train ministers to correct the twisted Christianity propagated by [W]hites that encouraged blacks to be subservient and docile” (Williamson, 2008, p. 27). Northern White Baptists through the American Baptist Home Missionary Society joined with Black ministers in Mississippi to erect Natchez Seminary in Natchez, Mississippi on October 23, 1877 (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Williams & Ashley, 2004; Williamson, 2008). The school that began
which began with only 20 students was constituted “for the moral, religious and intellectual improvement of Christian leaders of the colored people of Mississippi and neighboring states” (Jackson State University, 2007, para. 2; Williams & Ashley, 2004, p. 357). In November 1882, the school moved to Jackson, the capital and largest city in Mississippi on the site where Millsaps College now stands (Jackson State University, 2009; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Williams & Ashley, 2004). In the same year, the first Black joined the faculty (Williamson, 2008). In March 1889, the curriculum was expanded, the name was changed to Jackson College in recognition of the institution’s new central location and the Board of Trustees consisted of both White and Black members (Jackson State University, 2009; Williams & Ashley, 2004; Williamson, 2008). In 1902, Jackson College relocated from its site in north Jackson to a tract of land in the southwest section of the city across the street from Campbell College, a historically Black private college supported by the African Methodist Episcopal Church, due to animosity in the White community and threats on the president’s life (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Jackson State University, 2009). By 1927, Jackson College conferred bachelor’s degrees (Williamson, 2008) and operated as a private church school for 63 years (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f).

In 1934, the American Baptist Home Mission Society withdrew its support from the institution. It immediately became apparent that the school needed state support in order to survive (Jackson State University, 2009). In 1940, the State of Mississippi assumed the support of the college and assigned to it the mission of training teachers. On
May 6, 1940, the legislature authorized the transfer of Jackson College to the state, changed its name to Mississippi Negro Training School and downgraded the institution to the status of a junior college (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). Partially funded by an annual $30,000 grant Rosenwald Fund, the legislature appropriated $10,000 to the second-state supported college for Blacks to educate African American teachers (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Sansing, 1990). By 1944, the legislature reinstated the four-year program and changed the institution’s name to Jackson College for Negro Teachers (Williamson, 2008). Between 1953 and 1956, the curriculum was expanded to include bachelors programs in the arts and sciences and a graduate program. In 1956, the name was changed to Jackson State College. The college continued to expand the curriculum and programs in the years prior to the college receiving university status on March 15, 1974. In 1979, Jackson State University was designed the urban university for the State of Mississippi (Jackson State University, 2009; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Williams & Ashley, 2004).

The Gibson study. The postwar enrollment boom of the 1940s created immediate problems for state institutions and revived a debate over the function and nature of higher education in American society. Joseph E. Gibson completed the most comprehensive study of higher education in Mississippi since the O’Shea Study. The Gibson study of 1946 chastised the Board of Trustees for not implementing more of O’Shea’s recommendations. In no uncertain terms, Gibson informed the Board of Trustees to create a role and scope for each institution and make sure the institutions remained within the parameters of the design. Gibson warned that “the price of allocation of functions is
eternal vigilance by the coordinating authority” (Sansing, 1990, p. 131). The Gibson study concluded that the needs of Blacks in higher education were not being met and recommended a new vocational school for Blacks near the center of the state’s Black population. The study also questioned the wisdom of maintaining Alcorn in a remote location and suggested the board consider merging it with Jackson College. The Board of Trustees implemented very few of Gibson’s recommendations and moved forward with a recommendation Gibson did not endorse. In 1950, the legislature created The University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson with a full complement of medical degrees and health-related graduate programs. The Board of Trustees assigned role and scope functions to each institution and accepted assurances from college presidents and deans they would thoughtfully expand their programs with minimum duplication (Sansing, 1990).

**Mississippi Valley State University.** With half the state’s Black population located in the Mississippi Delta, the Board of Trustees recommended creating a new institution instead of relocating Alcorn A & M College to the delta. In an effort to delay desegregation, the legislature established Mississippi Vocational College in Itta Bena on the site of an abandoned cotton plantation in 1946 (Sansing, 1990). Located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, there were few elementary and secondary schools and even fewer qualified teachers in that region of the state. Mississippi Vocational College was established to provide vocational training and training teachers for rural and elementary schools (Ayers v. Allain, 1987; Delta State University, 2015b; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f; Mississippi Valley State University, 2011; Sansing, 1990; Williams & Ashley, 2004; Williamson, 2008). It opened
during the summer of 1950 with an enrollment of 305 in-service teachers. During the first full academic year, the college began with 14 regular students and seven faculty members (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013f). In 1964, the College was authorized to offer the liberal arts degree as well as education and science degrees and the name of the institution was changed to Mississippi Valley State College. In 1974, the name was changed to Mississippi Valley State University to reflect the additions of preprofessional, specialized and technical fields (Mississippi Valley State University, 2011; Williams & Ashley, 2004).

**Unsuccessful attempts at integration.** Shortly after World War II, Black veterans began to challenge Mississippi’s closed society. To Blacks, higher education was the avenue to upward mobility. Very few White Mississippians understood the hold this dreams had on Blacks and their determination to reach it. Mississippi state officials employed a strategy of deception, ignore and delay to prevent integration of state higher institutions of learning. In August 1950, the Board of Trustees gave presidents of Mississippi’s White colleges the authority to “accept or reject any applications according to the best interest of everyone” (Sansing, 1990, p. 141).

“Shortly after the Supreme Court issued the *Brown* decision, the Mississippi legislature passed a resolution directing all public officials and state agencies to ‘prohibit, by any lawful, peaceful, and constitutional means, the implementation or the compliance with the Integration Decisions of the United States Supreme Court’ ” (Sansing, 1990, p. 140). Racist Whites in Mississippi organized the White Citizens Council, the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, the Ku Klux Klan, Americans for the Preservation of the White Race, and the White Knights of Mississippi among other private citizens’ groups
to terrorize activists or any Black person with the audacity to challenge the Southern way of life. In view of the fact that of the zealous White countermovement opposed to the Black freedom struggle, “Mississippi earned the reputation of being in the belly of the beast” (Williamson, 2008, p. 35). Four Black men sought admission to HWIs during this period.

**Charles Dubra.** In 1953, Charles Dubra, a Black minister from Gulfport applied for admission to The University of Mississippi Law School. While Dean Robert Farley recommended Dubra’s admission, the board rejected his application on the grounds that his undergraduate institution Claflin College was unaccredited although Dubra’s graduate work at Boston University would have made him eligible. Dubra did not seek legal redress (Sansing, 1990).

**Medgar Evers.** The same year Medgar Evers, employed by the NAACP and a graduate of Alcorn A & M College, applied for admission to The University of Mississippi Law School. After conforming to the board’s changing admissions requirements and repeated denials, Evers accepted the position as NAACP’s first field secretary for Mississippi and no longer pursued admission to Ole Miss Law School (Sansing, 1990).

**Clennon King.** In 1958, Clennon King, a professor at Alcorn A & M College was the impetus of college boycott on the campus when he criticized the NAACP, endorsed segregation and demeaned women in his classes. King called the board office to tell them he wanted to pursue a doctorate in history at The University of Mississippi. King traveled to Ole Miss to make a personal application for admission. Upon his arrival, King was led to a room in the administration building and was left alone for some time. After a period
of time, King began shouting in danger for his life. While officials were escorting King off the campus, King told them he planned to return to campus. Governor James P. Coleman hatched a plan to have King taken to Jackson to be examined by two doctors and after a court hearing. As a result, King was sent to the state mental institution (Sansing, 1990).

**Clyde Kennard.** Clyde Kennard, an honorably discharged veteran who owned a small poultry farm near Hattiesburg, first inquired about admission to Mississippi Southern College in 1955. He applied for admission to Mississippi Southern College in January 1959 (Sansing, 1990). Mississippi Vocational College president James H. White went to Hattiesburg to influence Black leaders to persuade Kennard to withdraw his application. Afterwards, Kennard was invited to a meeting in Jackson with the president of Mississippi Southern College, Governor Coleman, and the board executive secretary in the governor’s office, Kennard agreed to withdraw his application until after the gubernatorial election (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). On September 15, Kennard submitted the same application and updated his medical exam. His application was rejected because he allegedly committed fraud by updating the medical exam. Shortly afterward, Kennard’s poultry farm was foreclosed upon, his stock was confiscated and the insurance on his private automobile was cancelled. Kennard’s bank refused to allow officials to seize his funds. After leaving a meeting on the Mississippi Southern campus, Kennard was allegedly arrested for driving an excessive rate of speed earlier that day. Police planted whiskey in Kennard’s car and charged Kennard with illegal possession of whiskey and reckless driving. The Mississippi Supreme Court dismissed those charges.
In 1960, Kennard was framed for burglarizing the Forrest County cooperative building and stealing $25 worth of chicken feed from the same cooperative that foreclosed on his farm. The person who testified against Kennard received a suspended sentence, but Kennard was given seven years in the state penitentiary. The sentence was upheld by the Mississippi Supreme Court and appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court were denied. Within a year of his incarceration, Kennard developed intestinal cancer.

Pressured by author John Howard Griffin, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dick Gregory, Governor Ross Barnett granted King early release. At the time of his release, Kennard weighed less than 100 pounds and was near death. He was taken to Chicago for emergency surgery but it was not successful. Kennard died on July 4, 1963. Although Kennard’s name was mentioned in the State Sovereignty Commission secret files, legal documents in state and federal courts and prison records, Kennard’s name never appeared in the minutes of the Board of Trustees for the State Institutions of Higher Learning (Sansing, 1990). In 1993, the University of Southern Mississippi named its student services building Kennard-Washington Hall to honor Kennard’s determination to pursue a higher education and Walter Washington, the first African American to receive a doctorate from The University of Southern Mississippi (The University of Southern Mississippi, n.d.).

**Hierarchy in Mississippi higher education.** Mississippi higher education officers had established a priority pyramid for the state universities. At the top of the pyramid was The University of Mississippi, Mississippi State College came second, Mississippi State College for Women was third, Delta State Teachers College and Mississippi Southern College were fourth, and finally Alcorn A & M College. To combat
this pecking order, Mississippi Southern College and Mississippi State College began to expand their curriculum. By 1948, Mississippi Southern College’s charter was amended to allow them to grant undergraduate degrees in areas other than teaching. The college quickly began to expand undergraduate departments and its graduate school. Likewise Mississippi State College added 417 new courses to the curriculum from 1945 to 1953 and expanded the graduate program. The agricultural college became a comprehensive university and gained university status in 1958. Both colleges outstripped the enrollment of The University of Mississippi, broadened their course offerings, upgraded their academic programs and established themselves as peers, and not rivals of the state university. During the same period, The University of Mississippi’s laissez faire approach to institutional governance allowed Mississippi A & M and Mississippi Southern to expand their curriculum and become peer institutions thus altering the priority pyramid for Mississippi higher education. Ole Miss Chancellor tried to convince the Board of Trustees that Mississippi could not support more than one comprehensive university, but his proposals had come too late. Mississippi State College had been granted university status and the legislature had expanded the mission of Mississippi Southern. Delta State Teachers College was renamed Delta State College in 1955. Between 1953 and 1956, the curriculum was expanded to include bachelors programs in the arts and sciences and a graduate program (Sansing, 1990).

While White institutions were allowed to expand in contravention of board policy, change at Mississippi’s Black colleges were carried out according to a carefully plan designated by the Board of Trustees where Black alumni had little influence of input on board decisions. Board members also realized that higher education facilities at Black
institutions were still unequal to those for Whites (Sansing, 1990). “No state spent less on
the education of its [B]lack residents than Mississippi, which spent $122.93 per [W]hite
cild and $32.55 per [B]lack child in 1950, a ratio of almost four to one” (Williamson,
2008, p. 35). Among HBCUs in Mississippi, there was also a pecking order. Although
Alcorn A & M College was the oldest public Black institution in the state, the Board of
Trustees focused on upgrading Jackson State College in the middle of the 20th century
with an enlarged library and more highly trained faculty to assuage the call for equal
opportunity in the Black community. Mississippi Vocational College resembled a
community college and received less support than Alcorn A & M College. Jackson State
College was the flagship Black institution in the state and Mississippi Vocational College
was the least important (Williamson, 2008). In 1951, the state issued new mission
statements for the three Black institutions of higher learning (Sansing, 1990; Williamson,
2008). Alcorn A & M College would offer teacher training in vocational agriculture and
home economics and emphasize mechanical arts, agriculture and allied sciences.
Mississippi Vocational College would stress vocational training while offer some teacher
education classes. After World War II, circumstances forced the board to restructure the
curriculum at Jackson State and establish new graduate programs and professional
programs. Jackson State College would become a liberal arts college and offer a broad
range of undergraduate degrees in arts and science and education as well as graduate
degrees in a few select fields (Sansing, 1990). In 1956, the name of Jackson College for
Negro Teachers was changed to Jackson State College. Jackson State continued to
expand its liberal arts curriculum and programs in the years prior to the college receiving
university status on March 15, 1974 (Jackson State University, 2009; Sansing, 1990;
Williams & Ashley, 2004). To postpone the day when Black students would seek the same opportunities as Whites, the board established an out-of-state scholarship program for Blacks to go out of state to obtain graduate and professional degrees not available at Mississippi’s Black institutions (Sansing, 1990, Williams, 2005).

**Desegregation and integration.** The following statement made by Sansing (1990) explained how every aspect of Mississippi daily life was segregated. In 1956, Mississippi and South Carolina were the only two state university systems that had not been desegregated (Sansing, 1990).

Before James Meredith enrolled at Ole Miss, no other public school in Mississippi—grammar school, high school, or college—had been integrated. Everything was segregated: public parks, playgrounds, libraries, beaches, theaters, doctors’ offices, lunch counters, cafes, water fountains, hospitals, hotels, motels and even cemeteries. (Sansing, 1990, p. 195)

James Meredith chose to integrate The University of Mississippi because “Ole Miss was a symbol; it was still a bastion” (Sansing, 1990, p. 157). If the racial barrier fell there, it would fall everywhere. Before submitting his admissions application, Meredith wrote the NAACP Legal Defense Fund to request legal aid and financial assistance in the event a costly court case ensued. After his initial rejection, Meredith wrote the Justice Department to inform the civil rights division of his intention to seek admission to The University of Mississippi. During Meredith’s first appearance before the Fifth Circuit, the court was favorable to Meredith’s argument but the court stated that Meredith had not conclusively proven his case. The judges sent the case back to the U.S. District Court and ordered a new trial on Meredith’s request for a permanent injunction allowing him to
enroll. The Fifth Circuit also overruled the district court judge on several points and admonished the judge for his conduct during the hearing. The appeals court judges noted that Mississippi “maintains a policy of segregation” and this is “a plain fact known to everyone” (Sansing, 1990, p. 163).

After a second district court trial, Meredith again appealed to the Fifth Circuit. After first denying Meredith’s plea for an injunction, the Fifth Circuit ordered the admission of James Howard Meredith to The University of Mississippi and stipulated that all institutions of higher learning under the governance of the Board of Trustees were covered by the ruling on June 25, 1962. The ruling enjoined university and state officials to expeditiously act on Meredith’s application and hold anyone in contempt if they thwarted, obstructed or otherwise prevented the implementation of the court order. Meredith hoped to be admitted without violence but this was not the case. On September 29, 1962, The University of Mississippi students gathered in front of the Lyceum building when students heard Meredith would be on campus within the hour. The building was cordoned off by marshals and federal officials. Hurling epithets escalated to brickbats, lead pipes and Molotov cocktails being thrown, tires on army trucks being slashed, and canvas truck roofs being set afire. When the students surged toward the marshals, the marshals gave the order to fire tear gas. Students dispersed and began to deface and defame the university. The riots continued throughout the night (Sansing, 1990). Two people were killed in the melee before the riot was quelled by 3,000 federal soldiers (Delta State University, 2015b). After Meredith’s admission, Blacks were peacefully admitted “to Mississippi’s other state institutions, including junior colleges,
high schools, grammar schools, lunch counters, public parks and polling places” (Sansing, 1990, p. 157).

After desegregation, competition and duplication engulfed the entire state system. Black colleges sought to expand their own degree programs and upgrade their facilities and physical plants as increasing numbers of Black students were attracted to HWIs that offered popular degree programs not available at Black colleges. Program duplication and the exorbitant cost of higher education made coordination among state institutions imperative (Sansing, 1990).

_Fighting against change._ Change was occurring in Mississippi. The 1963 gubernatorial election was the last election where Blacks and other minorities were not allowed to vote and White politicians could openly refer to Blacks as Niggers. While change was occurring, the state Board of Trustees fought against it tooth and nail. A few members of the board with extremely conservative ideology not only resisted change, but manipulated the board to promote their own ideology (Sansing, 1990).

In February 1962, Mississippi State University men’s basketball team won the Southeastern Conference (SEC) championship. An “unwritten law,” first invoked in 1959 to prevent the Ole Miss baseball team from advancing to the NCAA tournament after it won the SEC title, prohibited Mississippi’s White institutions from playing integrated teams. In 1963, the Mississippi State president and coach announced that the basketball team would play in the post-season tournament. A judge issued an injunction prohibiting the Mississippi State basketball team from leaving the state. The coach and president left the state before the injunction could be served and the team left Starkville without incident.
The board adopted a policy in 1955 that required college presidents to personally approve all outside speakers on their campus (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). After Aaron Henry spoke at Ole Miss Law School and Mississippi State, the board adopted a policy requiring the names of all speakers to be furnished to each trustee before an invitation was extended. On several occasions, the board went to court to get an injunction to prevent speakers from lecturing on Mississippi campuses and students on the affected campuses went to court to prevent the injunction from taking place. The policy was replaced by a court drafted policy that gave the president and a campus review committee final authority to approve or disapprove outside speakers. The Board of Trustees also interfered with academic freedom and personnel decisions during the 1960s and 1970s by preventing the appointment of professors they believed were a threat the Mississippi’s way of life (Sansing, 1990).

_Civil unrest at state universities._ The first large scale protest at a Mississippi college or university was the 1957 boycott at Mississippi Vocational College. Forty percent of the student body staged a 36-hour walkout to demand the campus administration work with student government association (Williamson, 2008). One month later, students at Alcorn A & M College protested professor Clennon King’s treatment of women in his classes, his revisionist views on American slavery, his disdain for the civil rights movement and his admiration for Uncle Tom in _Uncle Tom’s Cabin_. Students refused to return to class until King was removed. Trustees refused to negotiate until students returned to class. Students continued to protest at Alcorn in 1959 and 1960 for improved conditions, an autonomous student government, student representation on the discipline committee and expanded social privileges. Smaller protests continued on
the campus over the years until a full-fledged protest with boycotts, sit-ins, demonstrations and litigation engulfed the campus in 1964 (Williamson, 2008). In 1961, students at Jackson State College mobilized in support of Tougaloo College students who were arrested after a library sit-in (Williamson, 2008). As an aside, the State of Mississippi seized Campbell College by right of eminent domain mainly because of the role it played in the Jackson civil rights movement. Members of the legislature wrestled control from the college’s board of trustees as the campus and deteriorated and had gone into debt (Williamson, 2008).

The board policies created disturbances and civil unrest at The University of Mississippi during a literary festival when students from Tougaloo College were invited to campus in 1965. Ole Miss students jeered, taunted Tougaloo College students and overturned and damaged a car. In 1966, the board’s replacement of the president of Alcorn College became the focus of student complaints and a boycott as well. Mississippi Southern College and Delta State University students protested in opposition to the Vietnam War without violence. In 1970, Black students marched to the chancellor’s residence at The University of Mississippi and chanted their demands. The next night, they were arrested during a protest an “Up with the People” concert. The same year, Mississippi Valley State College students demanded changes as well as the removal of President James H. White (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). Tragically, three students at Jackson State lost their lives when incidents of rock throwing escalated. Benjamin Brown died as the result of a melee between Jackson State students and passing motorists in 1967 and James Early Green and Phillip L. Gibbs died when White policemen and highway patrolman were called to control a riot near the campus in 1970 (Delta State
University, 2015b; Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). The President’s Commission on Campus Unrest concluded that “[t]he stark fact underlying all other causes of student unrest [at Jackson State College] is the historic pattern of racism that substantially affects daily life in Mississippi” (Sansing, 1990, 210). Oliver Emmerich, a former member of the Board of Trustees and editor of the McComb Enterprise identified four circumstances that triggered the violence at Jackson State.

The board’s long-standing policy of banning speakers form Mississippi’s institutions of higher learning, the racial dimensions of almost every official public policy, the continued refusal of the state’s political leadership to appoint [B]lacks to governmental agencies that affected their daily lives, and the fact that [W]hite policemen feared no recrimination for killing [B]lacks. (Sansing, 1990, p. 211)

Adams v. Richardson. In March 1969, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) notified the Board of Trustees that Mississippi had to comply with the 1964 Civil Rights Act or risk losing federal funds. Ten states operated racially segregated systems of higher education and were ordered by the Office of HEW to submit a desegregation plan within 120 days detailing how they would eliminate the dual systems to create a unitary system of higher education. Five states—Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Oklahoma—refused to submit a plan and five states—Arkansas, Georgia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia—submitted plans that were deemed unacceptable (Brown, 1999). The OCR did not follow up on its initial review (Sansing, 1990). Litigation ensued when the Department failed to initiate enforcement proceedings against the states (Brown, 1999).
Kenneth Adams, a Mississippi high school student, filed a class action lawsuit against the Secretary of the Department of HEW Eliot Richardson in 1970 for failing to make the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Florida, Arkansas, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Maryland, and Virginia comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and not dismantling their dual systems of public higher education (Brown, 1999, 2004; Jaschik, 2006). Revised Criteria Specifying Ingredients of Acceptable Plans to Desegregate State School Systems of Public Higher Education (1978) listed the four major criteria for collegiate desegregation:

1. the disestablishment of structures that perpetuate dual systems of higher education;
2. desegregation of state-wide student enrollment in order to maximize access and completion of black students; (3) desegregation of faculty, staff, and administration, including governing boards; and (4) a continued commitment to the monitoring and evaluation of the desegregation process. (Brown, 1999, p. 26)

On February 16, 1973, the U.S. District Court in Washington ordered HEW to initiate enforcement proceedings. HEW advised Mississippi on March 27, 1973 that it was not compliance and directed the board to file an acceptable compliance plan within 120 days. On February 2, 1976, the federal authorities approved the board’s compliance plan which separated junior colleges from senior institutions (Sansing, 1990). In 1990, a ruling in Women’s Equity Action League v. Cavazos (1990) dismissed the case because private citizens are prevented from suing the federal government. As a result, neither Title VI nor Adams led to the desegregation of public colleges and universities in southern states and bordering states. Compliance was left to individual states as the result
of the case’s dismissal (Brown, 1999, 2001, 2004). The states’ agreements to abide by their desegregation plans remained in effect and negotiations continued after the dismissal of the case (Jaschik, 2006).

The Board of Trustees had been part of that power elite since the end of Reconstruction. It had traditionally conducted the affairs of higher education in secret, closed-door sessions far removed from the actions and by its constitutional independence, the Board of Trustees had for many years mistaken arrogance for authority (Sansing, 1990, p. 219).

In 1972, “the legislature passed an open meetings law, which required the Board of Trustees and all other state agencies to conduct their meetings in public sessions” (Sansing, 1990, p. 222).

**Governor Waller’s higher education study.** During the retrenchment era of the 1970s, the legislature became increasing critical of wasteful duplication. In 1972, Governor William Waller appointed a blue-ribbon committee to study higher education. The committee focused on the feasibility of consolidating or closing some of the state’s institutions and coordinating degree programs. The committee alleged the state institutions did not train their graduates for jobs in Mississippi. Instead of reevaluating policies and priorities, the Board of Trustees circled the wagons and refused to cooperate with the governor and his committee (Sansing, 1990). In 1974, Governor Waller vetoed a special catch up appropriation for universities libraries. Eight months later, the state building commission imposed a moratorium on construction preplanning at state universities. This was the first indication that the postwar college boom had subsided. In the same year, the state legislature yielded to local interests and upgraded the regional
colleges to universities and ignored its own mandate by establishing two new professional schools in the early 1970s. In 1975, the board reported having success in reducing duplication by discontinuing one hundred unaccredited and unproductive programs (Sansing, 1990).

Favoritism continued to play a role in the operation of the Board of Trustees. In 1975, the Board of Trustees was again accused of favoritism when it denied a request by Jackson State to begin a doctoral program in education. The board denied the request because there were similar programs at Mississippi State University, the University of Southern Mississippi, and the University of Mississippi and one more program was not needed. The Jackson newspaper The Clarion-Ledger was not impressed and accused the board of serving as cheerleaders for their favored institutions. State senator Jim Nobil of Jackson claimed the board denied the request because the program would draw students away from the other three institutions. In 1978, Jackson State University requested $100,000 to build a memorial garden to its past presidents. Although the legislature had already appropriated the funds and the state building commission authorized the expenditure, the Board of Trustees insisted on canceling or scaling down the project claiming it was not a justifiable use of resources during a time of retrenchment. Similar requests from Ole Miss or Mississippi State did not trigger such scrutiny. In 1980, the board authorized the renovation of a dean’s office at The University of Mississippi for $26,000, spent $250,000 to build a residence for the director of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and authorized The University of Mississippi to lease a $1 million residence for its president’s home (Sansing, 1990).
The Foster study. The Foster study of 1985 found that closing Mississippi University for Women and Mississippi Valley State University would not be economical because their students would transfer to other state universities which would have to be expanded. The state would have to maintain the unused buildings on both campuses and pay off the bonded indebtedness on those buildings. The Foster study was not enthusiastic about consolidating higher education institutions. The call for closure or consolidation was a call for the board to take whatever action necessary to keep the cost of higher education within the financial means of the state (Sansing, 1990).

A commissioner of higher education. In August 1986, the retirement of executive secretary prompted the board to appoint a special committee to redefine the role. The committee recommended the office be superseded by a commissioner of higher education with broader authority and responsibility who would carry out board policies. The board accepted the recommendation and established the new office. In November 1987, William Ray Cleere became the first commissioner of higher education (Sansing, 1990).

Academy for Educational Development study. In 1989, another study by the Academy for Educational Development published an 11-volume report highly critical of program duplication at Mississippi’s eight institutions. The philosophy of the Board of Trustees had been to delegate all planning and manage responsibilities to the institutions. The board must lead and manage, define the mission of each institution, and focus the eight institutions’ attention on providing programs needed to respond to their unique mission. Institutional autonomy would have to be surrendered if higher education is to function as a coordinated system. The Board of Trustees would have to function as a
governing board instead of administrative board that removed itself from operational decisions (Sansing, 1990).

**Governance.** The Mississippi legislature changed the way individuals are appointed to the Board of Trustees to the State Institutions of Higher Education. After January 1, 2004, individuals will be appointed as vacancies occur from the three Mississippi Supreme Court districts until there are four members from each district. The terms of the board members are staggered and have been reduced. Members appointed after 2012 will serve a term of nine years, reduced from 12 years.

The Board of Trustees oversees degree-credit courses, research and public service activities and programs at the eight public universities, including The University of Mississippi Medical Center, The Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine, ten off-campus centers and various other locations throughout the state. (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013b, para. 3)

The Board Office is responsible for policy and financial oversight of the eight public institutions of higher learning. The Commissioner of Higher Education is responsible for assisting the Board by enforcing its policies and bylaws. Divisions within the Commissioner’s Office include academic and student affairs, construction and physical affairs, finance and administration, and research and planning (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013b).

**The Ayers settlement.** “It would be ironic, to say the least, if the institutions that sustained [B]lacks during segregation were themselves destroyed in an effort to combat its vestiges” (*U.S. v. Fordice*, 1992b, Thomas, C., concurring opinion). Two years after
the *Fordice* decision in 1992, the parties attempted to settle the case. Unable to agree, the
district court trial began in May 1994. In 1995, Alvin Chambliss, the attorney most
closely identified with the *Ayers* case for 25 years, was suspended then dismissed by the
North Mississippi Rural Legal Services for refusing to influence the widow of original
plaintiff Jake Ayers and other dissatisfied litigants to accept a highly questionable deal
with the state that would absolve Mississippi of its past racist practices in education.
After Chambliss was forced out, federal judge Neal Biggers allowed an early plaintiff
U.S. Congressman Bennie Thompson to enter the case and lead plaintiff in the place of
the deceased Jake Ayers and replaced Chambliss as lead attorney with Jackson attorney
Isaac Byrd (McBride, 2003b). After 103 witnesses testified over a ten-week period in
*Ayers v. Fordice* (1995), the U.S. District Court 83-page ruling considered a wide range
of issues. Among them are admissions standards, college missions, duplication of
academic programs, racial designation of campuses, campus climate, and the perpetration
of segregation through state and institutional policies and practices (Kaplin & Lee, 2000).

The U.S. District Court rejected the State of Mississippi and the Board of
Trustees’ proposal to merge Mississippi Valley State University with Delta State and
Mississippi University for Women with Mississippi State University and ordered the state
to consider other alternatives to reduce the racial identity of the campuses. The court
found that the use of ACT scores as a sole criterion for admissions was discriminatory,
but the use of ACT scores for awarding scholarships was not discriminatory. The lawyers
for the African American plaintiffs argued that some colleges should have open
admissions policies until greater racial balance was achieved. This proposal was rejected
and the plaintiff’s proposal for uniform admission standards for all Mississippi colleges
and universities was accepted. The court ruled that the limited missions of historically Black institutions were vestiges of segregation and ordered a study of program duplication. As a result, funding should not be completely tied to institution missions, since the mission assignments were made during the period of segregation (Ayers v. Fordice, 1995; Kaplin & Lee, 2000).

A memorandum opinion and remedial decree established a Monitoring Committee to monitor the implementation of the terms and obligations imposed by the state. Jackson State University (JSU) received select programs in allied health, a Ph.D. in social work, master’s and Ph.D. programs in urban planning, a doctorate in business administration, articulation agreements with surrounding community colleges, $15 million to upgrade Jackson State University, $5 million endowment to recruit White students, and complete control of Universities Center at Jackson State University. Alcorn State University (ASU) received funds for a Small Farm Development Center, annual research and extension funds to match dollar for dollar up to $4 million, $5 million endowment to recruit White students, a Master’s in business administration at ASU-Natchez campus and special funding for capital improvements. The Monitoring Committee was to decide whether desegregation in the Mississippi Delta would include merging Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) and Delta State University (DSU). The committee was to examine all graduate catalogs for all IHL institutions and admissions standards and articulation procedures for community colleges (Ayers v. Fordice, 1995).

Again, the case was appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. First, the Fifth Circuit affirmed academic programs at Alcorn State University and
Jackson State University and land grant functions at Alcorn State University and Mississippi State University, but remanded that District Court clarify board’s proposal to merge Mississippi Valley State University and Delta State University. If merger was no longer an option, this should be incorporated into remedial decree a provision to direct the board to study and report to the monitoring committee of the new academic programs that will succeed in desegregating higher education. Similarly, the Fifth Circuit remanded a similar provision to the District Court regarding the new land grant and academic programs at Alcorn State University and the accreditation of existing business programs at Jackson State University and ordered relief (Ayers v. Fordice, 1997). Second, the Fifth Circuit affirmed findings and conclusions on issues of program duplication. The Court ordered that the merger of Mississippi Valley State University and Delta State University no longer be pursued and incorporate into remedial decree to study and report unnecessary duplication between Mississippi Valley State University and Delta State University to the Monitoring Committee. The Fifth Circuit affirmed funding but remanded the issue of equipment funding to the U.S. District Court for fact finding on cause of segregative effects and relief (Ayers v. Fordice, 1997). Third, the Court reversed the use of ACT cut off scores as criterion to award scholarships at HWIs and remanded to U.S. District Court to determine if the practicality and educational soundness of undergraduate scholarship policies at HWIs and implementation of appropriate remedial relief if necessary. The Court also affirmed defendant’s employment practices and policies (Ayers v. Fordice, 1997). U.S. Supreme Court writ of certiorari to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit was denied on January 20, 1998 and on February 22, 2000 (Ayers v. Fordice, 1998, 2000a).
In 2000, IHL submitted proposed allocation funding for Ayers programs at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University for court approval prior to the expenditure of such funds (Ayers v. Fordice, 2000b). In 2001, a settlement was reached between the State of Mississippi, the lead plaintiff Congressman Bennie Thompson and his counsel Isaac Byrd and the U.S. government. The original plaintiffs and their now private attorney Alvin O. Chambliss, Jr. were excluded from the settlement talks. The Court issued notice of a proposed settlement of the class action was given to advise Mississippi residents of the status of the action on May 8, 2001 and the parties in the class moved to approve the settlement agreement negotiated and submitted by the parties (Ayers v. Musgrove, 2001a). Private plaintiffs and the original attorney Chambliss filed a motion in U.S. District Court for plaintiffs to opt out of the private plaintiff class in opposition to the settlement agreement procedure. The motion was denied (Ayers v. Musgrove, 2001b). In 2002, the U.S. District Court reversed its ruling on the proposed settlement because it required the Mississippi Legislature to endorse and appropriate money to fund the proposal (Ayers v. Musgrove, 2002a). A third U.S. Supreme Court writ of certiorari from the Fifth Circuit was denied (Ayers v. Musgrove, 2002b).

According to Bennie Thompson, there was a possibility that HBCUs would not have received a financial settlement as the result. Thompson also asserted that when the settlement was open for public response, none of the current plaintiffs raised any questions during this period when their opinions would have counted most (McBride, 2003c). “Judge Biggers said that if we had not worked out a political settlement as we
did, that it would not have cost the state of Mississippi one penny” (McBride, 2003c, para. 13).

I’ve done the best deal I could. If the appellants can get more than $503 million, then I would be happy. But at the time we called for support of the settlement, Judge Biggers had warned us that he was ready to close out the case without attaching any money as a part of the agreement. (McBride, 2003c, para. 11)

After the settlement was reached, Chambliss and the U.S. Department of Justice appealed the case on behalf of the private plaintiffs to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Chambliss with a team of highly motivated lawyers argued to rework the $503 million settlement rejected by the original plaintiffs but accepted by revisionist group of plaintiffs headed by U.S. Congressman Bennie Thompson. Both lawyers Chambliss and Byrd were present in New Orleans for the appeal. Chambliss petitioned the court to offer relief based on the original plan of offering Black students equal educational opportunity stated under Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 and put in place the spirit of the Brown v. Board of Education decisions of 1954 and 1955 to provide equal access to all levels of professional preparation to Black students. Chambliss and his team based their arguments based on the guarantees of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments and Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964. Chambliss was determined to go “all the way” as long as Mrs. Ayers and the plaintiffs said they wanted relief (McBride, 2003a, para. 15). In February 2004, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit upheld uniform admissions standards proposed by the state, reversed financial aid policies of historically White institutions because they perpetuated prior discrimination based on race and demanded the state to amend the remedial decree
requiring proposals for increasing the enrollment of White students at several historically Black colleges. The U.S. Court of Appeals affirmed the uniform admissions policy and the requirement for HBCUs to achieve and maintain 10% other-race student enrollment before receiving the endowment. The appellate court rejected Chambliss’ arguments to consider altering of institutional mission designations, the accreditation of academic programs at HBCUs, the reallocation of land grant responsibilities between Alcorn State and Mississippi State, and general funds for facilities at HBCUs. In addition, the Court ruled that no relief was warranted to remedy disputes in salaries, hiring, or promotion of faculty or to modify the composition of the IHL Board of Trustees (Ayers v. Thompson, 2004a). For a fourth time, U.S. Supreme Court writ of certiorari to the U.S. Court for the Fifth Circuit was denied thus ending the case that lasted 29 years (Ayers v. Thompson, 2004b).

At the conclusion of the Ayers desegregation case, the State of Mississippi pledged to pay a total of $468.235 million in public funds to be dispersed over a 17-year period. The funds were divided in this way: $6.25 million for student financial assistance, $245.88 million in academic programs, $55 million for public endowment, $35 million for private endowment, and $75 million for capital improvements at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University and $2.25 in attorneys’ fees. However, the endowment funds would be withheld from HBCUs until each institution attained other-race student enrollment of 10% for three consecutive years. The total amount of the settlement is $503.236 million (Ayers v. Musgrove, 2001b; Jaschik, 2009, 2012, Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review, 2009). The next section will discuss the four policy issues—
admissions policy, program duplication, institutional mission and number of institutions—the State of Mississippi had to address when the U.S. Supreme Court vacated the ruling of the Fifth Circuit in 1992 and remanded the case back to the U.S. District Court in north Mississippi.

Admissions policy. This original admissions policy enacted in 1963 required applicants at the three comprehensive, flagship historically White universities to have a minimum American College Test (ACT) score of 15, with the exception of Mississippi University of Women which required applicants to have an ACT score of 18 to automatically qualify for admission. Historically Black colleges required a minimum ACT score of 13 to automatically qualify for admissions. The previous admissions policy did not take into account an applicant’s high school grades or course of study as a predictor of college performance. While Mississippi University of Women had the same institutional mission as the regional universities of Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University, it required a higher ACT score than both HBIs. The U.S. Supreme Court found that previous admissions standards had a continuing discriminatory effect and were remnants of the dual system (*U.S. v. Fordice*, 1992a).

The current statewide policy of the Mississippi higher education governing board was approved by the U.S. District Court and upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (*Ayers v. Fordice*, 1997). The statewide admissions policy for undergraduates in the State of Mississippi was enforced in 1995. The State Institutions of Higher Learning adopted a sliding scale that allowed all public four-year institutions to consider high school grade point average in the College Preparatory Curriculum, a combination of ACT scores and high school grade point average, or NCAA requirements
for student athletes (Ayers v. Fordice, 1997; Jaschik, 1995; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2010c). Most recently, the number of Carnegie units earned during high school for admission to public universities have increased from 15 ½ to 19 ½ (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2010c). Minor’s (2008) examination of enrollment data of Mississippi between 1984 and 2004 revealed that African American enrollment at HWIs increased from 13% to 22% while White enrollment at public HBCUs increased from 1.7% to 2.9%.

**Program duplication.** Unnecessary program duplication refers “to those instances where two or more institutions offer the same essential or noncore program” (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a, p. 20). Program duplication is based on two ideas. First, having two similar programs at White and Black universities would encourage White students to enroll at one set of institutions and Black students to enroll at another. Program duplication is a continuation of the “separate but equal” policy which is neither associated with an institution’s racial identity or sound educational practice. Second, the practice of “separate but equal” is rarely equal and always favors White institutions. Placing a growing prestigious program at a Black university will allow the institution to admit and enroll students of all races and benefit from the state funds that follow (Jaschik, 2007). The U.S. District Court found that 34.6% of the 39 undergraduate programs and 90% of the graduate programs at historically Black institutions are “unnecessarily duplicated” by historically White universities in Mississippi (Jaschick, 2009; U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). The comprehensive universities unnecessarily duplicated 30% of the programs offered by Jackson State University. Likewise, Delta State
University unnecessarily duplicated 38% of the programs offered by Mississippi Valley State University. The quality of an institution affects the administration of academic programs and the attractiveness of programs to the students. In a Lumina Foundation Report studying the distribution of advanced degree programs in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina, Minor (2008) found that only North Carolina seemed to make a concerted effort to increase the capacity of its HBCUs in terms of program offerings. The other state governments examined put HBCUs at a disadvantage by continuing to approve new degree programs at predominantly White institutions (Minor, 2008; Schmidt, 2008).

In sum, HBIs received less state funding, had meager, inadequate and unattractive facilities, and had fewer programs often duplicated at HWIs. Now with uniform admissions standards for all public four-year institutions, the historical inequity of higher funding continues to make HWIs appear more attractive than HBIs. Eliminating duplicative programs would have an effect on student choice and allow African American and White students to enroll at the same institutions (Jaschik, 2009; U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a).

**Institutional mission.** Institutional mission classification refers to how the Board of Trustees assigned certain missions to public universities (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008). In 1975, the Board of Trustees began formulating a long term range and scope plan for each state university. In the meantime, the Board of Trustees transferred the associate degree program in nursing at the University of Southern Mississippi in Natchez to Alcorn State University on February 17, 1977 and authorized Alcorn State to upgrade the program to a baccalaureate degree when funds and faculty could be secured. The
“role and scope” gave way to the term “mission statement” which was finally completed and adopted by the board on November 19, 1981. The University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University and The University of Southern Mississippi were designated comprehensive universities and would continue to offer doctoral programs and were assigned leadership roles in specific disciplines. Jackson State University was classified an urban university. Its mission was to enhance the overall quality of the institution and to become engaged in research directly related to the urban area of Jackson. Alcorn State University, Delta State University, Mississippi Valley State University, and Mississippi University for Women were deemed regional universities. These institutions would offer existing baccalaureate programs and some graduate programs until the impending program reviews were finalized (Sansing, 1990). In 1983, Centers of Academic Excellence were assigned to each comprehensive university (Sansing, 1990). In 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court found that designations for institutional mission, state funding and curriculum decisions followed the historical racial composition of the institutions. During the time of de jure segregation, the three White flagship institutions received the most funds, developed the widest range of curricular functions, and initiated the most specialized and advanced programs solely for the education of White persons. The Court ordered the state to eliminate discriminatory effects of the policy of institutional mission designation on remand back to the U.S. District Court in North Mississippi (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a). In 2001, institutional missions for each university were reexamined. Jackson State University was changed from an urban university to a comprehensive university. All other institutions retained the same institutions mission (Jaschik, 1995). The institutional mission designations for universities in the State of Mississippi have
remained virtually unchanged from 1981 when institutional missions were reassigned by IHL to 2001 (Ayers v. Musgrove, 2001b).

According to McBride (2003b), IHL conferred the status of comprehensive university to Jackson State in name only, without the intention of making it a research institution on the same level as traditional White institutions in the state. Former state senator Henry Kirksey asked IHL to provide him with a detailed proposal to make Jackson State University a comprehensive university. What he received was information about everything except IHL’s definition of “comprehensive university.” Plaintiffs’ attorney Alvin Chambliss, Jr. requested that Jackson State University be equal to other comprehensive institutions, namely The University of Mississippi and Mississippi State University. Chambliss made the following statement in 2003.

Jackson State has not been brought up to the same level of comprehensive education as Ole Miss and Mississippi State. That’s what we asked for. But it has been denied by Ayers plaintiffs. At best, JSU can be classified as a master’s comprehensive/Doctoral II institution. It does offer a few doctorate degrees. But you can’t list JSU as a comprehensive university because to be a comprehensive school at the doctoral level, you have to be classified as a Research I or a Research II institution. Jackson State isn’t even close to being a Research II school. We argued for the comprehensive university status for Jackson State, but they’ve changed the definition on us. So what we are asking the courts for is the same classification for JSU that MSU has. (McBride, 2003b, para. 16)

Number of institutions. The U.S. Supreme Court found that continuing and maintaining eight public higher education institutions instead of a smaller number of
institutions was irrational and wasteful, particularly when Delta State University and Mississippi Valley State University are 35 miles apart and Mississippi State University and Mississippi University for Women are only 20 miles apart. While the court suggested that the closure of some institutions would decrease discriminatory effects, the elimination of program duplication and revision of admissions criteria may make institutional closure unnecessary. The U.S. Supreme Court remanded that the state explore the issue of retaining all eight institutions, how it affects student choice and perpetuates segregation and whether closing or merging institutions is a viable option (U.S. v. Fordice, 1992a).

Since Mississippi has eight institutions of higher learning, funding and funding formulas becomes a major issue. Mississippi maintains eight public four-year institutions of higher education. Reducing the number of institutions through closure or merger will make more funds available to the remaining institutions. The question then becomes which institutions are to be relocated, closed or merged.

**Relocation, merger, and closure.** The topic of relocating, merging, and closing higher education institutions is not a new discussion in the history of Mississippi higher education. Talks of relocating The University of Mississippi from Oxford to Jackson first surfaced around 1900, again after the creation of the consolidated board in 1910 and again in 1920. In 1912, the legislature also considered the feasibility of consolidating The University of Mississippi and Mississippi A & M College. By 1920, another proposal surfaced to consolidate The University of Mississippi, Mississippi A & M, College, and the Industrial Institute and College into one institution a named The University of Mississippi. The University of Mississippi would be relocated in Jackson
and the Columbus campus would remain and become a junior college for women. By 1927, Governor Bilbo recommended moving Ole Miss to Jackson in 1927 because drastic measures were necessary to revitalize The University of Mississippi (Sansing, 1990).

After 1927, discussion talks of relocating and merging The University of Mississippi ceased, but other state institutions because the subject of debate. In 1934, bills in the Mississippi House of Representatives would have abolished State Teachers College in Hattiesburg and Delta State Teachers College in Cleveland, but they were withdrawn for a bill consolidating the IHL into a university system, which was defeated (Sansing, 1990). In 1944, one state department of education official stated the campus of Alcorn A & M College was uninhabitable and recommended its closure because 50 years of neglect and paltry appropriations left it in shambles. The new president suggested Alcorn be moved to a more central location or suggested hard-surface roads make the campus accessible, but the establishment of Jackson College and its role to provide general education courses to Mississippi’s Black college students made Alcorn’s attempts more difficult (Sansing, 1990; Williamson, 2008).

In recent years, the decision to maintain or decrease the eight public four-year institutions in Mississippi has been contentious. Facing major budget reductions in 1986, the Board of Trustees passed a motion to recommend that the legislature close Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi Valley State University, the veterinary school, and dental school and all off-campus centers. The motion passed with a vote of 9 to 3 with the three Black trustees casting dissenting votes. The decision to close two universities and two professional schools were such politically sensitive issues that the legislature did not consider the proposal in 1986 (Sansing, 1990). The Fordice case
encouraged the state to consider mergers to eliminate the duplication of academic programs but did not order Mississippi to merge institutions (Jaschik, 2009; *U.S. v. Fordice*, 1992a). Mississippi decided not to merge institutions but pledged to spend more money to improve programs at HBI\(s\) so they could better serve all students (Jaschik, 2009).

At a closed-door session in 1992, the Board of Trustees developed a reorganization plan that called for the closure and merger of Mississippi Valley State University with Delta State University and merge Mississippi University for Women with Mississippi State University (Thorn, 1997; Williams, 2005). In 2009, former Governor Hailey Barbour revived the discussion of merging Mississippi institutions when he proposed combining Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University into Jackson State University and combining Mississippi University for Women into Mississippi State University. The purpose of the proposal was to reduce the number of state-supported four-year institutions from eight to five in order to reduce cost and consolidate or eliminate programs not pulling their financial weight at each university. Dividing limited resources among eight universities is unsustainable. Governor Barbour’s proposal did not focus on desegregation but on the efficiencies of the current system and the need to save money. The merger would keep all HBCU campus locations open and consolidate the administration functions (Associated Press, 2009; Chandler, 2009; Gasman, 2009c; Jaschik, 2009). Governor Barbour was not the only person talking about merging the three HBCUs. The former president of Jackson State University Ronald Mason, Jr. believed that due to draconian cuts in funding, HBCUs would disappear in our lifetime. Citing economies of scale, Mason believed that one strong Black college is
better than three financially weak institutions in the state. He believes that by working together, the merged institutions with three campus locations in Itta Bena, Jackson, and Lorman would have more money, students, influence, and impact upon the African American citizens of Mississippi (Jaschik, 2010). The Mississippi Legislature failed to take action on the bill (Associated Press, 2010).

President emeritus at North Carolina Central University and civil rights lawyer Julius Chambers said that merging Black colleges is another act of discrimination. He questioned what would happen to faculty and students if programs were consolidated and to the HBCU campus when it is was no longer a full institution (Jaschik, 2009). In an article by Jaschik (2009), Marybeth Gasman reiterated that the purpose of the settlement was to bolster HBCUs. These institutions never got the money owed to them due to years of discrimination. She also questioned the logic of merging institutions located in different geographical locations with different campus environments (Jaschik, 2009).

Lezli Baskerville, president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), stated that mergers would threaten the identity and existence of Black institutions. In her experience, “merging means submerging the [B]lack colleges and the universities,” taking away smaller nurturing environments that help students thrive (Sanbry & Levy, 2009, para. 25). The crux of the problem according to Baskerville is that state has not met its legal obligation to fund the HBIs (Sanbry & Levy, 2009).

Higher education funding in Mississippi. States that maintained dual systems of higher education according to race had minimally funded or underfunded public HBCUs. HBCUs have survived against great odds by doing more with less (Gasman, 2009a, 2009b). Minor (2008) found that Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina
allocated funds to public four-year colleges based on the size and number of academic programs. Such formulas maintained inequity by favoring HWIs that were established before HBIIs. Some national foundations bolstered funding inequities by claiming that HBCUs “can do more with less” and “[t]hey don’t need that much money” (Gasman, 2010, para. 3). HBCUs suffered disproportionately in the economic crisis of 2007 (Gasman, 2009, 2009b). Problems stem from the commitment of HBCUs to serve disadvantaged students and from the history of underfunding these institutions and discrimination. Due to tightening budgets, leaders of HBCUs have had to lay off tenured faculty. Lower enrollments, fundraising, endowments and alumni giving are particularly vulnerable (Gasman, 2009b). Only three of the 103 HBCUs—Howard University, Spelman College, and Hampton University—are included among the top 300 university endowments in this list (Gasman, 2009b). Lower endowments mean fewer dollars for institutional financial aid and operating costs. Alumni giving is critical for building endowments, but institutional wealth resulting from systemic racism continues to be lower than average at HBCUs (Gasman, 2009b).

According to Ayers v. Allain (1990), Mississippi Board of Trustees underfunded HBIs to maintain a racially segregated system. HWIs received more money on a per student basis than HBIs. Mississippi State University, The University of Mississippi, and The University of Southern Mississippi—all comprehensive HWIs—received the most funds. Regional institutions Delta State University, Mississippi University for Women, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University received the least. The urban university Jackson State University fell somewhere in the middle. Second, facilities at HBIs lacked the ambiance and were not as generous as facilities at HWIs because of
this disparity in funding. The replacement value of facilities at HWIs exceeded the replacement value of facilities at HBIs. Finally, HWIs unnecessarily duplicated programs at HBIs (Ayers v. Allain, 1990). U.S. v. Fordice (1992a) inferred that funding and curricular decisions during the dual period were based on the purposes for which the institutions were established. According to Schmidt (2008), lawmakers and higher education officials need to rethink the financing of public universities and leaders of HBCUs must make their institutions worthy of receiving additional funds.

Moses Newsome, vice president for research planning and economic development at Mississippi Valley State University and the Institution of Higher Learning’s government liaison with the Mississippi Legislature, stated that if the state institutions were fully funded, there would be no need for a funding formula (Powers, 2008). In every fiscal year from 1981 to 1986 with the exception of FY 1984, state appropriations for higher education institutions in Mississippi had been reduced. The 1984 special appropriation carried a recommendation of the Board of Trustees to authorize $100,000 study to examine the feasibility of consolidating or merging some institutions. The legislative budget committee reduced higher education appropriations $50 million below what the board asked for in FY 1986. With the funding crisis unresolved, legislators called for the Board of Trustees to pare programs and establish new priorities. The budget cuts increased the likelihood the funding formula would favor comprehensive universities and intensify rivalries among regional universities and the big three. Another study would be an exercise in futility and again difficult decisions were made to a later time (Sansing, 1990). From 2000 to 2013, state joint fund revenue of Mississippi increased 35%. During
this same period, state funding for K-12 and community colleges increased by 45% while state support for four-year institutions decreased 7% (Hamilton, 2014).

In 1990, the higher education funding model for the state of Mississippi was driven by enrollment. The percentage of the appropriation was based on the percentage of overall enrollment at each university was called the Constant Percentage Formula (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g, 2013h). This meant that institutions received the same percentage of overall appropriations from year to year without taking into consideration changes in enrollment and budget fluctuations. The Board of Trustees was concerned that universities were not rewarded for increasing enrollments or making campus operations efficient during a time of decreased or flat state funding (Powers, 2008). In 2004, IHL instituted a plan to fund instructional costs by discipline, level of instruction, and quantity and the type of student credit hours provided. This plan was to be implemented gradually from FY 2005 to FY 2008 with full implementation to occur in FY 2009 (Joint Legislative Committee, 2008; Powers, 2008). Included in this formula were operation and maintenance, deferred maintenance, a small school supplement, and Board initiatives. However, this model was not implemented because of the recession and the impact of Hurricane Katrina (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g). In 2008, the adopted funding formula gave more weight to full-time enrollment and program growth. Universities were awarded funds for student credit hours produced, the number of faculty, number of majors, research expenditures, programs added, and facilities operation costs thus favoring larger state institutions (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g; Powers, 2008). Colleges
with 5,000 students or less would receive a supplement. Each year the university’s share will be recalculated based upon the criteria and appropriations available from the state legislature (Powers, 2008).

Proponents said that the formula would ensure a more equitable distribution of resources. The previous method of distributing funds was difficult to explain because of the disparity of appropriations per full-time enrolled students. By spreading the implementation over six years, universities that would lose money would be given time to adjust. Opponents said changing the funding formula would unfairly penalize smaller universities and HBCUs that lack the means or the will to grow. Opponents also expressed that the supplement for small universities would not be enough to offset the changes that would adversely affect them due to the funding formula. Table 6 shows the allocations for public four-year institutions in Mississippi for FY 2008 and 2009 and the difference between in state allocations from FY 2008 to FY 2009. Column B shows the amount each university received during FY 2009 when funds were allocated through the formula and rebalancing process. Five institutions received lower allocations in FY 2009 than in FY 2008. These include Alcorn State University, Delta State University, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi Valley State University, and the University of Southern Mississippi. Included in this list are all of the regional universities and one comprehensive flagship institution (Joint Legislative Committee, 2008).
Table 6.

FY 2008/FY 2009 Comparisons of Institutions’ Allocations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>FY2008 Allocation</th>
<th>FY 2009 Approved Allocation</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASU</td>
<td>$20,274,580</td>
<td>$20,199,142</td>
<td>($75,438)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSU</td>
<td>$23,160,557</td>
<td>$22,984,671</td>
<td>($175,886)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSU</td>
<td>$40,580,608</td>
<td>$40,580,608</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSU</td>
<td>$99,031,766</td>
<td>$99,031,766</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUW</td>
<td>$15,760,396</td>
<td>$15,624,113</td>
<td>($136,283)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVSU</td>
<td>$15,780,434</td>
<td>$15,770,305</td>
<td>($10,129)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM</td>
<td>$80,047,736</td>
<td>$81,928,876</td>
<td>$1,881,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USM</td>
<td>$89,870,168</td>
<td>$89,753,923</td>
<td>($116,245)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$384,506,245</td>
<td>$358,873,404</td>
<td>$1,367,159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Column C = Column A – Column B. Copyright 2008 by Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review.

In 2009, a new formula was to be phased in over six years so institutions could make adjustments and develop recruitment strategies, but the Mississippi Legislature blocked the implementation of the formula the same year and inserted language that appropriations should be distributed as it had been in previous years (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g). In 2010, Mississippi public four-year universities developed plans to cut 10% from their original appropriation for FY 2010 to address the loss of stimulus funds and lower than expected projections for FY 2011 and FY 2012. Universities were also asked to take into consideration increases in insurance costs, accreditation costs and minimum wage (Northway, 2010). In 2011, the Mississippi Legislature directed the Education Achievement Council to develop a new funding mechanism for community colleges and four-year universities based on enrollment, productivity goals, and accomplishments (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013h). In 2013, the restrictive language was removed from the higher education appropriations bill paving the way for a new funding
model (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013h). Since the Constant Percentage Formula was instituted, the percent of state appropriations in FY 2000 was 56%, and the percent of tuition dollars was 32%. In FY 2012, universities received 37% in state appropriations and 57% in tuition dollars (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013h).

In 2013, Mississippi’s College Board approved a formula meant to more fairly distribute aid among schools. The components of the current funding model include base operational support for each institution, weights for completed credit hour completion, board priorities, weights for resident and non-resident students, and a hold-harmless and stop-loss provision (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g, 2013h). First, the formula would give institutions funds to cover overhead costs. This would result in smaller schools receiving a larger share of funds (Associated Press, 2013). First, operational support is a flat fee based on a percentage of these three functions: institutional support, operations and maintenance, and student services (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g, 2013h). The percentage is based on size of the institutions. Regional universities would be funded at 15%, the urban university would be adjusted down to 10% and research universities would be funded at 6% (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g).

Second, the Board of Trustees would distribute the remaining money to schools based on courses completed. Graduate and technical courses would be worth more than undergraduate courses. According to Trustee Alan Perry, basing funds on completed courses instead of enrollment gives each institution an incentive to become more
effective (Associated Press, 2013). Weights for completed credit hour production to measure the number of completed credit hours at each university is based on faculty/student ratios, facilities required, equipment needed and consumable goods used (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g, 2013h). Going from least to greatest, weights will increase according to course level and field. Lower division and upper division courses will receive less weight than masters and doctoral courses. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields receive greater weight than law, business and liberal arts classes and services. Ninety percent of state allocation is based on weighted credit hour production (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g).

The remaining 10% of funds would be given to universities that meet Board priorities. Among these are graduating students with low test scores, moving students out of remedial courses into college-level work, and increasing outside research money. Not included in the funding shift is The University of Mississippi Medical Center and the agricultural land-grant units of Mississippi State University and Alcorn State University. Funding priorities include attainment outcomes, intermediate outcomes, research activity, public and K-12 education and productivity outcomes based on three-year averages (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g, 2013h). The three attainment outcomes include degrees awarded at each level, Pell recipients, ACT scores less than 19, students 25 years and older considered at-risk, and priority fields of health, STEM, and education (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g, 2013h). Attainment outcomes account for 15% for research universities, 35% for urban university, and 40% for regional
universities (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning 2013g). Intermediate outcomes include students with less than 19 who successfully complete the first non-remedial English or math course, students who cross 30 credit hour threshold, and students who surpass the 60 credit-hour threshold. Intermediate outcomes account for 35% for research universities, 30% for urban university, and 30% for regional universities (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g, 2013h). Research activity includes research expenditures, technology transfer and entrepreneurship data, patents issued and filled, technology licenses, and start-up companies as reported to the Association of University Technology Managers. Research activity accounts for 10% for research universities, 5% at the urban university and 0% for regional universities. While each university’s contribution to public K-12 education is a criteria, the state has yet to determine an appropriate way to measure progress in this area (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g). Productivity outcomes include the number of undergraduate and undergraduate degrees awarded per 100 FTE and number of degrees awarded per $100,000 in revenue (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013g, 2013h).

Fourth, non-resident student completion of credit hours will not count fully toward the number of credit hours completed. Resident student credit hours will count as 1.0 and credit hours completed by non-resident students will be counted as 0.85 (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g). Fifth, a stop-loss provision was incorporated in the formula to ensure no university sustains a cut greater than 2% as the transition from the Constant Percentage
Formula to the Performance Allocation Model (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g, 2013h.). The Mississippi Legislature provided $3 million in additional funds to facilitate the transition to the new funding model and some monies for the employees’ state retirement system, and some renovation and repair (Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c, 2013g). According to Higher Education Commissioner Hank Bounds, the funding new formula would reduce inequities between universities by roughly one half (Associated Press, 2013; Mississippi Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, 2013c). Consequently, allocations for Mississippi University for Women increased 6.6% or $904,000. Aid at Alcorn State University increased 5.7% or $1 million, The University of Mississippi aid increased 5.5% or $3.9 million and aid at Mississippi State University increased 0.7% or $623,000. Jackson State University would see little change. According to the model, Delta State University, Mississippi Valley State University, and the University of Southern Mississippi would remain overfunded but their overall shares of funds would drop. The University of Mississippi would benefit from funding of out-of-state students at more than 40% of its students are nonresidents. Board president Bob Owens felt the percent was too high since The University of Mississippi and Mississippi State University both collect out-of-state surcharges from non-resident students (Associated Press, 2013).

In sum, history, governance and studies of higher education in Mississippi have affected Mississippi higher education in various ways. First, the Mississippi higher education system maintained the separation of the races. The founding of each institution of the eight institutions for a specific race and, in one case, gender of individuals resulted
in competition between universities, duplication of programs among universities within the higher education system and an unwritten hierarchy in higher education privileged HWIs over HBIs. Four African American men attempted to integrate HWIs in Mississippi but were thwarted by university officials with tactics of ignoring, deceit and deception. James Meredith successfully integrated The University of Mississippi after two U.S. District Court trials, one U.S. Court of Appeal trial, a court order by the U.S. Court of Appeals, numerous phone calls between the U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy and Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett, 3,000 federal troops, a riot at The University of Mississippi and the death of two people. The refusal of the State of Mississippi to desegregate its higher education system resulted in lawsuits designed to force the state to integrate its higher education institutions. *U.S. v. Fordice* (1992a) remanded the case to the U.S. District Court to exterminate traces of *de jure* segregation in Mississippi higher education in regards to admissions policy, program duplication, institutional mission and the number of institutions, which could be reduced through relocation, consolidation and closure and directly affects the funding of higher education institutions.

Second, governance of institutions changed from each college or university having its own Board of Trustees to combining four boards of trustees into a single board in 1910 and consolidating the boards of the teachers colleges into the single board in 1932. By 1940, a constitutional Board of Trustees of thirteen members with 12-year terms was established to resist the political maneuverings of the governor. In 2004, the term of the 12-member Board of Trustees was reduced from 12 years to 9 years. Instead of establishing a commissioner of higher education as suggested by the O'Shea study in
1927, the Board of Trustees opted to create the position of executive secretary. It was not until 1986 that the office of executive secretary was retired for a commissioner of higher education.

Third, the results of higher education studies that suggested merging and consolidating institutions, limiting each university to a specific role, scope and mission to reduce program duplication, resisting the expansion of graduate education, and establishing a commissioner of higher education were resisted time and time again by Mississippi higher education officials. The Board of Trustees preferred to delegate instead of lead, manage, and define the role of its institutions. Had the state of Mississippi heeded and acted upon the recommendations of the many studies it commissioned, many of its higher education issues would have been solved decades ago. However, its inaction upon those recommendations and actions upon the things they should avoid doing led to the problems the State of Mississippi continues to face in its higher education system. The next section will discuss legal responses to affirmative action in higher education and the reversal of the principle by the legal challenges.

**Legal Response to Affirmative Action in Higher Education**

“We expect that 25 years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary to further the interest approved today” (Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003b, O’Connor, S. D., majority). President John F. Kennedy first introduced the term “affirmative action” in a speech on the campus of Howard University (Bowen & Bok, 1998). In a 1965 commencement speech at Howard University, President Lyndon B. Johnson noted unprecedented poverty and the widening gulf between unemployment rates of Whites and Blacks after World War II and stated that civil rights legislation alone was not enough to
level the playing field. President Johnson saw affirmative action as a form of redress (Taylor, 2012). A plan to remedy decades of unfair treatment and exclusionary practices toward women, ethnic, and racial minorities in all facets of life soon followed. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Executive Order 11246 that mandated affirmative action in government contracting to remedy years of exclusions for minority workers (Harper et al., 2009; Taylor, 2012).

Colleges and universities followed suit making affirmative efforts to recruit and enroll students of color. This led to significant increases in diversity on campuses of many predominantly White institutions (Taylor, 2012). According to Bowen and Bok (1998), race-based college admissions “have led to striking gains in the representation of minorities in the most lucrative or influential occupations” (p. 10). Affirmative action policies in the mid-1960s dramatically increased educational opportunities for African Americans (Harper et al., 2009). From late 1960 to the early 1970s, African American enrollments increased from 27% in 1982 to 34% in 1976 before dropping in the next decade (Kelly & Lewis, 2000). The percentage of African Americans attending college in the United States increased from 30% to 80% from the early 1960s to the early 2010s (Taylor, 2012). Despite these gains for minorities, efforts to dismantle affirmation action began in earnest with Regents of the University of California v. Bakke in 1978 (Harper et al., 2009).

**Regents of The University of California v. Bakke.** Allan Bakke, a White male applicant who was denied admission to the University of California-Davis Medical School, believed he would have been admitted if it were not for affirmative action programs. Applicants could gain admission through two tracks. The regular track denied
applicants whose undergraduate grade point average (GPA) fell below 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. The special admission track admitted 16 disadvantaged students on a case-by-case basis even if they did not have the required 2.5 GPA (Harper et al., 2009). Bakke challenged a policy that set aside 16 of 100 slots in the class to “disadvantaged applicants” (Stoner & Showalter, 2004, p. 611). Over a four-year period, 63 minority students were admitted under the special arrangement and 44 under the general program. In 1973 and 1974, special applicants were admitted with lower scores than Bakke’s. After being rejected a second time, he filed a lawsuit seeking mandatory admission to UC-Davis Medical School. In 1978, the U.S. Supreme Court prohibited racial quotas but allowed universities to consider race as a factor among many in the pursuit in diversity (Byrd-Chichester, 2000; Harper et al., 2009; Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 1978a; Stoner & Showalter, 2009). Justice Powell in a majority opinion held that affirmative action could not be used to remedy “historic deficits of traditionally disfavored minorities” (Taylor, 2012, para. 8). Colleges should consider race when admitting students from different ethnic, cultural and/or racial groups which are victims of societal discrimination only to extent that the diversity would foster a “robust exchange of ideas” (Taylor, 2012, para. 8). The atmosphere of speculation, experimentation and creation in college is so essential to the quality of higher education that exposing students to a diverse group of people was in the nation’s best interest. An educationally motivated approach in considering race as one of many factors in admissions that is both careful and deliberate would pass constitutional muster (Stoner & Showalter, 2009). While Bakke (1978) did allow race to be used as a plus factor to gain admissions, the Hopwood case (1994, 1996,
2000) struck down the use of race as a compelling state interest for public institutions in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

**Hopwood v. The University of Texas Law School.** Cheryl Hopwood, a White woman from a working class family and three other students objected to the rejection of their admissions applications by the University of Texas Law School (Harper et al., 2009). The four individuals sued the state and the law school under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Sections 1981 and 1983 of the federal civil rights statutes and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The plaintiffs claimed they were denied admission based on race because the law school’s affirmative action admissions program gave preferences to African American and Mexican American applicants only. Cutoff scores in the admissions process were lower for African Americans and Mexican Americans than for other applications. Thus, applicants in the minority category were admitted with lower grades and lower LSAT scores over rejected White applicants with higher grades and LSAT scores (Kaplin & Lee, 2000).

In the first appeal, the federal court found that portions of the law that gave minority applicants a separate review process violated the Fourteenth Amendment, but that two of the law school’s justifications to achieve a diverse student body and to remedy present effects of past discrimination in the Texas public school system passed constitutional muster. Therefore, the court held that when compelled by the interest of attaining diversity in the student body, affirmative action served to remedy prior discrimination by the state of Texas in its entire education system (*Hopwood v. Texas*, 1994; Kaplin & Lee, 2000). In the second appeal, the federal appeals judge ruled that race could not be used to give preferential treatment to minority law school applicants in
Texas (*Hopwood v. Texas*, 1996; Southern Education Foundation, 1998; St. John, Simmons, & Musoba 1999). The appellate court rejected Justice Powell’s argument in *Bakke* (1978) and argued that “achieving a diverse student body is not a compelling interest under the Fourteenth Amendment” (Kaplin & Lee, 2000, p. 247). According to the Fifth Circuit, Justice Powell’s opinion never gained the support of a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court in that case or any subsequent case and racial classifications under recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions are only permissible for remedial purposes. The Fifth Circuit found that the law school’s admission program had a remedial purpose. In order to comply with constitutional requirements, the law school would have to present evidence of a history of its own prior unlawful segregation. Once the discrimination had been established, the law school would have to trace present effects from prior discrimination to establish the size of those effects and develop a limited plan to remedy harm. Present effects cited by the law school and district court were insufficient. A majority of the circuit judges voted not to hear the case *en banc* before a 17-judge appellate bench because the opinion “goes out of the way to break ground that the Supreme Court itself has been careful to avoid” (Kaplin & Lee, 2000, p. 249). In the third appeal, The Fifth Circuit affirmed the district court’s finding of fact that none of the plaintiffs had a realistic chance of being accepted even using a constitutionally valid, race-based admission process. The district court also reversed an injunction prohibiting the use of race whatsoever in the Law School’s admission process. The appellate court also remanded to district court further consistent proceedings (*Hopwood v. Texas* [Hopwood III], 2000).
Proponent judges insisted that every active judge on the court review the case because it would change the face of public education in Texas, other states in the circuit and the nation. These dissenters stated that the panel “had strung together ‘pieces and shards of recent Supreme Court opinions’ dealing with a variety of affirmative action issues in noneducational settings, and had created ‘a gossamer chain which it proffers as a justification for overruling Bakke’” (Kaplin & Lee, 2000, p. 249). The appellate court forgot about the legacy of de jure segregation against Black applicants in *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) where the U.S. Supreme Court found the admissions policy of the University of Texas Law School violated the Equal Protection Clause because it excluded Blacks. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review the case but raised questions about how to create lawful admissions policies that take race into consideration (Harper et al., 2009). The Fifth Circuit decision is binding on institutions in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas (Kaplin & Lee, 2000).

Prior to the second appeal in *Hopwood II*, African American student population at the University of Texas ranged from 4.1% to 5.6% from 1996 to 1998. After the *Hopwood II* decision which banned race in consideration in admissions and financial aid policies, the African American student population at the University of Texas comprised 2% of first-time freshmen (Harper et al., 2009; Willie-LeBreton, 2011). Policies like affirmative action that once ensured increased access and participation of African Americans in higher education are eroding in some states (Harper et al., 2009). While the University of Michigan cases of *Grutter* (2003a) and *Gratz* (2003) advocates that the use of race in making college decisions be careful and deliberate, the *Schuette* decision
abolishes the use of race to make admissions decisions in state-supported colleges and universities in Michigan where the voters banned the use of affirmative action.

**Grutter v. Bollinger.** *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003a) challenged the admission policy of the University of Michigan School of Law. At issue was whether diversity was a compelling interest that could justify the narrowly tailored use of race in selecting applicants for admission to public universities (Harper et al., 2009). Barbara Grutter, a White Michigan resident, was denied admission to Michigan’s Law School in 1996. She alleged her application was rejected because the law school used race as a “predominant” factor and alleged the University of Michigan and its officials violated the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Stoner & Showalter, 2009, p. 613).

The law school sought to admit a mix of students with various backgrounds and experiences who would respect and learn from each other. In 1992, the dean of the law school instructed a faculty committee to fashion a written admissions policy to implement the goal while attempting to seek diversity that complied with the *Bakke* decision (1978). They believed it was important to get a critical mass of minority students so that students would not feel like spokespersons for their race and to help diffuse non-minority students’ perceptions that there is a single minority viewpoint. The dean of admissions did not direct the staff to admit a specified percentage of minority applicants. The committee’s policy focused on students’ academic abilities with a flexible assessment of applicants’ talents, experiences and potential to contribute. Each applicant was selected based on information available in his or her file including a personal statement, letters of recommendation and an essay describing ways an applicant would contribute to the
academic environment and diversity. They also considered the enthusiasm of the recommenders, the quality of the undergraduate institution and the quality of the applicant’s essay. The law school reaffirmed its longstanding commitment to racial and ethnic diversity to include students who had been historically discriminated against (Stoner & Showalter, 2009).

In the law school admissions case, the policy was upheld with a 5-4 decision (Harper et al., 2009). The U.S. Supreme Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit agreed with administrators’ judgment that diversity was a compelling state interest. The law school was allowed to consider race as one of many factors in enrolling a critical mass of minority students to promote cross racial understanding, to break down racial stereotypes and to enable students to better understand persons of different races (Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003a; Stoner & Showalter, 2009). Twenty-five years after Bakke (1978), Justice O’Connor upheld Justice Powell’s reasoning in the Michigan law school case of Grutter v. Bollinger (Taylor, 2012, Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003b). Justice O’Connor in a majority opinion of Grutter (2003b) wrote that diversity is an essential part of attending college, which benefits nonminority students, namely White students, from “a variety of viewpoints among minority students” (Carey, 2012, para. 1). Taylor (2012) argued that the Court missed the point. “There would be no need for compensatory preferences like affirmative action if there were not harms for which to compensate” (para. 9). This robust exchange of ideas would happen organically if it were not for systematic injustices aimed at certain groups of people (Taylor, 2012).

Gratz v. Bollinger. Gratz v. Bollinger (2003) challenged the University of Michigan undergraduate admissions policy. At issue was whether racial preferences in
undergraduate programs violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act or 42 U.S.C. 1981 (Harper et al., 2009).

Jennifer Gratz and Patrick Hamacher, White Michigan residents, applied for admission to the University of Michigan’s College of Literature, Science and the Arts. Both were denied admissions to the College after first being waitlisted. They filed suit alleging that the University and its officials discriminated against them on the basis of race in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment (Stoner & Showalter, 2009).

The undergraduate college assigned a specific, numeric value to applicants based solely upon their status as minorities and not upon any exercise of educational judgment by campus administrators, thus awarding 20 points or one-fifth of the points to all underrepresented minority applicants virtually guaranteeing their admission. African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans were considered underrepresented minorities and almost all applicants from these groups were undisputedly admitted to the university (Stoner & Showalter, 2009). The Court found the admissions policy unlawful in a 6-3 decision. For undergraduate admissions, the decision meant schools could not award points to applicants solely based on race, but race could be used as a plus factor and in an individualized evaluation of applicants (Harper et al., 2009). The policy was unacceptable because the use of race was not careful and deliberate, and university officials did not utilize educational judgment to which the judicial process would defer. Each applicant should have been considered individually when exercising this judgment (Gratz v. Bollinger, 2003; Stoner & Showalter, 2009).

Fisher v. University of The Texas at Austin. Fisher v. The University of Texas at Austin tested whether colleges have the right to consider race and ethnicity in making
admissions decisions (Meloy, 2012). In 2008, Abigail Fisher was denied admission as an undergraduate applicant to The University of Texas at Austin. After Fisher did not qualify for automatic entrance to the university, she charged the institution of discriminating against her because she was placed in a pool of applicants who were evaluated using criteria that gave special consideration to Black and Hispanic applicants (Howe, 2013; McGee, 2013; Psencik, 2013; What you need to know about Fisher v. Texas, 2012). Fisher argued that The University of Texas violated the limits of race-conscious admissions policies set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003a) which held that colleges which seek to promote diversity must give “serious good-faith consideration to race-neutral affirmative action, policies” (What you need to know about Fisher v. Texas, 2012, para. 4). She also asserted that Texas’ “Top Ten Percent Plan” which automatically admitted students who graduated in the top 10% of their high school classes produced sufficient levels of diversity on the Austin campus and there was no need to give extra consideration to applicants based on race (Carey, 2012; What you need to know, 2012). Instead of accepting all students who graduated at the top 10% of their classes to Texas universities, the requirement was modified to limit the number of students to 75% of the slots available to in-state students. Fisher argued that the university may not use race as a criterion because the already race neutral Ten Percent Plan affords the university a sufficient level of diversity (Carey, 2012).

In fall 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* that questioned how and whether race may be used in college admissions decisions (What you need to know, 2012). In its ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court vacated and remanded the case back to the Fifth Circuit because it did not apply the test of strict
scrutiny to confirm The University of Texas’ use of race in admissions (Fisher v. The University of Texas, 2013; Howe, 2013; McGee, 2013; Psencik, 2013). In order for an institution to use affirmative action, the admissions policy must be narrowly tailored. The court must confirm that the use of race is necessary and other alternatives that excludes race would create a diverse student body (Howe, 2013). The Fisher court upheld the principle that consideration of race in admissions is permissible provided certain conditions are met (Fisher v. The University of Texas, 2013; Schuette v. The Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, 2014). In July 2014, the Fifth Circuit found in favor of UT-Austin. In its majority opinion, the court wrote: “It is equally settled that universities may use race as part of a holistic admissions program where it cannot otherwise achieve diversity.” The court continued, “This interest is compelled by the reality that university education is more the shaping of lives than the filling of heads with facts—the classic assertion of the humanities” (Fisher v. The University of Texas at Austin, 2014, p. 41). Fisher and associated parties planned to file an appeal, either for an en banc hearing with the Fifth Circuit, or to return to the U.S. Supreme Court to argue their case.

Each of the decisions mentioned above impacts how universities may admit students and may use race as a plus factor when making admissions decision. Lawsuits by Whites who were denied admission at predominantly White institutions have attacked the ability of colleges and universities to decide whom they should admit and have slowly chipped away at the gains made for minorities in higher education. In approximately 50 years since affirmative action policies were enforced to increase access to African Americans to higher education, these policies are slowly being eroded by states and courts.
**Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action.** In 2006, Michigan voters approved Proposition 2 which amended the state constitution to make affirmative action illegal in public employment, public education or public contracting purposes except for actions mandated by federal law or that were necessary for an institution to receive federal funds (*Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*, 2014). *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* comprises two lawsuits that were brought separately but make different arguments. The *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, Integration and Immigration Rights and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary* (BAMN) *v. Granholm and Cantrell v. Granholm* (2008) was brought by the ACLU and NAACP Legal Defense Fund on behalf of 19 students, faculty, and prospective applicants to the University of Michigan that challenged Proposal 2, a Michigan ballot initiative that led to a state constitutional ban on affirmative action in regards to race-conscious college admission policies in 2006 (American Civil Liberties Union, 2006b). It was believed that these policies created a discriminatory system of determining school criteria (ACLU, n.d.). On December 19, 2006, the ACLU and the NAACP asked a federal court to declare that it is constitutionally permissible for universities to consider race and gender as one factor among many in university admissions even though Proposal 2 barred the use of race in making college admissions decisions (ACLU, 2006b). In *The Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action (BAMN) v. Regents of University of Michigan* (2008), the U.S. District Court of Michigan granted summary judgment to the University of Michigan, upheld Proposal 2, and denied a motion to reconsider the grant of summary judgment (*Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*, 2014).
In 2011, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit reversed the U.S. District Court decision and declared Proposal 2 unconstitutional. A three-judge panel at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit struck down Proposal 2 because it violated the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution and placed an unfair burden on those seeking to have race considered as one of many factors in university admissions (ACLU, 2013b, 2013c, n.d.; Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Regents of University of Michigan, 2012). One judge dissented (Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Regents of University of Michigan, 2012; Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, 2014). The Michigan Attorney General requested the Sixth Circuit judges to sit en banc to vacate the ruling of the three-judge panel, a request that was opposed vehemently by the NAACP, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and the ACLU (BAMN v. Regents of University of Michigan, 2011; Legal Defense Fund, n.d.). In 2012, a 15-judge panel sitting en banc agreed with the panel’s decision and struck down the amendment blocking equal opportunity in university admissions again as a violation of the Equal Protection Clause because it forced the government to make decisions on the issue of race (ACLU, 2013a; Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Regents of University of Michigan, 2012; Legal Defense Fund, n.d.; Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, 2014). Eight judges affirmed and seven judges dissented (Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action v. Regents of University of Michigan, 2012; Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action et al., 2014).

The U.S. Supreme Court granted certiorari. The question before the Court was not about the constitutionality or merits of race-conscious admissions in higher education, but in what manner can voters of states choose to prohibit the consideration of race in
government decisions regarding school admissions (Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, 2014). Mark Rosenbaum, ACLU of Southern California Legal Director argued that Proposal 2 codifies racial discrimination into law and creates two separate and unequal systems for determining admission at state universities. Minority students and other minorities have to overturn a constitutional amendment for redress while donors, athletic officials, religious organizations and alumni can lobby the university to have their voices heard. Ever since Proposal 2, African American undergraduate enrollment dropped 33% between 2006 and 2012 and Hispanic enrollment declined by 10% for the same period. African Americans earned 10.3% of medical degrees from 2004 to 2010 and 4.8% of medical degrees in 2012, a decline of more than 50%. In the past, the U.S. Supreme Court has struck down ballot initiatives that suppress minority civic participation (American Civil Liberties Union, 2013a, 2014). The U.S. Supreme Court reversed the judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth District and upheld the Michigan constitutional amendment ratified by voters that prohibits the use of race in making admissions decisions (American Civil Liberties Union, 2013a, 2014; Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, 2014). The U.S. Supreme Court found that the amendment to Michigan’s constitution prohibiting the use of race in the admission process does not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. In short, the Schuette ruling now bans race conscious admissions at state colleges and universities (Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, 2014).

In summary, the use of affirmative action initially intended as a form of redress for decades of unfair discriminatory and exclusionary practices toward minorities has been under attack in the judicial system. Regents of University of California v. Bakke
(1978a) prohibited the use of racial quotas but affirmed the use of race as a plus factor expose students to diverse opinions and groups of people in order to achieve cultural, ethnical and racial diversity. *Hopwood v. The University of Texas Law School* (1996) ruled that the law school’s admission policies had a remedial purpose, race could not be used to give preferential treatment to minority applicants and achieving a diverse student body is not a compelling interest under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Fifth Circuit chose to ignore the case of *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) where the State of Texas and the University of Texas Law School violated the Equal Protection Clause by excluding Blacks, which made the admissions policy necessary for a remedial purpose. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003a), the law school’s admissions policy was upheld because race was considered as one of many factors to achieve a critical mass of minority students. In *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003), the undergraduate admission policy at the University of Michigan was unlawful because its policy of awarding points to minority students solely because of race was not careful and deliberate and did not utilize educational judgment. After remand from the U.S. Supreme Court back to the District Court, the Fifth Circuit recently ruled in *Fisher v. University of Texas in Austin* (2014) that the admissions policy of the University of Texas was lawful. *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* (2014) upheld the state constitutional amendment of citizens of Michigan and other states to prohibit affirmative action. According to the U.S. Supreme Court, the use of race in making admissions decisions does not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Carey (2012) describes the current U.S. Supreme Court as activist judges who seem poised to end decades of established law in order to prohibit colleges from creating
a diverse student body as they see fit. The five-vote coalition that upheld race-based admission policies at the University of Michigan has been dispersed by retirement. In *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Board of Education* (2007), Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. failed to see any distinction between state-sponsored racism outlawed by *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and present day policies that give minority children a better education. Roberts wrote “the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is stop discrimination on the basis of race” (Carey, 2012, para. 2). The court cases reviewed in this section have reinforced the thesis of Byrd-Chichester (2000) which stated that while Congress and the executive branch have made strides to ensure minority participation in higher education, the courts have narrowly interpreted the law in such a way that the laws and statutes are rendered invalid. The final section of this chapter will discuss the uses of Critical Race Theory as a tool for analyzing racial disparities in higher education.

**Critical Race Theory (CRT) in Higher Education**

The connection between education and the law is simple to establish. Education in the United States, while not explicitly outlined in the Constitution, is a social function relegated to individual states. As such, state legislatures generate and enact laws that prescribe the education for its citizens. In this modern era, the intersection of education and the law has tested the implementation of civil rights legislation. The one recurring theme characterizing education and civil rights battles is equal opportunity. The crux of the argument stated that students of color should have the same access to school opportunities. Emphasizing the “sameness” of races, the “equal treatment under the law” argument propelled African Americans from second-class status (Ladson-Billings, 2009,
Beyond equal treatment, there was also a need to address past inequities. Affirmative action policies and the creation of “protected classes” for African Americans and other marginalized groups helped to ensure these groups would reap the benefits of employment, housing, and college admission (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 28).

One of the earliest mentions of Critical Race Theory (CRT) was in the 1980s. Taylor (1998) in *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* explained the tenets of CRT, the major proponents of the theory and introduced ways CRT can be extended to the field of education. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) were the first to use CRT as an analytical framework to assess inequity involving race and poverty in education (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Misawa, 2010; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and have since critiqued and analyzed educational research and practice (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Ladson-Billings (1998) listed the areas of curriculum, assessment, instruction, desegregation, and school funding as points of analysis for CRT in elementary and secondary education. Since the same issues occur in higher education, CRT would be an ideal way to analyze these issues regarding race.

**CRT in higher education policy.** Harper, Patton, and Wooten (2009) analyzed the policy efforts in the history of higher education using CRT. Beginning with the founding of historically Black colleges, the researchers were able to analyze the equitability of the higher education African Americans accessed over the centuries. Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn, and Arrona (2006) used CRT to examine affirmative action policy in higher education. The researchers discovered the many select colleges and universities have not embraced a comprehensive admissions process which would result in more racial diversity after the University of Michigan admissions ruling.
Brady, Eatman, and Parker (2000) analyzed and interpreted higher education finance data using CRT to discuss the future of African American students at HBCUs in the post-Fordice era in Mississippi. The longitudinal study included data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) from 1974 to 1994. Brady et al. uncovered that the expenditures at most public HBCUs are lower than most public TWIs. The disparities in the full-time equivalent (FTE) between public and private HBCUs and all other public and private colleges increased over time. Higher education finance trends found inferior levels of state support to HBCUs compared to TWIs.

**CRT in higher education systems.** Critical Race Theory can be used to examine state systems of higher education. Muhammad (2009) examined the legal history of the *Ayers* case that chronicled the dual system of higher education in Mississippi using CRT. Muhammad found that White students were the primary beneficiaries of the settlement, thus violating the law of remedies and equal protection doctrine. The failure of HBCUs to meet White enrollment targets caused the institutions to suffer as endowments will not be granted and as fiscal, programmatic and physical improvements of the institutions will be stymied. According to Muhammad (2009), the weariness of the parties involved in the 29-year lawsuit, the cost of further delaying any remedy and the lack of public attention paid to higher education were the reasons the settlement terms are as it stands. Hiraldo (2010) espoused the use of CRT as an analytical framework in critical legal studies to address the racial inequities in society to higher education and to explain issues of higher education diversity and inclusiveness. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) addressed how CRT can inform critical race methodology in education. As a methodology, critical race offers
space to conduct and present research grounded in the knowledge and experiences of people of color by composing counter stories in order to challenge racism, classism, sexism and work toward social justice.

**CRT in faculty issues and academic programs.** Second, Critical Race Theory has been used to examine the role race plays for in faculty issues, in the faculty’s perception of other-race students and in academic programs. Villalpando and Delgado Bernal (2002) used CRT to examine barriers that impede the success of faculty of color. Their analysis discovered that across all institutions, faculty of color appear to be as productive in research and publications, teach more courses and engage in roles aligned with the public’s expectations of faculty. However, faculty of color and women of color achieve success at lower rates than White colleagues and are underrepresented at more prestigious academic departments. They also identified double standards to which institutions hold faculty of color and women regarding academic rank and tenure rates as well as the devaluing of their experiences as faculty of color (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). Cooper, Massey, and Graham (2006) used CRT to examine the narratives of two Black faculty members at a historically Black university who mentored a White faculty member who wanted to understand the culture of HBCUs in order to engage her students in meaningful learning.

Griffin, Bennett, and Harris (2013) examined the unique burdens and challenges Black male and female faculty experience in the academy by using CRT to examine their discourse. Men and women faculty shared narratives that are consistent with literature on Black faculty and their challenges in navigating the tenure and promotion process but there are notable similarities and distinctions concerning how their work is evaluated—
the perceived role of teaching in advancement and how and why they engage in service. Orelus (2013) utilized CRT, autoethnography and resistant narrative to examine systematic forms of oppression professors of color face when teaching at PWIs. Situating himself within the larger educational and political context, Orelus spoke of battling multiple forms of microaggression and the degree it has affected other professors of color.

Using photo-elicited interviewing, faculty at a predominantly White university responded to randomly assigned photographs and vignettes about a Black or White male student. Comeaux (2013) found that while most faculty members were supportive of the academic achievement of both student groups, some subscribed to dominant racial ideologies such as racial coding and colorblindness. Comeaux (2013) suggested interventions designed to combat racial inequalities to address the social significance of race in the lives of Black males and other students of color on predominantly White campuses.

Solórzano (1997) used CRT to examine racial stereotyping in teacher education programs. By focusing on racial stereotypes in popular and professional media, Solórzano (1997) identified, analyzed and transformed aspects in education that use stereotypes that subordinate students of color. By using CRT, Ladson-Billings (1998) reframed the notions of teacher preparation of diverse learners as difficult to impossible for four reasons. First, teachers may be resistant or hostile. Second, accrediting agencies do not force state departments of education to make sure teachers are prepared to work in diverse environments. Third, many teacher education programs are not based in theory. Fourth, these programs stand in opposition of predominant beliefs of an idealized past.
**CRT in student issues.** Critical Race Theory has been used as a fresh way to examine the identity development of students. Tanaka (2002) examined the relationship between qualitative research theories and the five probes of voice, power, authenticity, self-reflexivity, and reconstitution as a way examine and analyze higher education and create an intercultural theory of student development. Tanaka (2002) spoke of storytelling of CRT as a way to critique higher educational structures and practice. Torres, Jones, and Renn (2009) identified CRT and queer theory as ways new approaches and ways to discuss identity development in student affairs in addition to approaches based in psychology, sociology, social psychology and human ecology.

CRT research in higher education can also examine how African American students feel and experience racism as they oppose the dominant discourse about their race and gender. By studying focus group data from African American students at three universities, Solórzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) identified the subtle conscious and unconscious verbal, nonverbal and/or visual insults directed at people of color. The study showed how African American students react and respond to these microaggressions and how these insults have a negative impact on race relations on the campus. Harper (2009) completed 143 face-to-face interviews with Black male undergraduates at 30 predominantly White colleges and universities across the United States to create five composites that oppose the dominant discourse concerning the educational and social status of Black men in the United States and are resistant response to racist stereotyping and subordination.

CRT has also been used to explain the experience of other minority groups in higher education. Espino (2012) created a counterstory of composite characters based on
personal experience, interviews with research participants, discussions with colleagues in higher education, and social science literature to empower and nurture the development of researchers who are focused on anti-oppression scholarship. CRT and Latin CRT informed her epistemological perspective and methodological approach when analyzing the life narratives of two Mexican Americans who received the doctor of philosophy degrees. Buenavista, Jayakumar, and Misa-Escalante (2009) used CRT to challenge the stereotype that Asian Americans are a minority group that enjoys academic success. These stereotypes obscure the important issues facing Asian Americans and perpetrate the minority paradigm. Brayboy (2005) outlined the major tenets of Tribal CRT, an outgrowth of CRT, to address issues of indigenous peoples in the United States. This framework with roots in CRT, anthropology, political and legal theory, political science, education, American Indian literatures, and American Indian studies provides a framework to address the relationship between the U.S. federal government and American Indians as legal and political groups and as individuals. Park and Liu (2014) demonstrated how the concepts of critical mass and meritocracy have been misapplied to Asian Americans in the higher education affirmative action debate and critiqued the dominant conceptualization of meritocracy and critical mass and advocated for a more nuanced and holistic conceptualization of the terms and their relevance to Asian Americans in higher education.

**CRT in academic research.** Critical Race Theory can be used to critique academic research that utilizes CRT. Harper (2012) examined four ideological frames people use to concerning relations to explain racial differences. By examining 255 articles from top-tier peer-reviewed academic journals on CRT in students, faculty, and
governance in higher education, Harper (2012) discovered that authors either offered assorted explanations that did not explain racism or analyzed race in a way that was not critical.

Misawa (2010) addressed the concept of positionality and suggested that the teaching of social justice and equality issues in adult education should include a discussion on the intersection of race and sexual orientation. After examining the history of CRT in the field of education, Misawa (2010) compared the tenets of CRT and Queer Critical Race Theory (Queer Crit) as a means to examine issues of race and sexual orientation and “help educators achieve real institutional democracy for learners” (p. 196). Additionally, Misawa (n.d.) suggested the use of autoethnography as a way for educators to equip students to think critically. After examining four lenses that enable adults to think reflectively and defining critical thinking, Misawa explained how qualitative epistemologies allow researchers to critically reflect on their own biases and viewpoints and to become better acquainted with themselves. Finally, Misawa lists five requirements of autoethnographic inquiry and offers an example of a Queer Asian critical race autoethnography.

Chapter Summary

Higher education in Mississippi is mired because of issues with race. Court rulings like Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) and the Morrill Act of 1890 codified de facto segregation during the time state governments began to establish Black colleges and universities for its citizens. Attempts to desegregate predominantly White higher education institutions in Mississippi were treated as a threat to the Southern way of life. Delay, deceptive, and duplicitous tactics and all legal and illegal means were used by
Whites to prevent the integration of Blacks into White institutions of higher learning.

Also, Mississippi higher education was riddled with instances of inaction or defiance in the face of studies and directives to eliminate program duplication, control programmatic growth by limiting institutions to their mission assignments, carefully growing graduate education and eliminating or merging institutions.

Even after integration, traces of *de jure* segregation continued to exist in higher education. Lawsuits like *Adams v. Richardson* (1973), *Geier v. Alexander* (1986) in Tennessee, *Knight v. Alabama* (1995), *U.S. v. Fordice* (1992a) in Mississippi, and *U.S. v. Louisiana* (1993) were filed to get states to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. However, it seems that the current anti-affirmative action sentiment in the aforementioned cases have impeded the progress of African Americans and other minorities and the efforts of higher education to right the historic wrongs perpetrated against these minority groups. Chapter 3 will discuss the theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory and the methodology of this study.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand the impact of the *Ayers* case on state-supported HBCUs in Mississippi from a Critical Race Theory perspective. The research questions that guided the case study were as follows:

1. How has the history of higher education in Mississippi affected the way HBCUs operate today?
2. How does the *Ayers* case affect HBCUs today?
3. What strategies have HBCUs employed to achieve the student diversity measure set forth by the *Ayers* settlement as a condition for controlling the endowment?

Theoretical Framework

Oliver Wendell Holmes in *The Common Law* “posited that judicial decisions depended not on the result of a rational system of accumulated wisdom, but largely on the predilections and social situation of the judge” (Taylor, 2009, p. 1). Legal Realism peaked in the 1920s and 1930s and emphasized the social and political context in which judicial judgments were made. During the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War, the principles of Legal Realism reemerged as a movement called Critical Legal Studies (CLS). CLS focuses on the analysis of doctrinal policy that legitimizes the structure of the society in the United States. While CLS maintained that meritocratic nature of mainstream legal ideology, it did not critique racism, failed to speak “to the specificity of individuals and groups in cultural contexts” (Crenshaw, 1988, p. 1334) and failed to “provide pragmatic strategies for material and social transformation” (Ladson-Billings,
The next section will discuss Critical Race Theory (CRT) as an outgrowth of Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and the six tenets espoused by the theory.

**Critical Race Theory.** Historically, Critical Race Theory can be viewed as an outgrowth of CLS scholarship (Crenshaw, 1988). According to Lawrence, Matsuda, Delgado, and Crenshaw (1993), CRT evolved in response to a perceived stalling of traditional civil rights litigation in areas of affirmative action, campus speech codes, criminal sentencing, and legislative districting. Following the advances of the 1950s and 1960s in dismantling discrimination, there arose a backlash against progressive racial reforms. The courts expressed a general hostility towards policies that took race into account to redress contemporary forms of racial discrimination. Subsequently, the pace of racial reform slowed and began to reverse (Lawrence, Matsuda, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993). CRT emerged in the mid1970s from the early work of Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman who were disgruntled with the slow pace or racial reform in the United States (Hiraldo, 2010). The official start of Critical Race Theory (CRT) was marked at a conference at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1977 (Crenshaw, 2002). Critical race theorists charged that the reasoning and logic of the law was based on arbitrary categorizations of race and decisions reflected and advanced these power relationships in society “by covering injustices with a mask of legitimacy” (Taylor, 2009, p. 2). Critical race scholars argued that the domination and power of certain groups was continuing and change was needed (Taylor, 2009). CRT critiques the incremental, slow, and upward pull towards civil rights via the court system to serve as a catalyst for change (Crenshaw, 1988). A group of legal scholars including Derrick A. Bell, Charles Lawrence, Richard Delgado, Lani Guinier, and Kimberlé Crenshaw began to openly criticize the role of law
in constructing and maintaining racially-based social and economic oppression, to look for a reason to explain why school integration did not materialize as promised and to formulate new strategies to effect transformation (Taylor, 2009). These theorists articulated that Critical Legal Studies failed to address the “effects of race and racism in U.S. jurisprudence” (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004, p. 26).

CRT analyzes the use of race to perpetuate social disparities between dominant and marginalized groups (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT as an analytic framework provides a lens “to question, critique, and challenge the manner and methods in which race, white supremacy, supposed meritocracy, and racist ideologies have shaped the undermined policy efforts for African American student participation in higher education” (Harper et al., 2009, p. 390). The framework of CRT is based on six tenets: the permanence of racism, challenge to mainstream ideologies and conventional norms, contextual and historical analysis of law, experiential knowledge, multidisciplinary analysis, and social justice (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Taylor, 2009).

**Permanent racism.** “The first observation is that racism is a normal fact of daily life in U.S. society that is neither aberrant nor rare” (Taylor, 2009, p. 4). CRT begins with the notion that racism is entrenched or enmeshed in the fabric of the United States social order and appears normal and natural to the people in the society (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Racism is difficult to eliminate and address because it cannot be distinctively recognized (Harper et al., 2009) and because it controls the economic, political, and social realms of society by privileging White individuals over people of color (Hiraldo, 2010). Assumptions of White superiority are so ingrained in political, legal, and
education structures that they are almost unrecognizable (Delgado, 1995). Ironically, Whites cannot understand their economic, educational and political advantages or comprehend the experiences and perspectives of non-Whites. According to Lawrence (1987), oppression no longer seems like oppression to the perpetuating group. Non-Whites, on the other hand, have a startling view of White supremacy informed by the historic, social and political disadvantage of not being White from first-hand knowledge and multigenerational experience (Taylor, 2009). According to Parker and Villalpando (2007), the purpose of CRT is to explain what is assumed in the discussion of race and privilege and unearth the patterns of exclusion that exist in U.S. society.

CRT challenges the material interests of White elites and the psychic interests of working class people. Through the convergence of these interests, large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate racism. Critical race scholars critique the liberal stance that utilizes colorblindness and neutral principles of constitutional law and the more extreme view that the law should not take race into account even when remedying a historical wrong. The theory of colorblindness can only address egregious racial harms that would be condemned by the majority of the population. Unfortunately, the ordinary racism that embedded in thought processes cannot be addressed and will continue to subordinate minorities. Critical Race theorists are suspicious of rights which always tend to be procedural and rather than substantive. This can be countered by color-conscious efforts to change the way things are done (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

**Challenge to mainstream ideologies and conventional norms.** There is no biological basis for racial categories and no genetic characteristics possessed by members of any racial group (Ladson-Billings, 2003; Morris, 2007). It is through social
interactions that modes of inequality and difference were developed that racism utilized to gain meaning (Morris, 2007). Race is a social construction which was given meaning through racial formation. These formations developed into social prejudices which became reflected and reified in law and the prevailing metanarrative regarding truth and reality. As such, all other forms of knowledge were marginalized and repressed (Ladson-Billings, 2003). CRT challenges mainstream ideologies and conventional norms created by Whites that lead to disparities of power and racism (Misawa, 2010). Racism is a social construction, not the project of objective, inherent, or fixed biological or genetic reality. Instead, race is a category created, manipulated and retired by society when convenient. Revisionist history reexamines the historical record of the United States and replaces the cultural interpretations of events by the majority with ones that more accurately reflect the experience of minorities (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

“The interests of Blacks in gaining racial equality have been accommodated only when they have converged with the interests of powerful Whites” (Taylor, 2009, p. 5). The rights afforded to African Americans are basic rights White individuals enjoyed for centuries (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Based on Marxist theory, the concept of interest convergence states that the bourgeoisie will tolerate advances for the proletariat if the advances benefit the bourgeoisie even more (Crotty, 1998; Taylor, 2009). In other words, the White power structure will tolerate racial advances for other races only when it promotes White self-interests (Harper et al., 2009). Bell (1992) argued that symbols of White power are desirable to marginalized people. Whites grants Blacks symbols that do not cost much in order to keep them pacified, but those symbols were not gifts of value, but of “[W]hite mendacity, [W]hite deceit and [W]hite chicanery” (p. 18).
Interest convergence acknowledges that White individuals are the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2003, 2009). Although affirmative action as a benefit for people of color has been under constant attack, White women and their families ultimately benefit from a structure initially implemented to offer equal opportunity to people of color (Hiraldo, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009). As a result of insufficient convergence of interests between elite Whites and African Americans, efforts to eradicate racism have produced minimal effects (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

**Contextual and historical analysis of law.** According to critical race scholars, the principal obstacle to racial reform is challenging the notion that any standard should represent the experiences of Whites (Taylor, 2009). The historical account of the majority should be scrutinized and reinterpreted instead of being accepted at face value. CRT refutes the traditional racial paradigms by claiming a distinctive minority voice. Revisionist history replaces comforting interpretations of events in America’s history by privileged members of society with ones that more accurately reflect the experiences of minorities. This requires a nuanced understanding and a critical perspective toward examining historical events (Harper et al., 2009). CRT insists on contextual and historical analysis of law and confronts and challenges historical inaccuracies (Misawa, 2010). According to Solórzano (1997), “A [C]ritical [R]ace [T]heory in education challenges ahistoricism and the unidisciplinary focus of most analyses and insists on analyzing race and racism in education by placing them in both a historical and contemporary context using interdisciplinary methods” (p. 123).
The critique of liberalism stems from the ideas of color blindness, neutrality of the law, equal opportunity for all and merit are social constructs designed by dominant groups to maintain power (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Harper et al., 2009; Taylor, 2009). According to CRT, claims of merit sustain White supremacy (Harper et al., 2009). When rhetoric that does not allow a person to reference race is privileged, the groups most affected by racism cannot name their reality without invoking offense or denial.

Colorblindness has the dangerous effect of rendering White privilege invisible, reinforcing it preeminence (Schofield, 1986) and allowing people to ignore the persistence and permanence of racist policies that perpetuate social inequity (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). “The colorblind public consensus that prevails in America today—i.e., the widespread belief that race no longer matters—has blinded us to the realities of race in our society and facilitated the emergence of a new caste system” (Alexander, 2010, p. 12).

Harper et al. (2009) listed three central beliefs that must continually be challenged: the elimination of racism through blindness to race, attributing racism to individuals and not systems, and fighting racism without attending to other forms of oppression and injustice, like sexism, economic exploitation, and homophobia. “When such beliefs are maintained in society through legal, educational, and sociopolitical channels, students of color, low-income persons, and other disenfranchised populations are silenced” (p. 392).

“[T]he U.S. political, legal and educational system is based on Whites having certain unalienable rights to property and capital” (Taylor, 2009, p. 7). Whiteness as property is an asset that only Whites can possess. Historically, this asset was the embodiment of privilege during slavery. The historic system of ownership and enslavement of African men, women, and children as property reinforces the notion of
White supremacy (Hiraldo, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009). CRT reminds us that Native Americans and Africans were expected to provide these rights in the forms of labor and land (Taylor, 2009). As a property interest, Whiteness operates on different levels, including the rights of disposition, use and enjoyment, reputation and status property, and exclusion (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

As a right of disposition, some property rights are transferable but other properties have limited transferability (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Whiteness is conferred upon certain performances making them transferable or alienable (Fordham & Obgu, 1986). As a right of use and enjoyment, Whites use and enjoy the privilege of Whiteness that allows them specific social, cultural and economic privileges (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; McIntosh, 1990). In the right to reputation and status property, damage to someone’s reputation is to damage an aspect of his or her personal property (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004). A person’s status is debased because an act or performance is not identified with Whiteness. For example, to call a White person “Black” is to defame the individual just as learning a second language as practiced in bilingual education in the United States lowers the status of the English language. In similar fashion, an urban, non-White school lacks the status and reputation of a suburban White school (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In the absolute right to exclude (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004), Whiteness is constructed as the absence of the contaminating Black influence (Bell, 1980; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The right to exclude was demonstrated by denying African Americans access to schools and creating and maintaining a dual system of education (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).
For centuries, educational access for non-Whites has never been a social or a *de facto* legal right. Even now, the U.S. Constitution and the courts continue as gatekeepers of this right. By failing to discuss the historic reasons Whites and people of color have had separate and unequal educations, people do not actively seek to understand the complexity surrounding the issue of race and educational access. The academic achievement gap between Whites and other groups is viewed as a new and separate problem instead of being seen as the outcome of intentional historical and social policies of the past (Taylor, 2009).

**Experiential knowledge.** The experiential knowledge of people of color is integral to understanding their realities (Misawa, 2010). “Critical race theory scholarship is grounded in a sense of reality that reflects the distinctive experiences of people of color” (Taylor, 2009, p. 8). CRT utilizes storytelling to analyze myths, presuppositions and popular wisdom or metanarratives of popular culture regarding race which subjugates African Americans and other minorities (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Knowledge, according to Banks (1993), is the way reality is explained or interpreted. Socially constructed, knowledge is heavily influenced by the positions of minorities within a particular economic, the political and social system, the structures of society, and the interpretation of their experiences (Banks, 1993). Positionality as a core principle of multiculturalism and CRT becomes a perspective which must be disclosed because this perspective informs the way researchers, practitioners and policy makers present, interpret, and analyze data (Taylor, 2009). With their different histories and experiences with oppression, African American, Native American, Indian, Asian, Latino, Latina, and Queer writers and thinkers are able to communicate to Caucasians what they do not know
CRT gives voice to unique perspectives and lived experiences of people of color. By legitimizing and appropriating the experiential knowledge of men and women of color and by understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination in education, CRT scholars can place racism in a realistic context and work to eliminate it (Harper et al., 2009).

Counternarratives are used to highlight discrimination, offer different interpretations of policy and challenge the assumptions and stereotypes about people of color (Harper et al., 2009). The experience of people negatively affected by racism becomes a valid data point. Narratives or counterstorying serve two purposes: to redirect the dominant gaze to see a new point of view and to refute claims of colorblindness and merit, a social construct that allocates privilege and status to Whites and sustains their dominance in society (Taylor, 2009). CRT scholars often use autobiography, narrative, parable, and storytelling as a way to challenge and expose the social constructions of race by legitimizing the racial and subordinate experience of marginalized groups and critiquing and exposing the dominant ideology which perpetuates stereotypes (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Parker & Villalpando, 2007; Taylor, 2009). CRT allows the person to name his or her own reality (Delgado, 1995). The experience of people negatively affected by racism “embraces the subjectivity of perspective and openly acknowledges that perceptions of truth, fairness, and justice reflect the mindset of the knower” (Taylor, 2009, p. 8). These counterstories can be composites of personal narratives of people of color (Delgado, Bernal, & Villalpando, 2002).

**Multidisciplinary analysis.** CRT utilizes multiple positions and oppressions experienced of color. This multidisciplinary analysis differs from the unidisciplinary
focus of most analysis (Misawa, 2010). Interdisciplinary in nature, CRT borrows from the intellectual traditions of law, sociology, history, ethnic studies, and women’s studies give voice to racial injustice (Harper et al., 2009).

**Social justice.** The social justice of CRT seeks to eliminate racial oppression and the broad goal of eliminating all forms of oppression (Misawa, 2010). Social justice programming encourages students to work toward social justice and systemic change by empowering them to become engaged citizens. Social justice issues are grounded in oppression, power and privilege (Lechuga, Clerc & Howell, 2009). Social justice education examines multicultural competence in higher education and exposes students to recognize inequality on individual, institutional and systemic levels (Mayhew & Fernández, 2007). Social justice is interested in the human defenders who derive enormous utility from defending the principles of social justice. Barduch (2012) suggests four commonly viewed evaluative criteria: efficiency; equality, equity, fairness, and justice; freedom, community, and other ideas; and process values and procedures valued in American democracy.

The tenets of critical race theory—permanent racism, challenge to mainstream ideologies and conventions, contextual and historical analysis of law, experiential knowledge, multidisciplinary analysis, and social justice—have the ability to expose racism in education and propose solutions for addressing it (Ladson-Billings, 2009). CRT relies on individuals who recognize race as a social construct and understand how society allocates status and privilege. Racial realists recognize the hierarchy that determines who receive benefits and the context in which the benefits are accrued (Harper et al., 2009). According to Bell (2005), racial realism requires a mindset to understand the permanency
of racism and the subordinate status of African Americans in the United States while working to improve the plight of historically excluded groups.

**Research Design**

This research study utilized a multiple case study methodology. This multiple case study provided insight into an issue of desegregation in public higher education and created a narrative or counternarrative to present the prevailing thoughts on race and desegregation regarding three HBCUs in Mississippi, each of which comprises one case in the multiple case study. Yin (2014) offered a two-fold definition to explain the scope of the case study and the methodological features of the case study. “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates the contemporary phenomenon (‘the case’) in depth in its real world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2014, p.16).

A case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion and as another result benefits from prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (Yin, 2014, p.17)

A research case study has five components: case study questions, propositions if any, the unit or units of analysis, logic linking the data to the propositions and criteria for interpreting the findings. Case study research is an appropriate research method to answer research questions that ask “how” and “why,” to examine phenomenon where the researcher has little to no control over behavior events, and to study a contemporary versus an entirely historical phenomenon. The “how” and “why” questions have an
explanatory power that focuses on the operational links that can be traced over time and not by frequency or incidence. Case study research is quasi-experimental or observational research because it cannot and does not manipulate behaviors, but it can apply the logic of an experimental design (Yin, 2014).

The multiple case study design illuminates different perspectives on an issue (Stake, 2003). Multiple case study has a number of advantages to single case study. First, the evidence from multiple cases is considered more compelling and more robust (Yin, 2014). A number of cases are studied to understand a general condition, phenomenon, or population (Stake, 2003). Second, replication logic can explain why a proposition has been demonstrated or not across cases, why certain cases have certain predicted results and why other cases have contrasting results. Third, case study focuses on literal replication, not theoretical replication. The researcher replicates the procedures for each case by using the logic of replication. Since the contexts of the cases differ, qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize from one case to another. Fourth, multiple case study is preferred when no logical subunits can be identified or the theory underlying the case study if of a holistic nature (Yin, 2014).

**Participant selection.** For this study, the *Ayers* discrimination lawsuit in Mississippi higher education sought to remedy past discriminatory effects in higher education on behalf of Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. The participants of this research study were chosen by purposeful sampling because of their intimate knowledge of operations and policies of their University and the state higher education board as administrators at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University (Creswell,
2007; Patton, 2002). The researcher examined the websites of each HBCU under study, examined their governance and administrative structures, and determined the administrative division and administrative officials to interview. Fifteen participants were approached for their participation in this study, five individuals at each institution from each of the following offices at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University: President, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement, and Business and Finance. In qualitative research, a small sample size is suitable for collecting extensive details about each participant (Creswell, 2009). When a person declined to participate in the study, the researcher asked the individual to recommend someone with knowledge with knowledge and experience who may be willing to answer questions. Snowball or chain sampling occurred when well-informed people identify critical cases or informants who have a great deal of knowledge about a phenomenon (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

**Gaining access to participants.** After receiving Institutional Review Board approval from the University of Memphis to conduct this research study (see Appendix A), I contacted the Institutional Review Boards from Jackson State University, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University for approval to do research on their campuses (see Appendices B, C, and D). Once each review board cleared me to do the research, I contacted the administrators by phone call, email, certified letter and in some cases office visits. The initial phone call introduced the administrators or their executive assistants to me, my university affiliation, degree program, research study, request for their participation, data methods. Following the phone call, I immediately sent each administrator an email with an approved cover letter containing all the pertinent
information regarding my study followed up by a certified letter. Cover letters were sent to Jackson State University, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University officials (see Appendices E, F, and G). If the person agreed to participate, we set up a day and time for the semi-structured interview and optional nonparticipant observation. If an individual chose not to participate, I asked him or her to refer me to someone with an intimate knowledge of institutional and state policies regarding higher education. When an interview was secured, I took the opportunity to visit other administrators who had not yet responded to my request.

Data collection began in the order IRB approvals were granted from each institution beginning with Jackson State administrators, Alcorn State administrators and Mississippi Valley State administrators. Thirteen administrators or administrative designees participated in the study. No university president was interviewed during in this study. Among the 13 administrators or their designees who participated in the study, 3 officials represented Jackson State University, 5 officials represented Alcorn State University, and 5 officials represented Mississippi Valley State University. Informed consent was obtained from each participant (see Appendix H). The Jackson State University institutional review board required that the participants of research studies on their campus sign their consent form (see Appendix I).

**Research sites.** This multiple case study consisted of data collection in multiple sites. Data collection occurred on the main campus of the three HBCUs in Mississippi: Jackson State University, a comprehensive university; Alcorn State University, a land grant regional institution; and Mississippi Valley State University, a regional university.
Jackson State University. Jackson State University is located in Hinds County. The main campus is located in the capital city of Jackson in central Mississippi. The mission of Jackson State University is to produce “technologically-advanced, diverse, ethical, global leaders who think critically, address societal problems and compete effectively” (Jackson State University, 2009, p. 9). The vision of Jackson State University is to become recognized as a “nurturing, state-of-the-art technologically-infused intellectual community” where students and faculty “engage in creative research, participate in interdisciplinary and multi-institutional/organizational collaborative learning teams and serve the global community” (Jackson State University, 2009, p. 9).

Alcorn State University. Alcorn State University is located in Claiborne County. The main campus, Alcorn State, MS, is 7 miles west of Lorman, 80 miles southwest of Jackson, 55 miles south of Vicksburg, and 40 miles north of Natchez (Alcorn State University, 2013). The Natchez campus is home to the School of Nursing and the School of Business opened in 1998. Courses are also offered at an off-campus site in Vicksburg in collaboration with Hinds Community College. The Vicksburg Corporate Office opened in 2003 (Alcorn State University, 2011). The mission of Alcorn State University is to emphasize:

- intellectual development and lifelong learning through the integration of diverse pedagogies, applied and basic research, cultural and professional programs, public service and outreach, while providing access to globally competitive academic and research programs. Alcorn strives to prepare graduates to be well-rounded future leaders of high character and to be successful in the global markets of the 21st century. (Alcorn State University, 2011, p. 36)
The University’s vision is to “become a premier comprehensive land-grant university” and “develop students into globally-competitive leaders and apply scientific research, through collaborative partnerships, which benefits the surrounding communities, states, nation and the world” (Alcorn State University, 2011, p. 36).

**Mississippi Valley State University.** Mississippi Valley State University is located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta where 34% of the state’s African American population currently resides. The main campus is in Itta Bena, MS in Leflore County on a 450-acre tract of land with the site for campus development consisting of 200 acres. Mississippi Valley State University is approximately 5 miles west of Greenwood, approximately 100 miles north of Jackson, and approximately 120 miles from Memphis, Tennessee (Mississippi Valley State University, 2011).

The mission of Mississippi Valley State University is to provide “comprehensive undergraduate and graduate programs in education, the arts and sciences, and professional studies” (Mississippi Valley State University, 2011, p. 17). The institution focuses on seven main areas as outlined by its undergraduate catalog: the foundation of excellence, meeting regional educational needs and maintaining historical relationships, community service and service learning, centers of excellent, health and wellness, research and culture, and a global perspective. Mississippi Valley State University is committed to excellence in teaching, learning, service and research – a commitment resulting in a learner-centered environment that prepares critical thinkers, exceptional communicators, and service-oriented, engaged and productive citizens. MVSU is fundamentally committed to positively impacting the quality of life and creating
extraordinary educational opportunities for the Mississippi Delta and beyond.

(Mississippi Valley State University, 2011, p. 17)

**Data Collection**

In a case study, a researcher collects detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period to explore an activity, event, program, process or one or more individuals in depth (Stake, 2003). Qualitative researchers collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study. Information is gathered by talking to people directly and seeing them behave and act within their context. As a result, researchers have face-to-face interaction over time (Creswell, 2009). As a qualitative researcher, it is important to observe the administrators in their daily environment and to take notes that allowed me to create a counterstory or counternarrative to illuminate the themes that emerge from the research, a major component of CRT. The strength of case study research is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence that includes documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts. Case study adds two sources of evidence to the historian’s repertoire: direct observation of the events under study and interviews of persons involved in the events (Yin, 2014). The data collection methods for the multiple case study included semi-structured narrative interviews with institutional administrators, nonparticipant observations, document analysis, and field notes. The data collection took place from September 2014 to December 2014.

**Semi-structured interviews.** I interviewed 13 administrators or their administrative designees at each of the three historically Black institution ideally for 60 min or for the amount of time the administrators had available. The researcher utilized a
semi-structured interview guide to conduct the interviews. The semi-structured interview guide included the research questions and a list of follow-up questions for each participant (see Appendix J). I was free to probe and ask additional questions for clarity and understanding so that there is not an assumed understanding between the researcher and the participant before bringing the participant back to the main line of questioning. The semi-structured format allowed the me to make good use of the time and required the me to ask each participant the same questions to compare data across questions and institutions (Stake, 2003; Yin, 2014). Interviews are targeted by focusing directly on case study topics and insightful by providing explantions as well as personal views of the participants (Yin, 2014). All participants agreed to me audio recording the interview and signed the consent form. They also were provided copies of the consent form.

**Nonparticipant observation.** A valuable component of data collection during site visits is direct observation. During an observation, the researcher is provided the opportunity to view how staff and administrators interact to implement policies and procedures in a real-time setting. An observation can provide a more accurate view of operations and implementation of policy than staff interviews (Mathison & O’Brien, 2010). Direct observation is both immediate and contextual. It covers actions and realtime and can give context to the case (Yin, 2014). Generally, nonparticipant observation occurred during times I was left in a room alone or while I was waiting to meet with an administrator. In one instance, I was allowed to shadow a participant to a check presentation. In these instances, I took notes and sketches of the location on the nonparticipant observation form (see Appendix K). Written or audio recorded notes of
my initial impressions were expanded the within two days to make sure I remembered the things that were impressed upon me in the nonparticipant observation.

**Document analysis.** “Documents play an important role in corroborating and augmenting data from interviews and other sources and are critical for every type of case study” (Martinson & O’Brien, 2010, p. 175). The analysis of documents serves a number of purposes. First, it can provide details to outstanding questions that remain after site visits. Second, document analysis offers rich contextual information. Third, it offers a better overall understanding of the operations and implementations at site (Martinson & O’Brien, 2010). First, I collected and reviewed mission and vision statements, press releases, graduate and undergraduate recruitments materials, flyers, campus newspapers, alumni newsletters, campus maps and annual reports I gathered while at each site. Second, some participants informed me of documents that were available at the institution. Third, I set up my Google account to alert me daily of news regarding IHL, each university president and each university. Fourth, I contacted the IHL office and was provided a copy of the Ayers Accountability Manual. Fifth, I contacted the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and requested founding legislation for each of the state’s public four-year universities.

**Field notes.** Field notes written in great detail describes people, events, issues conversations and settings (Wiener, 2007). Field notes can occur in many ways via writing materials as there is not one universal prescription for taking field notes. These may include place and time for field recordings, symbols developed by observers as a form of short hand and how field notes are stored. Different settings lend themselves to
different ways or proceeding and organizing fieldwork. “What is not optional is the taking of field notes” (Patton, 2002, p. 302).

Field notes contain descriptions of what have been observed that the observer believes is worth noting. Field notes are descriptive and should be dated and record basic information, such as place of observation, physical setting, social interactions, and activities that took place. Field notes also contain what people say, preferable direct quotations, the observer’s reactions and own feelings and reflections about personal meaning and significance may also be recorded in field notes and insights, interpretations, beginning analysis and working hypothesis about what is occurring in the field and what it means (Patton, 2002). Seeing that the the court cases revealed that physical plant of HBCUs were inferior to the physical plant of HWIs, I took walked the campus of each HBCU and took pictures of monuments, signage, and markers and video of the buildings on each campus as an additional data source. I spoke my impressions as I was video taping and transcribed what I said. An additional source of field notes were conversations that occurred with participants that were not recorded. These were spoken into the audio recorder or were written soon after the interaction.

During interviews, “The use of a tape recorder does not eliminate the need for taking notes,” but allows the researcher “to concentrate on takign strategic and focused notes, rather than attempting verbatim notes” (Patton, 2002, p. 383). Taking notes during interviews serves four purposes. First, it helps to formulate new questions as the interview moves along to add to clarity to what was said earlier. Second, reviewing field notes before transcripts ensure the inquiry unfolded in the desired direction and can stimulate early insights relevant to subsequent interviews in the field. Third, note taking
facilitates later analysis and locates important quotation from the recording. Fourth, field notes taken during interviews served as a back up in the event the recorder malfunctioned or the recordign is inadvertently erased during transcription (Patton, 2002).

**Data Analysis**

A fundamental philosophical assumption of qualitative research assumes individuals construct reality by interacting with their social world. There are many realities instead of one, observable, measurable reality. The purpose of the qualitative research is to understand how people make sense of their lives, delineate the process of meaning, and describe how people interpret the experience (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Researchers make an interpretation based on what they read, see, and understand which in turn is informed by the context, background, history, and the researcher’s prior understanding and eventually results in the emergence of multiple views of the problem. Reporting the problem using multiple perspectives allows a researcher to develop a complex picture of the problem. By identifying as many factors involved in the problem under study, a holistic picture of the problem can be achieved (Creswell, 2009). Data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques of Ezzy (2002) and the social, intersubjective and cultural fields of Zilber, Tuval-Mashiah, and Lieblich (2008). Memo writing was also a crucial step in the analysis process. Analysis occurred from December 2014 to June 2015.

**Thematic analysis.** After the interviews are transcribed, I used thematic analysis which aimed “to identify themes within the data” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 88). To generate a set of categories, I began by open coding interview transcripts. After each interview was transcribed, each line of the interview was coded with a phrase. Each participant’s
phrases were typed into a Microsoft Excel file with its own color. The phrases of participants that worked at the same university were printed on the same color card stock to differentiate between universities and cut out with scissors. These small rectangular cards were then placed in a gallon-sized Ziploc bag. Next, I used axial coding to “integrate codes around the axes of central categories” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 91). The codes were taken out of the Ziploc bag and placed in general categories which were placed in a quart-sized Ziploc bags within the gallon-sized bag. Lastly, I completed the thematic analysis by performing selective or theoretical coding to identify the major themes that emerged from the core categories. I took the category bag and typed the codes under the category in a Microsoft Word document. The color for each participant was replaced by a pseudonym. The pseudonym was placed in parenthesis after the code was typed. After typing all of the codes, the categories were collapsed into themes (Ezzy, 2002). The chapters for each university was written from the word document with and direct quotations were pulled from the interview transcripts.

**Intersubjective relations.** Ezzy (2002) stated that the nature of an event of belief is found in “the relationship of the event or belief to a broader interpretive framework or narrative” (p. 95). In addition, I analyzed transcription a second way using the intersubjective relations, the social field, and cultural meta-narratives as three ways to look at the same text. Intersubjective relations looked at explicit references and assumed context which embodies “the role of the parties, prior relations, feelings” (Zilber et al., p. 1054) in which the narrative was told, as “knowledge of the immediate context is essential for understanding the story, and it should be accounted for and explored in the interpretation” (Zilber et al., 2008, p. 1053). The social field refers to the spatial
(institutions and organizations) and temporal (historical events and figures) components, the contexts within the experience was lived. History and identity are “continually reinterpreted as we have new experiences and tell new stories about ourselves, our past, and the world around us” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 96). Finally, the cultural metanarratives which “reflect cultural themes and beliefs that give a local story its coherence and legitimacy” were explored to see if participants agreed with or challenged these dominant cultural discourses regarding diversity efforts at HBCUs (Zilber et al., 2008, p. 1054). The narrative accounts of the participants examined the role of HBCUs in the African American community and relationships with society as a whole and the College Board. Participants also spoke about their university in the context of historical events and their lived experiences. Lastly, the participants addressed the cultural metanarrative regarding negative perceptions or stigmas the majority population hold about BHCU

These administrators challenged the cultural metanarrative and offered a counternarrative from their position as administrators, educators, and former students.

**Memo writing.** Memo writing is a systematic way of recording emerging questions, puzzles, definitions, and categories during data collection and formal analysis (Rogers & Goodrick, 2010). “[M]emo writing is the dynamic, intellectually energizing process that captures ideas in synergistic engagement with one another and through naming, explicating, and synthesizing them, ultimately renders them accessible to wider audiences” (Bex Lempert, 2007, p. 246). Memos serve a variety of functions. First, memos may “delve into the deeper meaning of a code, to describe the significance of an observation, to capture an incident that appears salient but may not as yet have been coded, to question earlier observations” (Weiner, 2007, p. 302). Second, memo writing
allows the research to think through ideas about a category and its properties and to search for interrelationships with other emerging categories. A memo is an account of the researcher talking to himself or herself (Charmaz, 2014). Qualitative researchers must write out their memos to keep from forgetting (Noerager Stern, 2007). Memo writing should be done freely, expansively, unconstrained by restrictions of formal writing (Charmaz, 2014). Conjoined with diagrams and memos are messy, partial and provisional. They evolve, sometimes negate, and hopefully extend earlier configurations (Bex Lempert, 2007). As such, memos are works of clay and paper, not works of marble or eternal bronze (Charmaz, 2014).

There is a social component to writing memos. Memos are adaptable narrative tools researcher use to develop ideas and elaborate on the social worlds of research sites. Memos reflect the social lives they interpret and the interactional social position of the researcher and the respondents (Bex Lempert, 2007). According to Charmaz (1983), memos are the analytical locations where researchers are most fully present, finds their voice and gives themselves permission to formulate, play with, reconfigure, expand, explore, and distill ideas for publication and participation in conversation with others. Memos record interpretations and incipient patterns emerging from the concrete realities the social worlds of research sites. Memos must acknowledge the situational limits of the research and does not point toward universal knowledge (Richardson, 1998).

Writing memos allows researchers to develop theory, transform raw data, diagram and generate new ideas and occurs continuously throughout the research process. First, the intent and purpose of memo writing is discovery and theory development (Bex Lempert, 2007). Writing memos is the pivotal intermediate step between data collection
and writing draft of papers and is the link and means by which the research transforms
data into theory. “Memos are theoretical notes about the data and the conceptual
connections between categories” (Holton, 2007, p. 281). Memos guide the next steps of
data collection: coding and analysis. Memoing done in conjunction with coding and
analysis captures the researcher’s emergent ideas of substantive and theoretical categories
and forces a reasoning of the emerging theory and categories as they emerge and
integrate. Memos present hypotheses about connections between categories and their
properties and begin the integration of the connections with clusters of other categories to
create a theory. Memos raise the description of the theoretical level through the
conceptual rendering of the material. The goal is to develop ideal with complete
conceptual freedom (Holton, 2007).

Second, “extensive amounts of solid, rich data are the ‘raw’ materials for
discovery. Analysis of this ‘raw’ data occurs through memo writing and diagramming”
(Bex Lempert, 2007, p. 262). Crucial to the research process, writing memos prompts the
researcher to analyze data and to develop their codes into categories early in the research
process (Charmaz, 2014). Memo writing is the link and means by which the research
transforms data into theory. It is through the memo writing process where the research
interprets the data through sorting, analyzing and coding the “raw” data into memos to
discover emergent social patterns and continuously explores, clarifies and theorizes about
these emergent patterns (Charmaz, 2006).

Data are the building blocks of developing theory and memos are the mortar that
holds the building blocks, or data, together (Noerager Stern, 2007). “When studies
include formal/informal interview, the narrative voices of respondents constitute our
data” (Bex Lempert, 2007, p. 256). The data is the researcher’s evidence that supports analysis, allows audience to participate in the analytical arguments (Bex Lempert, 2007). “Including respondent voices in memos provides an immediate illustration of the analytical topic, keeps the researchers grounded by keeping the data in the forefront of the analyses, and makes the data easily transferable to final written documents” (Bex Lempert, 2007, pp. 256-257). Memoing roots the researcher in data analysis and increases the level of the researcher’s abstract ideas (Charmaz, 2006).

Third, writing memos and creating diagrams “throughout the research process” enable researchers “to shape the collection and subsequent analyses of data” (Bex Lempert, 2007, p. 262). Less wordy than memos, diagrams create a visual display of what the researcher knows and does not know and represent categories and their linkages more precisely and concisely. Diagrams are manipulative and help to generate new ideas, connections, and reconfigurations. Memos and diagrams evolve they grow in complexity and abstraction as analysis progresses and literature informs (Bex Lempert, 2007). Sorting through memos helps the researcher integrate the theory, understand the physical display of their through process in the appearance of theory as it takes shape (Noerager Stern, 2007).

Fourth, “continuous memo writing, re-reading and re-writing, leads to progressively more abstract levels of theorizing” (Bex Lempert, 2007, p. 262). Writing memos is a process qualitative researchers uses to keep track of their thoughts about the data (Noerager Stern, 2007). Memo writing is a continual process that helps to raise the data to a conceptual level and develop the properties of each category (Charmaz, 2014). Writing successive memos helps the researcher involved in the analysis and helps them to
increase the level of abstraction of their ideas. (Charmaz, 2014). Clarity and integration will occur with expanding the analysis (Bex Lempert, 2007). It also helps the researcher avoid the premature adoption of a core category and a final theoretical framework, by ensuring the fit, relevance, and workability for the theory (Charmaz, 2006).

Memos are helpful during analysis. Once categories are developed, clustered, and expanded, the researcher sorts them according to properties and categories. The labels act as rubrics for the categories and their properties. New labels will be needed categories collapse upon each other and memos will belong to another category. During the research process, I kept three types of memos. First, the procedural memos described the type of analysis and the steps I performed on the data. Second, analytic memos detail the actual analysis as described by the procedural memo. Third, reflective memos kept track of my thoughts, questions and preliminary analysis during data collection and analysis.

**Representation**

The findings of qualitative research are usually in the form of words and descriptions. During traditional representation, data is represented in the form of quotes form interviews, episodes form field experiences or documentary evidence to adequately and convincingly support findings. It is the “rich, thick, descriptions” of words that persuade the reader of the trustworthiness of the findings (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 101). In representing the qualitative research, the researcher struggles to mediate the tension between having the right amount of supporting data versus interpretation and analysis and to find the right voice to present the findings (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). The analysis was written in three sections to represent the three cases: Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. The
emerging themes form the data served as the headings for each case and quotes, episodes and documentary evidence supported and led credence to the themes.

**Trustworthiness**

Qualitative researchers often use the term trustworthiness to refer to the concept of validity. Credibility helps the reader to trust data analysis (Roberts, 2010). “Qualitative research is demonstrably trustworthy and rigorous when the research demonstrates that he or she has worked to understand the situated nature of participants’ interpretations and meanings” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 81). In this research study, a pilot study, construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability ensure the trustworthiness of the findings.

**Pilot study.** Martinson and O’Brien (2010) advocated using a pilot test if possible to test each data collection method to illuminate and correct problematic areas. The pilot study helps the researcher refine “data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures being followed” (Yin, 2014, p.96). Access, convenience and geographic proximity can be the main reason for selecting the pilot case (Yin, 2014). By undergoing this process, the researcher is able to anticipate events and problems, identify people, establish rules for confidentiality, modify data collection strategies, or reword, modify or add to the research questions (Martinson & O’Brien, 2010).

In my pilot project *Equity under the Law*, I examined how Mississippi Valley State University implemented the negotiated ruling of the Ayers desegregation lawsuit. I chose the university because of its proximity to Memphis, Tennessee and to my hometown of Indianola, Mississippi. I am a graduate of the institution, and I knew a current administrator at the institution. Gaining access to participants was difficult. When
asked to participate, three administrators did not respond after phone calls, emails or an office visit, another declined and one agreed to participate. I gathered data from a speech, a face-to-face interview, and a radio interview of administrators at Mississippi Valley State University. I found that past history of inadequate and minimal funding from the state and recent years of declining enrollment continues to affect the fiscal forecast of Mississippi Valley State University. The most pressing issues include recruiting students and sustaining enrollment. Fifty percent of entering freshmen return their sophomore year. In order combat negative publicity, Mississippi Valley State University must revitalize its academic programs and cultivate alumni gifts. Most importantly, bold administrative leadership must articulate a positive vision for Mississippi Valley State University and to communicate the vision to faculty, staff, students the local community and the higher education community to move the institution forward (Hamilton, 2014).

At the time of the pilot study, the university was undergoing a presidential search. My pilot study was accepted for publication by the Research in Higher Education Journal. After the pilot study, I made the following changes to the research protocol. First, I reduced the time for the semi-structured interview from 90 min to 60 min. Second, I made the nonparticipant observation optional. The participant chose whether they want to be shadowed or not. Third, I revised the research questions and interview guide and made changes in the observation guide to reflect changes suggested by my dissertation committee. Fourth, I asked participants to suggest a person as proxy if they chose not to participate in the research project. Fifth, the study was expanded from one institution, Mississippi Valley State University, to the three public HBIs in Mississippi—Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University.
**Validity.** Since qualitative researchers are the primary instruments for data collection and analysis, the interpretation of reality is accessed directly through observation and interviews. A qualitative research is the researcher’s interpretation of someone else’s reality, a reality that is multiple and changing and constructed by individuals (Merriam & Simpson, 2000).

Construct validity establishes the correct operational measures for the concept under study. To meet the test of construct validity, an investigator must select the specific types of changes to study, relate them to the original objectives of the study and demonstrate the selected measures of these changes do indeed reflect the specific types of selected changes. During data collection and writing the draft, the using multiple sources of data ensure construct validity and establishes a chain of evidence and member checks (Yin, 2014). For explanatory or causal studies, internal validity seeks to establish a causal relationship, for example, trying to determine whether event x led to event y. During data analysis, pattern matching, explanation-building, addressing rival explanations and using logic models can help to ensure internal validity (Yin, 2014). In this study, triangulation and a subjectivity statement help the researcher ensure internal validity. First, triangulation utilized multiple sources of data and multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings. A statement of researcher’s experiences, assumptions and biases helps “researchers identify how their personal features, experiences, beliefs, feelings, cultural standpoints and professional disposition affects their research and convey this information to other scholars for their consideration of the study’s credibility, authority, and overall quality or validity” (Preissle, 2008, p. 846). The researcher must work hard to
report all evidence fairly. If not, bias may occur more frequently and demand greater attention (Yin, 2014).

External validity seeks to establish the domain to which a study’s findings are generalized beyond the immediate case study. Case studies are generalizable to the theoretical propositions and not to general populations. The problem external validity presents for a case study is that findings of qualitative research are not transferable to other cases. Generalizing is not automatic. Theory is tested by replicating the findings in a second or a third instance (Yin, 2014). External validity is strengthened through thick description, multisite designs, modal comparison, and random sample within the phenomenon. Thick description provides enough information and description so that readers determine how closely their situations match the research situation and whether the findings can be transferred. The use of several sites in multisite designs, particularly those that represent some variation, makes the results more applicable to a greater range of situations. Modal comparisons deal with how typical programs, events or samples compare with the majority of others in the same class. Random sampling within the phenomenon under study is another option since a study there may have numerous parts, each of which could be sampled for inclusion in the study (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). In this study, external validity was accomplished by utilizing thick, rich description, modal comparisons and replication logic in collective case study.

**Reliability.** Reliability demonstrates that the operations of a study—such as the data collection procedures—can be repeated with the same results. If a later investigator followed the same procedures as described by an earlier investigator and conducted the same case study all over again, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings
and conclusions (Yin, 2003, p. 34). In qualitative research, reliability is problematic because human behavior is never static. One person’s experience is not more reliable than another person’s experience. Reliability looks at whether the results are consistent with the data collected. This can be done by triangulation, peer examination and audit trail, or in this case procedural, analytic and personal memos, to delineate how decisions were made throughout the inquiry. External validity looks to strengthen rigor (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Case study can establish rigor if the research has followed systematic procedures and had allowed equivocal evidence to influence the direction of findings and the conclusion. This can further be accomplished by using the case study protocol and developing a case study database during data collection (Yin, 2014).

**Triangulation.** In social science research, triangulation refers “to strategies to overcome the potential bias that can arise from the use of a single method, single data source, single observer, or single theoretical base” (Rogers & Goodrick, 2010, p. 446). Triangulation is achieved by examining the evidence from different data sources, using a range of methods, collecting data from different sources, and working with peers or participants to analyze the data. By adhering to these principles, the researcher can strengthen claims “to build a coherent justification for themes” (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). Themes must be based on the convergence of several types of data or perspectives from the participants. When this occurs, the process adds validity to the study (Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative researchers gather multiple forms of data instead of relying on one single source. Multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, are reviewed, analyzed and organized in to themes that cut across all data sources.
In order to adhere to the principle of triangulation, I utilized non-participant observation, narrative interviews, and document analysis. Data triangulation occurred by using three research methods: non-participant observation, interviews, and document analysis.

Theoretical triangulation occurs when data is examined from various perspectives. It is helpful in bringing forward different backgrounds, understandings and views to the research (Rogers & Goodrick, 2010). Theoretical triangulation occurred by analyzing the data based on thematic analysis of Ezzy (2002), intersubjective relations of Zilber et al. (2008), and using Critical Race Theory as a lens to view the research findings. Originally part of the early stages of grounded theory, thematic analysis seeks to identify themes within the data. The themes are inductive because the nature of the categories and themes are not predetermined, but emerged during analysis.

**Subjectivity Statement**

In Indianola, Mississippi, a railroad track that runs through the middle of the city from the east to west divides the city. In my youth, people who live north of the tracks were White and people who live south of the tracks were Black. We affectionately called it “the White folk side” and “the Black folk side” of town. The city school system was predominantly Black. Whites would attend first through eighth grades at the elementary school north of the tracks. During high school, Whites would leave the public school system to attend the academy in the city or travel 30 min to attend a private Catholic high school in another county. In my adulthood, people would ask me if I knew a certain White person, but more often than not, I did not know them because we did not go to school together (Carr, 2012). In casual conversations with some people in later years,
people asked I knew someone my age from Indianola. When I answered, “I did not know them,” I realized they were probably White and attended the academy. I was shocked to realize that there were kids my own age with whom I had absolutely no interaction (Carr, 2012).

I attended Gentry High School, the same high school LaToysha Brown and Primus Apolonio attended in the Carr article. Two main corridors meet at a 90-degree angle with the main offices, lockers and cafeteria. Off the longest corridor are four wings of classrooms that you have to walk outside of the corridors to access. The rooms are the wings are open to the elements. Built in 1952 as a consolidated school district for colored students in south Sunflower County, White county leaders attempted to deter Blacks from going to school by building a campus that was partially outdoors after a fire destroyed the previous building. Now the conditions are much worse. Gentry High School has dangerous sinkholes in the courtyard and inadequate drainage. Teachers and students have to wade through water to get to class when it rains. Some classes are without air conditioning in the winter and heat in the summer. Internet access is inadequate and causes computers to crash. As of 2012, Gentry High School was 98% African American, 1% Caucasian, and 1% Hispanic (Carr, 2012). After seeing Gentry High School play sports teams like South Panola High School in Batesville and Warren Central High School in Vicksburg whose schools and sports teams have successfully integrated, my question because, “Why can’t we do that in Indianola?” Brown expressed the same sentiment (Carr, 2012).

One memorable academic experience was the scholar bowl. Public and private high schools participated at a local community college against each other in rounds until
there was a winner. During my tenth grade year, my predominantly black high school came in second place. I took pride in beating White students who attended academies. After that and other experiences, I realized they I truly did have what it takes to compete at a high level with all types of people.

During my senior year in high school, the only college I considered attending was Tougaloo College a private four-year historically Black institution north of Jackson, Mississippi. I considered it primarily because it was ranked in *U.S. News and World Reports* and had a great reputation for mathematics and science. I did not consider Mississippi Valley State University because of its proximity to home and the growing chorus of opponents who wanted the institution closed or merged. The reputation of Mississippi Valley State University was not as highly esteemed as that of Tougaloo College and I thought I would not learn much at the public historically Black institution. Mississippi Valley State University has always been an underdog and has been undervalued and written off by other HBCUs, White universities, the State of Mississippi, and the Board of Trustees. Even though I had a lot of love and affection for Mississippi Valley State University, it was not my first college choice. In fact, Mississippi Valley State University was not on my list of colleges. During that time, there was talk of the *Ayers* case closing the university. I had made up my mind to attend Tougaloo College, a private HBCU in Jackson, Mississippi, with aspirations of being a concert pianist. The theory professor there told us to be realistic and pursue a music education career. I had no problem pursuing music education, but Tougaloo did not have a music education degree. The choir teacher said I could take the music education classes from Jackson State, but I was forbidden by my mother to attend Jackson State University
because it had a reputation for being a party school. In a conversation, the chair of the music department at Mississippi Valley State University told me that no matter how good you are, people look at credentials and I would not have them if I graduated from Tougaloo with a music degree. During the summer, I took 2 summer classes at Mississippi Valley State University with every intention of returning to Tougaloo. I thought summer school would be a breeze. I said to myself, “They can’t teach me anything. They are about to close. Summer school is less intense as the regular school year. This is going to be a breeze.” Boy was I wrong! Summer classes at Mississippi Valley State University worked were the most intense classes I have taken. The choir teacher at Tougaloo College heard from some of my friends that I was considering transferring. He called me on Monday said needed an answer by the end of the week because he had some students who could use my scholarship if I chose to transfer. I called him two days later to tell him that I had planned to transfer to Mississippi Valley State University. I graduated in three years as co-valedictorian with a music education degree.

Years later as a doctoral student in the Higher and Adult Education, I attended an alumni meeting for Mississippi Valley State University. The university president spoke to us in a videotaped message. She made it apparently clear that my alma mater was in dire financial condition. The funding policy of the state would reduce appropriations to a staggering level. Student recruitment and alumni support to bolster dollars for the institution were critical to the institution’s survival. At that moment, I decided that my research would focus on the viability and sustainability of historically Black colleges and
universities in a way that I could benefit my alma mater, Mississippi Valley State University.

Equity and fairness are two principles that are dear to me. It bothers me when a person, group or entity is not treated fairly. I believe there should be processes and procedures in place to remedy inequity and unfairness, but the powers that be may prevent iniquities and unfairness from being addressed. Second, I tend to associate myself with the underdog. As an African American male reared in the Mississippi Delta, I have defied the odds of African American males in my hometown my going to college and receiving a bachelor’s degree, two master’s degrees, and pursuing a terminal degree. Third, I believe that through hard work, grit and determination, an individual can reach and achieve his or her goals. However, I am also cognizant that many factors prevent African Americans from leveling the playing field with Whites and other minorities. Fourth, I firmly believe racism continues to exist in the United States.

I have great affinity for the HBCUs in Mississippi. Many of my African American teachers in the public schools I attended graduated from these institutions because they could not or chose not to attend one of the HWIs. The interstate and interconference football rivalries between Alcorn State and Jackson State, Jackson State and Mississippi Valley State, and Mississippi Valley State and Alcorn State are just as exciting as the football rivalry between Mississippi State and Ole Miss. I grew up watching Steve McNair from Alcorn State, Walter Peyton from Jackson State and Jerry Rice from Mississippi Valley State become franchise players in the National Football League. Consequently, I graduated with a bachelor’s degree in music education from Mississippi Valley State University, the same institution that educated my mother, aunts and teachers.
I understand that every occurrence at an HBCU cannot be attributed to racism and cannot be analyzed using CRT. While the previous admissions policy, the number of institutions, the designation of institutional mission, program duplication and the number of Whites attending HBCUs are remnants of segregation in higher education, ineffective leadership cannot be attributed to racism. I believe that Mississippi Valley State University and Jackson State University may never control the endowment promised to them because they may never achieve other-race student enrollment of 10% for three consecutive years. I do not believe the settlement is fair to the three Mississippi HBCUs who never practiced discrimination, but are the products of discrimination and segregation. I believe that political powers behind the scenes removed Alvin Chambliss as attorney from the Ayers case, added Congressman Bennie Thompson to replaced Jake Ayers after his death as the lead plaintiff even though his wife survived him in an effort to bring the 29-year-old case to a resolution. Consequently, I believe that HBCUs should work toward diversifying their campuses as more Black students are attending HWI instead of HBCUs.

I believe my segregated upbringing in a post-segregation society provides me a unique opportunity to explore the issues through a Critical Race perspective. Being a member of a minority group who has been oppressed and discriminated against and an alumnus of an institution that has received its share of oppression and discrimination by others, I believe I am in a unique position to call “an Ace an Ace” and “a Spade a Spade.” I believe my disciplined qualitative research training allowed me to delve deep into the research in order to find a solution to the challenges my alma mater currently faces. My position as an African American male places me outside of certain circles. My personal
belief “to seek justice and to do good” drives my research. For the sake of my alma mater, I am willing to help Mississippi Valley State University survive and thrive in an unprecedented time of budget cuts and economic uncertainty.

**Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand the impact of the *Ayers* case on state-supported HBCUs in Mississippi from a Critical Race Theory perspective. Data collection methods included an optional nonparticipant observation, 60-min semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Data was analyzed utilizing thematic analysis, intersubjective fields, social context and cultural metanarratives. A previous pilot study demonstrating construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability ensured trustworthiness of the findings. Each case or institution was represented using traditional representation. The use of quotes from interviews, episodes form field and experience and documentary evidence were used to create a counterstory or counternarrative on behalf of each of the institutions to understand the impact of the *Ayers* settlement on state-supported HBCUs in Mississippi. In the next three chapters, the findings of each case and the emergence of the themes within each of the three cases will be discussed. Chapter 4 will discuss the findings of data collection on the main campus of Jackson State University.
Chapter 4
Jackson State University

Traveling east on John R. Lynch Street in southwest Jackson, parts of the neighborhood are textbook examples of urban blight, namely the strip malls, convenience stores and potholes along Ellis Avenue. However, the atmosphere begins to change when you begin to approach the campus of Jackson State University. One of the first buildings you see is the School of Engineering Building on the west side of the campus. Most noticeably are three circles or turnabouts at three prominent entry points to the university. At the first, there is the main gate and a convex half circle red brick sign with silver capital letters that reads “Jackson State University.” At the second turnabout, you can see Blackburn Middle School and the Undergraduate Admissions office as well as the back of several dormitories and buildings. At the third turnabout, you approach Police Services and the JSU Student Center. Adjacent to and across the street from the JSU Student Center is the University Place of Jackson, a complex occupied by commercial businesses with spaces for future businesses to occupy. To the south of the JSU Student Center is the nine-story Administration Tower under renovation. At a southwest diagonal from the Administration Tower is the H.T. Sampson Library. Also prominent on the southeast part of the campus is the Walter Payton Recreation and Wellness Center with a memorial to the alumnus and Chicago Bears running back Walter Payton in front of the facility. There are two buildings on the main campus of Jackson State University that are designated Mississippi Landmarks. These buildings include the Ayer Hall built in 1903 and Alexander Hall built in 1963, the H-shaped women’s dormitory that was fired upon in 1970 by Jackson police and Mississippi highway patrol resulting in the deaths of two
African American males. Among the buildings that have outlived their usefulness are the Roberts Dining Hall and the Jacob L. Reddix Student Union.

Affectionately called “Jackson State,” “J-State” or “Jackson,” the Jackson State University Campus also has monuments that hold significance to the university and the Civil Rights struggle in the United States. On the left side of John R. Lynch Street and in front of Alexander Hall are bronze Civil Rights markers from the Mississippi Freedom Trail that recount the tragedy on May 15, 1970 when Jackson police and Mississippi Highway Patrol peppered sprayed and opened fire on Alexander Hall. In the aftermath, Jackson State University junior Phillip Lafayette Gibbs and Jim Hill High School senior James Earl Green were both shot and killed near Alexander Hall and B. F. Roberts Dining Hall respectively. These students are memorialized in the Gibbs-Green Plaza, a red-bricked pedestrian walkway closed to vehicle traffic on what is Lynch Street, the street that bisects the campus on which the tragedy occurred.

In the lush green lawn adjacent to the Administration Tower, H.T. Samson Library and Gibbs-Green Walkway is a centennial memorial marker. It is a granite obelisk. On the base, there is a square with each side leaning back at a 45-degree angle. On the north side is the dedication on top and names of individuals responsible for the marker on the base. On the west side is the centennial logo on top and the lyrics to the alma mater “Jackson Fair” on the base. The logo reads: “One hundred years of service 1877-1977.” Within the circle is a large block “J” with an arrow going through it from the bottom to the top. Through the bottom arrow is the word “survive” and through the top part of the arrow near the tip is the word “thrive.” On the open hook of the J is a lamp light. Superimposed on the J is a small “S” on the left vertical line and a “U” on the right.
vertical line. On the south side is another logo and the names of university presidents on the base. In this logo are the words: “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” There is a sideways scroll that arches upward with. Behind the scroll is a rising sun with seven rays of sun pointing upward in an isosceles triangles. In the foreground is a torch held by a right hand and a flame coming out of the torch. On the left side of the flame are the numbers “19” and on the left side of the torch are the numbers “77.” Around this in a concentric circle are the words “Jackson State University, Mississippi.” On the east side is the centennial theme on top “To survive and thrive from a century of service we go forward” and the chronology of names and years for Jackson State University on the base.

**Background**

Jackson State University began as Natchez Seminary in 1877 by the American Home Baptist Mission Society and Black ministers. The seminary moved to a site in north Jackson in 1882. Its curriculum was expanded and its name was changed to Jackson College in 1889. In 1902, the college relocated from its site in north Jackson to the southwest section of the city. After operating as a private college for 63 years, The American Home Baptist Mission Society withdrew its support in 1934. The state assumed support of the college in 1940, changed its name to Mississippi Negro Training School, downgraded to college to junior college status and gave it the mission of teacher training. Between 1953 and 1956, the curriculum was expanded and its name was changed to Jackson State College in 1956. A notable building program and continued expansion of the curriculum led to the college receiving university status in 1974. Jackson State University was officially designated as the “urban university” by the State
of Mississippi, a “high research activity” institution by the Carnegie Foundation and is recognized by the Apple as a Distinguished School for its innovation, leadership and educational excellence (Jackson State University, 2007, 2009; Sansing, 1990; Williams & Ashley, 2004; Williamson, 2008). Jackson State University operates branch campuses at Holmes Community College called JSU-Holmes, in Madison called JSU-Madison where Tulane University where also has a branch campus (Wright, 2013), and downtown Jackson in its Institutes of Government called JSU-Downtown. Jackson State University also offers online degree programs through its online education vehicle JSU Online.

**Mission statement.** The mission state of Jackson University is quite simple. It imparts skills to its students to become global leaders to solve societal issues. “The University produces technologically-advanced, diverse, ethical, global leaders who think critically, address societal problems and compete effectively” (Jackson State University, 2007, para. 6).

**Vision statement.** The vision statement goes a little further than the mission statement. Jackson State University is a technology-driven community where all engage in creative, interdisciplinary and collaborative learning.

Building on its historic mission of empowering diverse students to become leaders, Jackson State University will become recognized as a challenging, yet nurturing, state-of-the-art technologically-infused intellectual community. Students and faculty will engage in creative research, participate in interdisciplinary and multi-institutional/organizational collaborative learning teams and serve the global community. (Jackson State University, 2007, para. 5)
The statement above is the official vision statement of Jackson State University. In their vision, Gideon and Timothy explained that Jackson State would have a student population of 15,000 students. Gideon explained it in this way: “I think we would be a very well-known research university. We would have a student population of 15,000, deep quality in the academic enterprise. All those things the president says are important.” Also, providing students with the opportunity for students to learn was cited as a vision for Jackson State University. Timothy stated:

If money were not object, we would probably be a campus of 15,000 [students] already. Truly, I think again people have tried to keep us from growing, but we have a president who is very adamant and holds everyone to a standard of excellence to ensure that we are going to be who we say we are and we’re providing opportunities for students to learn. And that’s what it’s about, providing opportunities for students to learn.

The vision of Isaac includes Jackson State University becoming a true urban university on the level of Virginia Commonwealth University. Isaac explained how Virginia Commonwealth University is embraced by the entire city of Richmond. Isaac stated: “They’re everywhere. You go to Richmond. You go downtown. You go anywhere. Virginia Commonwealth has enveloped that whole town. That’s that urban university type of setup. So yeah, that’s a good shorthand kind of answer to that question.”

Participants

I contacted five senior level administrators at Jackson State University by postal mail, email, and office visits to participate in my research study in each of the following
divisions: Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement, Budget and Finance, President, and Student Affairs. One person’s schedule would not allow participation in the study and another did not respond. Three administrators agreed to participate during the study. They were interviewed during the months of September and October 2014 on three separate visits. Being that the mascot of Jackson State University is the Tiger, the administrators will be labeled Timothy, Isaac, and Gideon in the order they were interviewed. Each person interviewed is an African American male. Each interview lasted approximately an hour or longer. The interview of Timothy and Isaac occurred in the office of each participant and the interview of Gideon occurred in a conference room adjacent to a suite of offices. Information identifying participants, such as approximate age, educational background, former occupations, current position, and other personal information have been redacted to ensure anonymity. Table 7 lists the pseudonyms of the research participants, approximate age group, race, gender and approximate years of experience.

Table 7

Research Participants at Jackson State University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timothy</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac</td>
<td>55-65</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gideon</td>
<td>45-55</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Themes

Three themes emerged during analysis of interview data. First, the use of a growth model by Jackson State University administrators has resulted in record enrollments. Jackson State University officials are utilizing data to assess and implement change and
best practices to improve fiscal management of the institution and efficiency by updating outdated systems and practices. Second, minor challenges that can slow the forward momentum of Jackson State University are its students’ ability to pay tuition, public stigma of Jackson State University, institutional culture and alumni support. Third, the problems with the Ayers settlement include consistent funding via the funding schedule and the mandate for student diversity as a condition for controlling the environment.

**Growth model.** First, Jackson State University officials have employed a growth model driven by strategic use of data and best practices to move the institution forward. Jackson State University administrators have implemented an aggressive enrollment management plan to grow its enrollment and budget in order to move the university forward. The growth model for Jackson State University encompasses recruiting and increasing enrollment and using data to plan institutional strategy and implementing best practices. The importance of the model is so important that everyone employee on campus has been informed of its importance. Isaac commented:

> Our enrollment is growing. It’s been growing for the last few years, but it’s been growing because the enrollment management plan. We’re very focused on it and everybody knows *that* is important from the grounds crew to the president, so everybody their whole behavior is aligned that way. It’s a growth model. We’ve got to grow.

**Record enrollment.** Jackson State University officials have made it clear that it is following a growth model. It is imperative that they must grow in order to bring its vision of becoming the urban university to fruition. This means the university must recruit more students in order to increase revenue. As a result of added students and revenue, Jackson
State University can continue to add and enhance academic programs, hire more faculty and deans, build more facilities, expand branch campuses, and offer online degree programs.

*More students.* In order to move a higher education forward, it needs revenue. Tuition students pay generates revenue for the university. More students mean more revenue for the university. Therefore, it makes sense to grow student enrollment in order to increase revenue. Timothy explained the growth of the student body in this way:

We have had a steady increase of enrollment for the last 3 years. We just reached 9,500 students this fall [2014]. When I first arrived here, we had 8,800 students. Last fall, we had 9,100 students and now we’re up to 9,500 students as of last week when our numbers came out for enrollment. And I know we have a goal of possibly getting go 10,000 students within the next couple of years, probably next year.

According to Isaac, enrolling a record number of freshmen has resulted in record enrollment at the university. “Record freshman class. Thirty-nine percent of the freshmen, I believe it is thirty-seven [percent], are in some STEM area: science, technology, engineering and math” (Miller, 2015). The main reason Timothy and Isaac cite for Jackson State University’s record enrollment is its sophisticated enrollment management plan. As part of the enrollment management team, Timothy called the enrollment management plan aggressive and the populations it targets, namely non-traditional students like veterans and in-service professionals. Isaac mentioned when he briefly talked about how the plan works. Isaac explained that the stretch goal is around 6 or 7%, but the University has been averaging a growth rate of 4% a year.
We have a very sophisticated enrollment management plan. We’ve identified the areas where we get our best yield. We have data on where our students are coming from, their profiles and keep track of data. We track the impact of our recruitment strategies and modify it where we need to modify it as we learn more about it. We know what the impact of social media. We know the impact of mass marketing. We know the impact of campus visits. We know the impact of recruitment visits. So we go to areas where we can get the highest yields.

The aggressive and sophisticated enrollment management plan has enabled Jackson State University to increase enrollment and revenue for three consecutive years. By enrolling more students, Jackson State University administrators have the revenue to offer more academic programs.

More academic programs. With more students and revenue, Jackson State University can enhance and implement new academic programs. In the Fall 2014, Jackson State University began offering a number of new degree and opening a new school. Isaac listed the following academic programs that were added to Jackson State University’s course offerings in Fall 2014.

Yes, a Ph.D. program in data-enabled sciences started this semester. Biomedical engineering undergraduate degree started this year because we have a lot of students here in biology. All of them aren’t going to be doctors so you’ve got to figure out a viable degree. Biomedical engineering is a powerful degree and they can earn quite a bit of money as an undergraduate. We just started a statistics degree. We’ve revamped the technology degree. There is some conversation about an ethnic studies degree. I don’t know where that is going to go. We’re
right in the sweet spot of creating the School of Public Health. So, we’re looking at interdisciplinary degrees between like Public Health and a Ph.D., you know, M.P.H. [Masters of Public Health] and Ph.D. or M.P.H. and working with the med school [The University of Mississippi Medical School in Jackson] and an M.D. And these are things that people are talking about or an M.B.A. with a technology focus that will be a joint program with the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology and all of that.

The School of Public Health will allow the University to impact the state, region, and the nation by responding to environmental threats. Timothy explained the importance of the School of Public Health and pushing the university toward innovation and creation on a regional and national platform when the school addresses important environmental issues.

One of things is keeping up with the trends of what is going on in the world. You know as new developments and things that are coming, I’ll give you an example. [Title deleted] mentioned the other day that we are looking to establish a School of Public Health having that focus on environmental needs. So as you see right now in the media, things that are going on with [the] Ebola [virus]. That’s something that’s environmental. You know with this whole School of Public Health and things like that, we’re addressing the needs of the environment because these are things that are affecting the world as a whole. With the amount of technology and things that our students are gaining here at Jackson State, they may have the answer or the cure for Ebola. It’s about innovation here. You know, there are not just plans that are sitting there on the shelf. As things are happening
in the world [Timothy snaps three times on the words things, happening, and world.], we are developing programs and services to address those things.

The focus of new programs at Jackson State University will have an interdisciplinary and a technological focus that will allow students to earn a good living upon graduation. The new School of Public Health will allow Jackson State University to respond to environmental issues and threats and place the institution of the regional and national conversation regarding issues of public health and safety. New faculty must be hired when academic programs are added or expanded.

More faculty. With growing student enrollment boosting revenue, Jackson State University can afford to hire faculty and deans and plow that money back into the people by giving them a raise every two years. The staff receive raises one year and the faculty receive raises the next year. The economy downturn has not impacted Jackson State University because of its growth and ability to recruit students has inflated its revenue. Isaac explains it this way: We’ve hired three or four new deans. We hired 35 new faculty positions last school year. We’re growing. See when you’re growing, you can do that. It’s a growth model. We’ve got to grow.” Timothy continued to explain that deans must bear some responsibility to increase enrollment in their colleges in order to increase their faculty lines.

I don’t believe the current economic situation has impacted us at all because what we’re doing, we’re utilizing the revenue dollars from our enrollment growth to put back in to investing in people, in resources. So we’re utilizing those funds. [Title deleted] has put a lot of responsibility back on the deans. If you want more additional faculty lines, you need to go out and get more students in your college.
That is a model that people need to follow because you are asking me for something that I can’t provide. However if you meet me halfway [by] going out to recruiting events and making sure that your faculty members are contacting students about the enrolling at Jackson State University, “OK, I can meet you halfway.” Now you’ve gotten the enrollment in your college that can supply a faculty line, so that has helped us. And I can say that has been significant and that has been the message and the deans have that understanding of what they have to do in order to get enrollment up in their colleges.

Increasing faculty at Jackson State University is a function of admissions and the ability of faculty members in departments to increase student enrollment. Increasing student enrollment has increased revenue and allows the university to hire more faculty for academic programs and build and acquire more facilities.

More facilities. With more students, academic programs and more faculty comes the need for more facilities to accommodate the growth, particularly dormitories and hotels to house students. Jackson State University is leasing a 240-bed motel on the Mississippi Fairgrounds in 2013 and plans to retain the property (Jackson State looking to buy apartments to house students, 2014). I saw the Jackson State University logo on a motel off I-55 when I took a different route back to Memphis. The acquired facilities will provide housing for on-campus students. According to Isaac, Jackson State University is also going to buy the Palisades, a 444-bed apartment complex adjacent to Jackson State University behind the Botany building. The university plans to lease it with a later option to buy the complex (Jackson State looking to buy apartments to house students, 2014; Jackson State to rent apartments for up to 1.9 M, 2014; Miller, 2015). Recently, Jackson
State University asked for College Board approval to issue $42 million in bonds to finance the construction of a new dormitory on campus (Pettus, 2015). The housing situation at Jackson State University is forcing officials to use conventional and unconventional methods to house students. Timothy explained the on-campus housing situation in this way.

You know, we house about over 2,500 students. One of my goals is to build at least two more residence halls to address our needs of our students who need housing. We’ve already been approved by the IHL board. The new 600-bed facility will put us over 3,000 students. Another short-term goal in the next three to five years is to build a 660 bed-foot residence hall. But that is a short-term goal that within the next 18 to 24 months to build another residence hall that will accommodate 630 students. It will have its own cafeteria. It will have some space in there where you can bring faculty and residents into the residence hall to do lectures within the classroom.

Jackson State University officials have put forth an audacious plan to build a multipurpose domed stadium in downtown Jackson. Currently, Jackson State University plays its football games in Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium owned and operated by Jackson State University through the Ayers settlement (Chandler, 2011; Vint, 2013). Currently the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) currently holds their championship games in Birmingham, Alabama. This new multipurpose domed stadium and venue, explain Timothy, would allow Jackson State University to capitalize on the infrastructure the city already has in place for lodging and restaurants. Talks of the domed stadium stalled in early 2015 (Miller, 2015).
A little bit of short- and long-term goal is for Jackson State to have its own stadium. I mean to be an institution of our size and not have its own stadium on campus—that’s huge! But the stadium will be Mississippi’s Stadium because it will be multipurpose. You can play football games there. You can play basketball games there. You can do conferences there. We are in the city of Jackson that is the capital. So you need a place where people can go that can do multiple things. It is my hope that we will eventually host the SWAC Championship here. You know Jackson is full with hotels and meeting space and stadium, and so I think that we need to invest in those types of things.

Jackson State University recently broke ground on a 2-story, 24,000 square-foot classroom complex as an addition to the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology. The enrollment for the college increased 25% in 2014-2015 from 1,800 students to 2,300 students. Thirty-seven percent of the freshman class are majors in the college (Miller, 2015).

Capital improvements were a major part of the Ayers settlement. I was interested to find out to what degree capital improvements have improved academic programs, Gideon talked about the president’s position on place.

Oh, that’s back to the president’s position on place. Place makes a difference. So the investment that we’ve made in the buildings have enhanced lighting, have enhanced comfort in the room based on replacing the HVAC systems, so the changes have been really good for the University. Well when a person comes to campus, they may not know a whole lot about campus, but they have a perception in their mind about Jackson State. “Oh those folks don’t know what they’re doing.
Oh that campus is probably run down. Oh this campus is probably dangerous.”
And then when they get here, they realize that all of those things are not true. First of all, they find a beautiful campus. I mean well-manicured. Very well done, so to speak. So I think that first impression makes a big difference.

Not only does place make a difference by updating facilities, Jackson State University is moving forward with acquiring off-campus properties and building dormitories to house students. Facilities like the multipurpose domed Mississippi Stadium will further propel Jackson State University to become the urban university of Mississippi. By moving beyond the main campus and into the community, Jackson State University has effectively improved its imprint on metropolitan and suburban Jackson and rural Holmes County by opening branch campuses.

More branch campuses. Jackson State University has expanded beyond its main campus in the southwest part of Jackson, Mississippi with locations at Holmes Community College (JSU-Holmes) and Madison with Tulane College (JSU-Madison, Wright, 2013). In January 2015, Jackson State University opened a location in downtown Jackson with the Institutes of Government (JSU-Downtown). When I asked Timothy about whether the enrollment numbers included branch campuses JSU-Holmes and JSU-Madison, the reply was an emphatic “Yes.”

Yes, JSU-Madison campus as well. We have partnerships with Hinds [Community College], we have partnerships with Holmes [Community College]. So we’re able to go into those areas again. And also, we’re getting ready to open a campus downtown with our Institute of Government. So for persons who are working in that environment, they can actually go to school downtown. The same
thing in Madison. People who are in that area who maybe wanted to do continuing education classes who may not want the private school experience, Tulane University is there and now Jackson State is in that environment. We have a lot of persons who able to get the continuing education that may be teachers in secondary [education] within the high schools and middle schools there that may want to go back and get a master’s degree or maybe get a MBA. They can do that right now at Madison. And then for those persons who work within government who may be interested in some governmental experience, we’re opening up a campus in January [2015] right downtown so Jackson State is expanding to those populations of people who want to be educated. And that’s what college is about. It’s about providing persons with the opportunity to become educated.

Opening branch campuses is only possible through the growth model when student enrollment bring in more revenue that allows Jackson State University to increase academic program offerings, hire more faculty, invest in more facilities, and open more branch campuses. I addition to all of the aforementioned components of the growth model, Jackson State University is committed to reaching more even students through its technology platform called JSU Online.

*Online education.* In the fast-paced technological society in which we live, online education is one way higher education institutions can provide services to more potential students. With the technological focus in its mission statement, with being named an Apple Designated Institution and with first-time full-time freshmen receiving iPads, it makes sense for Jackson State University to not only improve its technology infrastructure, but to also offer online classes. Timothy talked about the ability of JSU
Online to reach students where they are and potentially draw other-race students to enroll at Jackson State University.

We’ve developed a number of programs and we are now targeting online students. We created something that started this past fall JSU Online so we can provide opportunities for people who can’t come to school 8 [a.m.] to 5 [p.m.]

They have families. They may have other responsibilities. But now we are creating degree programs where they can be in the comforts of their own home and get a quality education from well-versed faculty who are experts in their field. This will end up contributing to their development as well. I think that is going to be attractive to people once they see, “Oh, although it’s an HBCU and I’m from a different race, I don’t have to necessarily go to campus” or “If I have any type of hesitancy about it, I can still do my degree program.”

Isaac summed up the entire growth model by connecting the growing enrollment with academics and faculty and the ability of JSU Online and technology to drive the enrollment strategy and increase university revenue.

We created Jackson State, JSU Online. Our online activity this year will probably surpass [The University of] Southern Mississippi’s [online activity]. So short term, we’ve got to reinvest in academics and we’re doing that. We’re hiring more faculty. We’ve got to maintain our enrollment to grow because with limited endowment, it’s really your bread and butter. You have to grow to thrive. There’s no ifs ands or buts about it. And we’ve got to drive this technology strategy that we have. JSU Online is going to be a major asset, money maker for us. It’s going
to be very lucrative and very important in getting us to [inaudible] in many different ways.

To summarize, the growth strategy is dependent on recruiting and increasing enrollment. If the increase enrollment of the past three years is any indication, Jackson State University will be able to utilize added revenue to provide deep quality in the educational enterprise, hire faculty, build and acquire more facilities, open branch campuses and drive their technology initiative because of their ability to enroll record numbers of students. Also, the growth model is also supported by the strategic way Jackson State University administrators utilize data to make decisions that will chart the course of the institution.

**Strategic use of data.** One of the reasons Jackson State University has been able to grow is because of the way its administrators use data. Data is collected and analyzed at every higher education institution, but what I found amazing was the strategic way one administrator used data to not only drive decision making, but also to strategically place Jackson State University in a position make the most of its institutional capacity to grow. I asked Isaac about the importance of data and the function and role Institutional Research plays in helping to make decisions that impact the university. Jackson State University officials are using its institutional research department to collect and analyze data on social marketing, examine the policy effects on the budget, assess programs, create institutional change and implement best practices.

Well, we have a really good Institutional Research (IR) group that was underperforming when we got here, but we made some changes so now they’re
really competent. I have direct access to collecting data. It’s a data-driven environment where we’re analyzing data all the time.

In this data-driven environment, Jackson State University officials are analyzing data in four ways. First, data is being used to analyze the efforts of recruiting and students characteristics using social marketing. Second, data is used to examine the effects of certain IHL policies on the university budget which in turn affects revenue. Third, gathered data is used to assess programs and services focusing on outcome measures. Fourth, data with other incentives are used to drive institutional change at the university.

Social marketing. Jackson State administrators are interested in using social marketing research in similar ways internet browsers, social media sites and companies cater to their customers in order to better serve to the needs of its consumers. Social marketing is one way to make sure Jackson State University is targeting its message to students for optimal effect. Jackson State University uses institutional research to analyze the student characteristics in order to better provide programs and services to students, double check studies by IHL, and perform correlation studies as Isaac explains.

I use them [IR] for analyzing the characteristics of the freshman class because we want to know what’s going on as we make the class so we can tweak things in certain ways. How that affects, for instance, tuition waivers? How many vals and sals [valedictorians and salutatorians] do we have? So that’s where we are now with that. We use them all the time. We check again. We send data to IHL all the time, but we will double-check them. I got a study from IHL that I’m giving to IR and say, “Double check this to make sure the data’s correct” because I have to have people that manage our numbers. Now ultimately where we want to go is,
and I haven’t had a conversation with them [IR] yet because they say I’m always coming up with a lot of stuff, but we want to use what some people call “big data” but it’s basically social marketing. You know how companies they go and get all of this. It’s not causality they’re looking for, it’s correlation. So if you can find the correlations, then maybe you can target your recruitment, target your messages in different ways to see what people are doing on social media and all this. IR is going to get involved in that. That’s a little ahead of what they should be doing but we’re going to get it to go. But basically, they’re very important.

Policy effects on budget. Data is used to target the University’s message to potential students via social marketing and to follow policy issues that could cause the institution’s bottom line to go south. There are provisions of the higher education funding formula that can cause an institution’s budget to take a nosedive. The strategic use of data can help administrators stay on top of issues that can potentially affect the budget if they make it a point to use the institutional research arm of the institution. One example of policy Isaac is following deals with IHL not paying colleges for Fs and Incompletes.

Like in the formula, it’s actually good public policy. You don’t get paid for incompletes or Fs which is not bad policy because it helps people graduate on time. So I get that data broken down by college and I say, “Deans, you guys have got to tighten up these incompletes. Why are there so many incompletes here because that’s affecting the bottom line?” But if you don’t have anyone to assess that, you’ll never know. Your budget will just go south and you’ll have no idea. So it’s that way, use them—they do reports and stuff—but its strategy that I’m interested in.
Assess programs and services. Higher education officials often assess its programs and services to determine whether it is meeting its goals and how to change them in order to get a better result. While Timothy takes a qualitative approach to gathering data, Isaac takes a quantitative approach. For Timothy, assessing student experiences is important to measure effectiveness.

And so my experiences and my former supervisors, it was all about what are we doing to add value to the students’ experiences. And so continuing to do things the same way and not seeing any change—that was an issue for me. I’m big on assessment. How are we assessing these students’ experiences? And if we did a program last year, what did we learn from that experience because the next group of students you are going to get in next year are going to have a different set of needs or another set of experiences. And so, I’m all about cultivating those experiences that are going to be able to ensure student success.

Gideon and Isaac both explain how Jackson State University plan to diversity and strengthen academic programs. Gideon points out three goals to build deep quality in the academic enterprise. This is done by using data to assess academic programs.

The short-term goals are to build deep quality in the academic enterprise. The short-term goal is to basically look at every academic department to see what we need to do to make sure that we have qualified folk teaching who are teaching, A, and we have a qualified teaching curriculum, [B], and that students are learning, [C]. So qualified staff, qualified curriculum, students are learning. That’s the university’s goals.
Academic programs need to be assessed to focus on outcome measures. Isaac believes that every program does do need not exist indefinitely. Administrators make this determination by using data.

Well, you’re got to assess the ones you currently have first. So we’re doing graduate program reviews particularly. We’re focusing more on outcome measures, learning outcomes at the undergraduate level. So some programs need to be sunset and other programs need to be created.

Timothy adds to the conversation by pointing out that assessment is necessary to gauge interest and to vet persons in order for new programs to be successful. Assessment allows administrators to tailor programs year after year to fit the needs of the students.

Another factor is making sure we are targeting the clientele that would benefit from that program. You can’t just establish a program and think that people are going to show up. We need to make sure that there is a strong interest in that we’ve vetted the persons who need to be vetted to ensure that those students are going to be successful in those programs. And then make sure that the programs are accredited. I mean no one wants to go to an unaccredited program in this day and time because that accreditation kind of validates not only the faculty, but the accreditation also validates what we are doing.

Jackson State University administrators use data to assess student experiences, existing academic programs, and student interest in new academic programs. Another way university officials are using data is to drive change in the way the institution does business.
Institutional change. Change in higher education institutions is inevitable, especially when there is a new administration. Jackson State University Campus officials are using data and teams to drive its initiatives toward fulfilling the vision of the urban university. Isaac provides a practical example of how institution research can promote change in behaviors at Jackson State University.

I’ll give you a good example right now. [Isaac pulls out a piece of paper.] This is a piece of data I have now and this won’t be the final number. So part of this whole movement and the change but with this change, there has to be certain incentives built in to accommodate this movement that you want. So you have half a year’s worth of money that you haven’t spent. You can’t use it for recurring things because if you put in salaries, you have to pay for those salaries. For us, it’s about a $1 million or something or 5% for the staff. So you have half a million that you haven’t spent and you aren’t going to spend this year. A half a million for one-time expenditures. But the salary program doesn’t start until November, Thanksgiving [2014]. So what I asked IR to do. I said, “What I want you to do is to look at the percent of credit hours—which colleges, these colleges. What percentage of the credit hours are they generating? Then I want you to create on a base of about $450,000 if I gave them this one-time money on the base of $450,000 as a function of their credit hour production, how much would they get? So this is what I have right now that they’re going to get. That’ll be for professional development for faculty. I’m writing a memo today or tomorrow. This is what the deans have. This is what they are going to have. So I use them for that.
To accommodate change in the organization, it is also about getting the right people on the right team to move the institution forward. While this is not data related, it is imperative that the right people be engaged to bring about the desired change at an institution. Isaac is adamant that he could not accomplish these things on his own. This was Isaac’s response to what he has been able to accomplish in his administrative role.

Gosh. A lot, but it’s not just me. I mean, it’s a lot of people. And that’s the beauty of getting a lot of high-performance people around you and creating teams and getting the right people on the bus and the wrong ones off. So with getting the right people on the bus and the wrong ones off the bus, you create the kind of high-performance based system you want.

Creating institutional change require more than analyzing data. It also requires administrators to create teams to work together and create a synergy to provide the forward movement for the university. Another reason Jackson State University is able to create forward movement is by implementing best practices to make university operate more efficiently.

Best practice is a business buzzword that describes a technique or method that consistently shows superior results to other techniques and methods. Jackson State University officials used best practice models to ensure good fiscal management and update systems to make work more accessible and efficient. In 2010, Jackson State University had a $1 million deficit and the commissioner asked officials to cut an additional $10 million from the budget. Isaac describes the transformation like this: “Our balance sheet went from a negative $1 million to plus $14 million in three years—that’s unheard of!” Gideon explained his biggest challenge as an administrator.
Biggest challenge. They had a deficit when I got here, a million dollars in the hole. They were a million dollars in the red and the commissioner [of higher education] told me that we needed to cut another $10 million from the budget in order to get financially sound. So that was a big challenge. The operating budget at that time was about $122 million and I had to cut $10 million from the budget. They were a million dollars in the hole. So in addition to cutting, I had to kind of pull them out of the hole.

Now I was curious and wanted to know how he was able to turn around the finances of the university. Gideon went on to explain how he was able to pull Jackson State University out of its million-dollar deficit.

Well, I got this system. It’s a pretty good one. I go after what I call “low-hanging fruit.” I look and see what’s costing the university money unnecessarily. And when I looked I found out, the first thing was they weren’t managing grants well and they were losing roughly $2 million a year. And they were losing that money because either they kept paying people after grants had ended or they didn’t report or make the financial report on time for some grants. And for some grants, they didn’t request reimbursement. For most of these grants, you spend the money and you get reimbursed. And so in some cases, they didn’t request reimbursements so they were losing $2 million a year through that process. So what I did was I put in place an aggressive grant management process—looking at it every month, making sure we billed every month, sent in reports when they’re due—and the goal is not to lose any money at all. And we’ve lost very little since we did that. The most maybe one year we lost about $70,000. But that’s going from a $2
million annual loss to $70,000 in one of the years since I’ve been here. We don’t lose money. The other thing is we were overstaffed—too many levels of supervision. So I did have to terminate some of those levels of supervision and came to a reasonable basis for a supervisor. So probably those two together saved about $3 million. We were losing $1 million a year in dining services—doing it ourselves, and we were losing money. And so I outsourced dining services. Now we were losing $1 million a year. The first year after I outsourced it we made a $20,000 profit. The year after that we made a $100,000 profit, so we basically swung from losing $1 million to gaining $100,000. So that’s a $1.1 million recovery in my mind. That kept us from losing money too. I’ll say this. We went from $1 million [deficit] the year before I came to about $4 million at the end of my first year. And then maybe about $8 million the next year. And then the third year about $2 million more. So we should be somewhere around $14 million in savings right now. And we’ve gone from a negative $1 million to a $14 million surplus.

Like Isaac said: “That’s unheard of!” Another administrator noted an outdated housing model that utilized too many professional staff. Changes in the model not only saved money, but provided students the opportunity to work to earn additional money while at the university. Timothy explained how he was able to achieve a surplus in the housing budget.

One of the things, I did a reorganization. When I first started here, every residence hall had four full-time professionals. There was a full-time hall director, a full-time assistant hall director and two full-time receptionists. That model does not
exist anywhere in the country. So what I did, I reorganized the housing department. We have now one full-time professional. We now have graduate assistants who may now be interested in pursuing a career in student affairs. And that’s what it’s about. It’s about giving back, how we train up the next generation of students. And then I put a CA. They call them CAs here, Community Assistants, or what we know as being RAs (Resident Assistants) on every floor. And so that decreased the professional staff by half. And so now we’re able to utilize those funds to do additional programming and events in the residence halls. And then we are now able to utilize those funds to hire our students because we know what our clientele is here at Jackson State—first generation, low income students. So a lot of these students don’t have employment. So instead of having those full-time receptionists at a desk and an assistant hall director, we put a graduate student in there with a tuition waiver. Give them a monthly stipend. Give the CAs a stipend and you use the surplus to hire students to work the desk so they will be able to buy their books. They can buy groceries. They can be able to stay here at the university.

The benefit to working at other colleges and universities is the experience and knowledge gained because of seeing how people at other institutions implement systems and procedures to make the job easier and more student friendly. Timothy talked about creating an online judicial system and online housing systems to assist students and make the work easier.

Under my leadership, I implemented the first online judicial system here. So a lot of things were a little bit, I’m not going to say outdated, but now I’ve been able to
take my experiences working at other institutions to implement change here at Jackson State University to benefit our students. Every institution I’ve worked at, we had an online judicial system. But my first year, I had to do every letter for each judicial student manually. And I’m talking about the caseload was probably between 300 and 400 students in the matter of a year’s time, fall and spring, who violate the student code of conduct. So every letter we had to do manually. I was able to implement an online judicial process where we are able to do everything electronically and communicate with the students electronically.

In summary, Jackson State University administrators are able to recruit and enroll students in record numbers because they know how to use data strategically to drive decision-making. By recruiting more students, Jackson State University has the revenue and latitude to offer more academic programs, hire more faculty, acquire and build more facilities, open more branch campuses and offer online education its students while expanding its vision to become the urban university of Mississippi. By using data in a strategic manner, Jackson State University officials are able to assess their message of their recruiting strategies through social marketing, measure the effect of IHL policy on the institution’s budget, assess programming and programs, drive institutional change and implement best practices to make the university more fiscally responsible. Next, there are challenges that may hinder a university’s ability to move forward, but the challenges of Jackson State University appear to be minor obstacles and hurdles in comparison to the exponential growth it is experiencing with the growth model.

**Minor obstacles.** Every institution faces obstacles and Jackson State University is no different. To the extent that the accomplishments Jackson State University have
achieved using the growth model, the challenges are minor obstacles which much be overcome to further move the institution forward. These challenges may slow the forward momentum, but the momentum will not come to a complete stop due to the growth model propelling the university forward. The minor obstacles for Jackson State include helping students’ ability to pay tuition, public stigma regarding Jackson State University, institutional culture and alumni support.

*Students’ ability to pay tuition.* The budget of public higher education institution in Mississippi is primarily tuition driven, a drastic shift from how institutions were funded in 2000 when the majority of the funds came from the state (Hamilton, 2014). According to Timothy, Jackson State University, like most HBCUs, educates low-income first-generation African American students. Gideon explains that other factors make it difficult to students to pay tuition, namely the fact that the Pell grant does not cover the cost of education.

So we have these students. And just like now we’ve got record enrollment. But if I get a student and that student is eligible for Pell that is eligible for a 100% of a grant-related federal program, the Pell is only going to pay $5,700. So tuition room and board might be about $7,500 or $7,800. Pell will only pay $5,700 per year. Now what that means is even for a student who the federal government determines is at a poverty level eligible for 100% Pell, they only going to get about $2,400 a semester. And then they’ve got to figure out how to come up with the rest. So I think a lot of people just kind of assume that there are students who are just going to school for free. Unless you’re on scholarship, that’s not
happening. You know if you’re on Pell, if you’re low income, very low income and you’re eligible for 100% of Pell, it’s only going to give you $5,700 a year.

Helping students pay for tuition is a major focus of university officials. Isaac mentioned the faculty-staff campaign as one of the ways the university assists students with financial need.

The faculty-staff campaign is an internal campaign where we all raise pay or raise money. This year we will probably raise a quarter of a million dollars. We write checks to fund and help students. Last year we raised $80,000. It was kind of a *laissez faire*.

Jackson State University houses a number of auxiliary enterprises in the JSU Student Center and in a nearby annex. Gideon spoke about the importance of providing scholarships for students with the excess money generated from auxiliary enterprises.

Auxiliary enterprises are revenue-producing entities like Burger King on campus or the dining program. Once we outsourced, it became a revenue producing entity. The Subway—that’s included in auxiliary—The Nail Shop, The Barber Shop. All of those are auxiliary enterprises. So the goal is to get those entities to a point where they generate an excess for the university and use that excess as much as possible for scholarships.

Not only do Jackson State University officials recognize its student demographic and their ability or inability to pay tuition, but they have also put in place resources to help students pay tuition by using funds generated from the faculty-staff campaign and the auxiliary enterprises. Public perception is also a minor obstacle university officials must overcome to continue to move the institution forward.
Public stigma of Jackson State University. The majority population who created HBCUs for the education its minority citizens also placed upon HBCUs the stigma that these institutions are inferior and provide lesser educational opportunities than institutions created for the majority population. The majority population also funded and gave vocational, teaching and agricultural missions to HBCUs to make the perception a reality. This had led to a collection of stereotypes and myths about HBCUs which, at one time may have been based in reality, but are no longer the reality of the institution. The perceptions include Jackson State University being “just another HBCU,” having problems managing finances, combatting biases of majority population against Jackson State, and no longer being needed after integration.

Not just another HBCU. Timothy pointed out that Jackson state is not “just another HBCU.” Issues not graduating students, not retaining students and deferred maintenance no longer occur at Jackson State University. Jackson State University is growing in enrollment and advancing in technology and academic programs. Soon, Jackson State University will able to compete with PWIs.

A lot of the perceptions when you talk to people outside of Jackson State, not only within the state but out of state: it [Jackson State] is just considered another HBCU, that they have a lot of deferred maintenance, students are not graduating within four to five years. They are not retaining students. They are not providing the same resources and activities that the majority institutions are providing. But now being on the inside and now I have an opportunity to help make some of those decisions because I have worked at other institutions, I now see the difference. And so I think sometimes people’s perception of Jackson State is that
we’re just another HBCU and we’re just not another HBCU. We are an HBCU that is equipped with the technology that is preparing students to go out and be a catalyst for change in the world. So in that conversation, I wouldn’t say it was a disagreement, but it was that they just couldn’t believe that an HBCU of 9,000 students, that we’re doing all these great things because those are things you don’t hear about from HBCUs. You hear that HBCUs are “ghetto” or they’re “hood” or they are not meeting the needs of this population of students, but we are meeting students where they are.

Managing finances. Managing finances is another perception people have about Jackson State University. In 2010, Jackson State University did have a problem managing its finances, but not under the current administration. Gideon explained that public perception does not have to become the university’s reality.

I think one of the perceptions that has been out there is that Jackson State has a problem managing finances, but that’s been one of those things that I’ve worked hard to overcome since I’ve been here. I just concluded that, you know, people will have that perception. I don’t want that to be a reality. So we’ve done a lot to help make sound our financial position.

Biases of majority population. The history of Mississippi and the White countermovement to civil rights movement discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2 explained the energy and zeal to which Whites in the State of Mississippi defied the U.S. Supreme Court decision to desegregate. Two Jackson State University administrators believe that because of these biases, the majority population in the State of Mississippi did not want Jackson State University and other HBCUs in the state to grow. Isaac shared
various comments Jackson State University officials received from public officials who did not understand why the university wanted to build a multipurpose dome.

I think there are people who because of their own biases, don’t want to see Jackson State grow. I think some of the reactions to our proposing a stadium downtown Jackson. You saw some of that. Some people are saying, “Well, Ole Miss doesn’t have that.” But you have some Blacks and White saying that. It wasn’t just White people, it was Black folk wondering.

According to Timothy, these biases are some of the reasons that stifled the growth of Jackson State University. If these biases did not exist, the student population of Jackson State University would currently exceed 10,000 students.

I do know that the Ayers case stated the majority of the HBCUs were not funded at the same level as the majority institutions. I think personally that was a political move. That’s my personal opinion. They weren’t intending for HBCUs to grow in the State of Mississippi and so they did what they could to ensure that their enrollment didn’t grow.

*The need for HBCUs.* HBCUs were established to educate Black citizens after they were freed from slavery in southern states and in states that border southern states during an era of segregation. Now that segregation is unconstitutional, some people in the majority population believe there is no longer a need for HBCUs. Isaac addresses this point. HBCUs need to tell their story better and provide information to the majority population and begin to change their perception of Jackson State University.

I think people who have not had or are not understanding of the why HBCUs exist, some of them question why we should have HBCUs. But I think as they
become more knowledgeable about our role, they’ll be more supportive. Hence, we have to tell our story better.

Gideon offered a suggestion that would help change the perception of majority people in the state about Jackson State University, particularly when recruiting students. “I would go to every private school even if the sentiment was ‘I’m not going to Jackson State’ because I think you start by changing people’s minds. Some of them need some information.”

In addition to Jackson State telling its story better and providing information to majority individuals, Jackson State University officials understand that public perception does not have to be the institution’s reality. Jackson State University has exceeded the expectations of the majority population and is poised to compare itself to other majority institutions. Jackson State University no longer has a problem managing its finances. While biases may have prevented Jackson State University from growing in the past, administrators have proved that there is still a need for Jackson State University. Another minor challenge facing Jackson State University is changing the culture of the institution.

**Institutional culture.** College officials attempting to implement change at colleges and universities must overcome both the institutional culture and tradition. Timothy expressed his challenge he overcame in his first year as an administrator. In my first year, trying to really figure out the academic structure. That was a struggle for me because I had to truly learn the culture of the institution who are the movers and shakers and who are invested in the holistic development of students. Again I mentioned tradition. There is a lot of tradition here and so how
do you break through the tradition to implement new programs and services, but maintain that level of tradition as well. That is my goal.

Two of the reasons it has been difficult for Jackson State University officials to change the culture. First, past administrations hired people who were not qualified for the positions they hold. Second, there was an unwritten mantra that employees are not terminated from the university.

*Employees not qualified.* In the past, Jackson State also hired people who were not qualified for the positions they hold. This happens partly because Jackson State University hired its own graduates who only know the institution’s culture and traditions. Moving forward, Timothy is determined to do his part to make sure he hires qualified persons for the positions they hold.

But we have a lot of people who only worked here at Jackson State and so this is all they know. And that’s another myth, well that’s another thing about HBCUs—that once somebody graduates, they hire them. But I tell all my staff members, “No. I will be interested in hiring you after you’ve left for about three to five years and you come back” because you need to see what other people are doing, because if I hire you right after you graduate, the only thing that you know is Jackson State and how is that contributing to your growth as a professional?

I am one of now five persons [spoken slowly and deliberately] within my entire division with a [division deleted] background. One of the things, another downfall of HBCUs is that we hire our cousins, we hire our church members and we hire our friends for people who shouldn’t be in positions in the first place. But that was prior to me arriving here, only thing I can do now is be the change. And so in
order for me to diversity that, we have to. This is a major. This is a career. And I’m not just looking for people who are looking for a job, because a job and a career are two different things. I’m looking for people. Every person that comes under my leadership now must have a [division deleted] background because it goes back to applying theory to practice. And so I spend a lot of time educating people who are in the division about [division deleted] practices because they don’t have the background because they were hired by somebody else and because maybe they were the friend or church member. No!

Gideon echoed Timothy’s sentiment of only hiring qualified people. Diversity comes second to a job applicant being qualified to perform the job responsibility. Likewise, Gideon refuses to hire someone who is not qualified or possess the skills to do the job. Matter of fact, there has not been a White applicant for available jobs he posted since his tenure.

For the most part, I can’t remember the last time I advertised for a job and got a White applicant that was qualified. And I couch that “qualified” piece because the way I am right now, I’m not looking to hire someone who isn’t qualified. They have to have some kind of skill, some kind of connection to that job. And you know when you get into the kind of goal setting, particularly for diversity, you might find yourself employing someone who isn’t really ready, but you need a White person.

Employees not terminated. For many years, Jackson State University was a place where employees knew they would always have a job. In fact, most unqualified
employees simply moved from one job to another. Gideon pointed out that the protected class or tenured employees makes it almost impossible to fire faculty.

First of all, you have this protected class of employees. They’re tenured. Once you get tenured, it’s almost impossible to be fired. So where I was before, we didn’t have anything like that, anything that would conceptually that would look like you are able to come in and just put a strangle hold on anybody who just hired you or anything like that.

Isaac echoed Gideon’s remark about the institutional culture results when people are not terminated. Long term, it is not healthy for a university and administrators who seek to move an institution forward.

You see for a long time here, nobody got let go. You moved. You don’t do well over here, you go over there. It was like a revolving door because there was this value of “nobody is let go.” That’s not healthy because you are creating and sending the wrong signals.

It has been difficult changing the institutional culture of Jackson State University because administrators must identify the movers and shakers on campus who are truly concerned about student development. In addition, most employees are rooted in the institution’s culture because they attended the university as a student. Many are underqualified for the position they hold and were hired by acquaintances or family members. Employees were secure knowing that “no one is let go.” It not only sends the wrong signals, but it makes changing the institutional culture very difficult.

**Alumni support.** Lack of alumni support has always been an issue for HBCUs. Possible reasons for this include bad customer service and the erroneous perception about
how much state support the university receives. Timothy believes one of the reasons HBCU alumni do not give back is due to bad customer service they received as students.

I think one of the things, and this is a trend at HBCUs, our alumni do not give back like alumni at PWI. And my personal opinion, I believe the alumni don’t give back at HBCUs is because of the experiences that they’ve had. And when I’m talking about experiences, I mean maybe experiences dealing with staff. Even in my conversations with some students, they’ve had such a bad experience maybe dealing with somebody in financial aid or dealing with trying to get a transcript. Those things deter students or alumni or constituencies from giving back because of the myths that I talked about earlier—their thoughts about what HBCUs are about—sometimes deter students once they graduate from giving back. You know they’ve gotten the degree. They’ve had a great experience outside of the classroom but the inner dealings with people here on campus, those things have truly deterred people from saying, “I want to be a part” or give back to these institutions.

There is a need to educate alumni that their support still is needed even through the university received state support. Isaac believes alumni giving at HBCUs, particularly at Jackson State University, is changing.

I think because there hadn’t been, and this is not just Jackson State, it’s pretty much most HBCUs because there hasn’t been a tradition of giving or an infrastructure to support giving, one of the disconnects I think clearly is the responsibility of alumni in the perpetuation of the school, that is giving back money. And so I think that is changing. That is one thing that is hard for alumni to
grasp especially at a public HBCU because they see you getting a state subsidy—so it’s like “what’s wrong with that”—and we’re getting tuition. But the margin of excellence is a function of the school to generate private dollars typically, that comes from graduates. If you look at the predominantly White schools that are raising the most money, they are raising it mostly from their graduates. So that’s one from the graduate point of view that’s what they misunderstand.

Once the institution educates its alumni, then alumni should understand in their importance in the perpetuation of the institution. Gideon said alumni can do one thing to help the university: “Give.” In addition to changing the alumni’s perception of giving, Isaac suggested ways alumni can help the university shore up its finances, grow and move forward.

Alumni can do several things. They can continue to help us recruit students. Talk about what it [Jackson State] did for them. Those graduates who are in companies and in corporations, they can be internal champions especially the large ones. They have foundations for support of colleges and they can give of their own resources from their own private dollars.

In summary, there are three minor obstacles Jackson State University officials must overcome to advance the institution. First, university administrators must find ways to help students cover the gap between the cost of tuition and the amount the Pell grant actually covers for these low-income African American students. Second, Jackson State University officials must combat public misperceptions. These include the ideas that Jackson State University is “just another HBCU” and that Jackson State University has a problem managing finances. Biases of the majority population are obstacles that may
stifle the growth Jackson State University because there is the belief that HBCUs are no longer relevant or needed. Third, Jackson State University administrators must fight tradition and institutional to implement change. This is difficulty because prior to their arrival, employees were not terminated and were hired for positions for which they were not qualified. Finally, Jackson State University officials have problems with the Ayers settlement.

**Problems with Ayers settlement.** While Jackson State University received the lion’s share of revenue, 43.4%, for facilities and academic programs because of its size (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009), Jackson State University has benefitted from the revenue it received as a result of the settlement. However, university officials had several problems with the settlement. Among them include are inconsistent funding and the student diversity requirement.

**Inconsistent funding.** The Ayers case provided funds for academic programs, salaries and facilities. The word “step downs” refers to the decrease in funds the university would receive after a determined period of years had passed. According to Table 2, the step downs occurred in FY 2009 and FY 2014 and the funding will end in FY 2019 (Joint Legislative Committee, 2009). When the settlement funding schedule ends, no more money will be available to HBCUs and the state’s obligation to the desegregation lawsuit. Gideon explained how much Jackson State University received and the increments in each step down.

In 2010, we had an Ayers budget of $11.5 million. So here’s the way it goes—$11.5 million, then $3.833 million is a step down each of the step down periods. So that takes this to be somewhere around $7.6 million. And then the next step
down which I believe is 2016, you have another $3,833,333 and that should leave somewhere around $3,833,333.

Timothy correctly asserted that Jackson State University benefitted greatly from the funds it received because of the Ayers case. As the largest of the three HBCUs in the state, Jackson State University received many academic programs and an additional school.

I truly believe that, you know as a result of the Ayers case, HBCUs in the state of Mississippi have benefitted greatly. I believe as a result of those dollars and cents, Jackson State is in a better place, you know. And now we’re able to say, “We are Mississippi’s urban institution” and we are able to compete with anybody.

I asked a series of questions about the Ayers settlement. The inconsistent funding is the main issue Jackson State University officials have issues with that Ayers settlement that is not particularly beneficial for the institution Jackson State University officials had an issue with more money being offered at the beginning of the settlement with periodic decreases after a number of years until the state has completed its obligation to desegregation the higher education system of Mississippi and the funds are depleted. One of the reasons for the inconsistent funding as a result of the step downs included in the funding schedule. Isaac expounded:

Yeah, I mean, it impacts it in a positive way because in the Ayers [settlement], we were able to get support for certain programs. So certain programs were started as a result of the funding. The problem with Ayers is that they keep decreasing the funding over a period of years and so it’s not consistent funding—so that’s a problem. I might have pushed for not having those step downs because if you’re
historically underfunded, then you need to keep it at a base level of funding. I guess that was politically palatable at that time.

Another reason for the inconsistent funding is the removal of funding at the conclusion of the funding schedule. According to Gideon, those funds should never be removed from the HBCUs. By removing the funds, Jackson State University is no longer on a level playing field with the majority institutions in the state.

Well one thing in particular that I think needs to be different. I don’t think the funds should have ever been removed from the university. If you’re trying to address a historical underfunding of the university, putting temporary funds in to overcome it doesn’t achieve that because. Let’s say, for example. I’m comparing. You know they give us $11.5 million and they say over the next 11 years that’s going to go from $11.5 million to zero. My question is, “Have you reduced [Mississippi] State’s revenue the same way? Have you looked at the state appropriation and after seven years reduced [Mississippi] State’s appropriation? No. Have you done that same thing to Ole Miss? No. So why are you taking Ayers money away from me?” If the money was there because some historical wrongs had never been addressed and it should have been, then you never take that money away because that money gets me on an even playing field. The moment you take it away from me, now I’m not on an even playing field anymore.

In addition to the incremental step downs and benefits Jackson State received in terms of programs and facilities, obtaining a diverse student population became the determining factor in whether Jackson State would control the endowment implemented as a result of the settlement.
**Student diversity.** Diversity became the focal issue during the Ayers case. PWIs were more diverse than HBCUs. As a result, a metric of 10% other-race for three consecutive years was established as a basis to give control of the settlement endowment to each respective HBCU. Each administrator spoke to the issue of diversity and its importance. Timothy talked about the importance of diversity in creating students who are able to compete. Timothy said:

> It goes back to what I said earlier about the philosophy of creating well-rounded individuals and ensuring that once our students leave here, they’ll be able to compete with any student and they’ll be able to assimilate into any culture because they’ve had a diverse experience. Although it’s an HBCU, they are still having a diverse experience interacting with people who are different from them.

Gideon further adds to what Timothy remarked. Diversity helps prepare students for a global society. Gideon explained:

> One of the mission statements refer to us being able to educate students in a global society. Well, the way you do that is that you get exposed to as many different cultures as possible. That’s diversity. I was exposed to a lot of cultures here that I never would have been exposed to before. That’s the kind of thing we need to do here with diversity too. So diversity in cultures, diversity in race, diversity in age: all of that makes a difference.

Isaac spoke to the richness of the educational experience as the result of diverse individuals learn from each other. In sum, it enriches the university and the educational experience.
Well, I think you want to have multiple points of view and you want to have people who have different life experiences because as we engage each other, the education, the value of what they receive here is substantial. But that’s not only by race, that’s also by region that you get a kid from the Midwest or the Northeast or the West, bring him in with students from the South and other parts, then it creates a richness of diversity of thought that I think enriches the university.

The Ayers settlement stipulated that HBCUs reach a minority threshold of 10% for three consecutive years in order to control the public and private endowments that the state controls and invests. I wanted to know the reasons Jackson State has not reached that 10% other-race minority threshold. Isaac offered the following commentary.

We were talking about the endowment or rather why we didn’t get to the ten percent. I have no idea. We’re making progress there and I think increasingly as we are viewed as the urban university, this area, we will get more diverse. But you see we have more diversity. We’re growing and our percentages are going up simultaneously so that means the denominator is larger. So we actually have more non-Black students. And the percentage is going up but the aggregate number is going up because the base, the denominator is going up. So we have more non-African American students than we’ve ever had as a portion of the students here. We’re 8% minority. We’ve gone up, so we like need 2 more percent or maybe a percent and a half or something. We’re getting more minority students. That’s grown. That’s grown.
Timothy was uncertain about why Jackson State University was unable to achieve 10% other-race enrollment because that was under a previous presidential administration. However, he does believe that the threshold will be achieved in Fall 2015.

Ten percent of other races? To be honest, I don’t have an answer for you. Now I can just only speculate. I don’t think we have been as aggressive in our recruitment. But now we have an enrollment management team. We meet every Monday. We are targeting those populations and letting them know, “Hey, veterans,” you know that’s a huge group coming back. “Teachers, do you see you can use the online degree programs?” They can’t do it during the daytime. I think that’s one of the ways that we are targeting those populations of people.

Gideon offered this explanation: “Oh, we’re like 9.7 or 9.8 right now. We’re close. I think prior to the current president coming on board, the answer is we really didn’t have an aggressive enrollment strategy. We didn’t have an aggressive strategy.” In addition, Gideon didn’t see controlling the endowment as an incentive to gain 10% other-race student enrollment, but mentioned becoming more diverse is better for the long-term strategy of the institution. Gideon uses nontraditional to mean non-African American.

You know the Ayers case said that basically when any of us at an HBCU get to 10% nontraditional population that there would be some money that we would basically get our hands on, but to me that’s not a big deal because the money has to be invested. Right now, the money is invested by IHL and they’ll cut us a check for anything that’s earned. Well if we get to 10%, then basically I get to manage that money myself rather than IHL. I don’t necessarily see that as an incentive. Plus, the total amount that was in this investment was supposed to be
$35 million under Ayers [private endowment] and they’ve only raised $1 million. All these years, they’ve only raised $1 million. You’ve got folk who are pushing to get a 10% population, but all you’re going to do is get, for us, you’re going to get the ability to manage that half a million dollar investment. That’s not a whole lot. It’s not worth it. So, I think that we need to get to that diverse population, not for Ayers but for our own long-term strategy. Long-term, if we’re aggressive at getting nontraditional students, then we’re also going to aggressive at getting nontraditional student donations. So there are a couple of things that have to happen and we’ve started it. Diversity of programs so you’ve got more science, engineering, technology graduates. Depending on where those people go, you’re going probably to see more physicians connected with the university just because you’ve got a robust science program. That’s going to help in contributions coming back. Everything else, if you build deep quality in the right way and each of the university colleges are growing, then you’re going to see, I think, a wealthier class of folk who are able to give back to the university. That class of folk needs to be diverse. So we need to be drawing as many nontraditional students as possible, age and race but specifically race.

Jackson State University officials collectively understand the importance of having a diverse student body, creating well-rounded individuals to compete and assimilate into any culture, exposing students to many different cultures so they can function in a global society, and enriching the university and the value of the education students receive. Prior to this presidential administration, there was not an emphasis on
reaching the 10% other-race threshold but Jackson State University is poised to eclipse the threshold possibly as soon as the 2015-2016 school year.

In summary, the problems with the Ayers settlement are twofold. First, the funding schedule in step downs did benefit Jackson State University in terms adding new programs and facilities. Administrators take issue with inconsistency in funding due to the step downs implemented in the funding schedule and the removal of funds from the university altogether. Second, Jackson State University officials recognize the importance of diversity. The current presidential administration is focusing on enrollment with its aggressive and strategic enrollment management plan. As a result, the percentage other-race students is very close to ten percent.

Chapter Summary

Three themes emerged during the data analysis of Jackson State University. First, Jackson State University officials have implemented a growth model based on recruiting and enrolling students in record numbers, the strategic use of data, and the implementation of best practices to make university operations more efficient and cost productive. Record student enrollment results in more revenue to add academic programs, hiring more faculty, acquiring and building more facilities, opening branch campuses, and implementing its online education initiative. Second, financially challenged students’ inability to pay tuition as well as public misperceptions, engrained institutional culture, and lack of alumni support are minor obstacles that can slow but not stop Jackson State University’s forward momentum as a result of its implemented growth model. Public perception can only be combatted when Jackson State better tells its story and provides knowledge to the majority culture to dispel myths and stereotypes. Jackson
State University officials assert that it is “not just another HBCU,” it does not have a problem managing finances, it is growing despite the biases of the majority population and HBCUs are still relevant and needed in the landscape of Mississippi higher education. The institutional culture is being changed by hiring qualified personnel and terminating individuals when necessary. Third, the Ayers settlement added programs and facilities to Jackson State University and the importance of exposing students to diverse cultures cannot be underestimated. However, the problems with the Ayers settlement include step downs in the funding schedule, the requirement to achieve a 10% other-race enrollment to control access of endowment, and the inconsistent funding because of step downs in the funding schedule and the removal of funds from the university. Since the purpose of the funding is to right a historical wrong due to years of the State of Mississippi discriminating against its public HBCUs, the funds should never be taken away. Chapter 5 will discuss the themes that emerged during data analysis regarding Alcorn State University and the Ayers settlement.
Chapter 5

Alcorn State University

After driving east on Mississippi Highway 552 six miles from U.S. Highway 61, a left turn leads you to the gates of Alcorn State University. The first evidence of the institution’s land grant status is the demonstration farm, the David C. Carter Dairy, to the left of ASU Drive before you make it to the guard shack and the Agricultural Extension Facility located next to the Jesse A. Morris, Sr./W.C. Boykin Agricultural Science Building on the right once you enter the campus. Behind the two buildings are rows and rows of carefully cultivated crops. The State of Mississippi Metrology Laboratory and the Center for Ecology and Natural Resources are located at the front of the campus. The Mathematics and Science Building and the Biotechnology Research Center are on the entrance the campus. A single road approximately one mile long leads you over hills and past buildings until you make it to the heart of the campus to the Walter Washington Administration and Classroom Building where the road splits into three directions. The historic buildings are located on the right side of the campus. The ASU Bookstore and the Medgar Wiley Evers Heritage Village Complex consisting of the first phase of four residence halls for students are located at the back of the campus. In the center of the campus are the Clinton L. Bristow Jr. Dining Facility and the J.D. Boyd Library to the left of the dining facility. Unlike any other campus in this study, Alcorn State University has an air strip.

Alcorn State University is affectionately called “Alcorn,” “Alcorn State,” “The Reservation” because of its mascot the Brave, and “God’s Country” because of the isolation of the campus from other municipalities. Established on the Oakland College
campus that existed since 1830, eight buildings are designated Mississippi Landmarks: the Bell Lettres Building built circa 1855 now the Alumni Hall of Fame, Dormitory No. 2 built circa 1855 now the Center for Rural Life and Economic Development, Dormitory No. 3 built circa 1855 now the Multicultural and International Affairs Office of Global Programs, Harmon Hall built in 1929, Lanier Hall built in 1939, Oakland Chapel built from 1840 to 1851, the Old President’s House built circa 1830 now the Alumni House Bed and Breakfast and the Rowan Administration Building built from 1928 to 1929. A picture of Oakland Chapel is on the Alcorn State University license plate issued by the State of Mississippi. The historic nature of the campus is also evident in a number of historical markers and a memorial on the campus. There is a Mississippi Department of Archives and History historical marker titled *Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College* and several Windsor-Battlefield Tour markers titled *Oakland College, The Chapel, Oakland Memorial Chapel, The Original Campus* and *Old Port Gibson to Rodney Road*. There is a bronze statue of assassinated Civil Rights leader Medgar Evers, the Mississippi field director for the NAACP and alumnus of Alcorn State University, standing atop a bronze rectangular podium with his biography carved into the stone.

Among the buildings in need of repair include the Mabel Henley Lott Housing Complex and a number of faculty houses while new buildings are needed to replace the James Bolden Campus Union Building and the Davey L. Whitney Health, Physical Education and Recreation Complex.

**Background of Alcorn State University**

According to Alcorn State University administrators, Oakland College was established in 1830 as an institution to educate White Presbyterian males. Oakland
College closed during the Civil War so the White males could fight and did not reopen after the war. Mississippi Governor Alcorn James L. Alcorn convinced the Mississippi Legislature to buy Oakland College to educate the colored citizenry in Mississippi. In 1871, Alcorn University became Mississippi’s oldest state supported HBCU and the nation’s oldest public historically Black land grant university founded under the First Morrill Act (Williams & Ashley, 2004). Named for Mississippi Governor James L. Alcorn, Alcorn University received the same funding as The University of Mississippi for the first ten years. In 1878, Alcorn University was reconstituted as Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical (A & M) College to teach practical working skills, farming and homemaking. According to Sansing (1990), the land grant share of Alcorn A & M College was reduced from three-fifths to one-half, the scholarship stipend was abolished, appropriations were drastically reduced and the campus was expanded from 225 acres to over 1,700 acres. In 1974, Alcorn A & M College received university status and was renamed Alcorn State University (Sansing, 1990). Alcorn State University has branch campuses in Vicksburg (ASU-Vicksburg) and Natchez (ASU-Natchez).

**Mission statement.** The mission statement of Alcorn State University encompasses preparing students for the global marketplace by cerebrating its rich heritage and diversity. Diversity is a core belief of institutional officials.

Alcorn State University, a Historically Black College and University, is a comprehensive land-grant institution that celebrates a rich heritage with a diverse student and faculty population. The University emphasizes intellectual development and lifelong learning through the integration of diverse pedagogies, applied and basic research, cultural and professional programs, public service and
outreach, while providing access to globally competitive academic and research programs. Alcorn strives to prepare graduates to be well-rounded future leaders of high character and to be successful in the global marketplace of the 21st century.

(Alcorn State University, 2014, para. 2)

**Vision statement.** The desire to become a premier land grant institution is the vision of Alcorn State University. “Alcorn State University will become a premier comprehensive land-grant university. It will develop diverse students into globally competitive leaders and apply scientific research, through collaborative partnerships that benefit the surrounding communities, states, nation, and world” (Alcorn State University, 2014, para 3). Alcorn State University officials cited a list of chief aims for Alcorn State University. Benjamin and Elijah listed *Access, Academics, Agriculture, Athletics, Advancement,* and *Alumni* as the chief aims of Alcorn State University.

Alcorn State University officials each had a vision of Alcorn State University. If money were no object, this is what they imagine for Alcorn State University. Rachel imagines that the necessary funds would allow Alcorn State University to reinforce academic programs, repair all buildings, bolster salaries and its technology initiative.

If we could get all of the money to do all of the things we needed to do, we would shore up all of our programs to make sure that they have all the technology that they needed. We would have technology up to date. Our teachers’ salaries would be at a level where everyone would want to come teach. We could get quality teachers to stay here. We would have maintenance done on all of our buildings so that we wouldn’t have any problems with deferred maintenance. All of our
policemen staffed and up to date. So Alcorn would really be good with no money restrictions.

Alcorn State University officials envisions itself at the forefront of creating solutions to society’s problems. Benjamin foresees a technologically-driven global institution creating solutions that would place Alcorn State University at the forefront of higher education institutions.

First of all, it would be a very globalized institution. Students will be traveling abroad extensively. We would have a globalized faculty. It would be a high-tech mecca. So globalization, highly technological institution. It’ll be working side by side along with world leaders to solve some of the pressing problems that we have in our world. I foresee that when issues such as [the] Ebola [virus] come about that Alcorn will be in the forefront. Our scientists will be working with the leaders—political leaders, congressional leaders, scientists, business leaders. They will be at the table to not only chart policy, but produce solutions and cures. I see that as a vision.

In agreement with Benjamin, Virgil envisions students graduating on time, increased alumni support and a waiting list of students to attend a premier institution with modern facilities. The institution will be referred to as “The Academic Resort.”

Instead of being called “The Reservation,” we would be called “The Academic Resort.” We would have modern facilities supported by a strong alumni base. We’d have students who all matriculated and graduated in four years or as their curriculum is designed. We’d be a vibrant research facility which engages in both practical and empirical research. We’d have a waiting list of students because we
couldn’t accommodate everybody. We would be perceived as a first-rate institution as opposed as being perceived as simply an HBCU. We would first be perceived—and don’t have any problem being perceived as an HBCU. That’s our heritage. We can’t deny that. We don’t want to lose that, but we would rather be known—as a first-class educational institution, a bastion among educational institutions.

Participants

I contacted five senior level administrators at Alcorn State University by postal mail, email and office visits to participate in my research study in each of the following divisions: Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement, Budget and Finance, President, and Student Affairs. Five administrators agreed to participate during the study. The participants were interviewed during the months of October and November 2014 on three separate visits. Being that the mascot of Alcorn State University is the Brave, the administrators were given the pseudonyms Benjamin, Rachel, Aaron, Virgil, and Elijah in the order they were interviewed. Four of the five persons interviewed are African American males and one is an African American female. Each interview lasted approximately 40 minutes to an hour or longer. The interview of Benjamin, Rachel, Aaron, and Elijah occurred in the office of each participant and the interview of Virgil occurred in a conference room adjacent to a suite of offices. Semi-structured interviews occurred for Benjamin, Rachel, and Virgil. Aaron asked for the interview questions prior to the interview that resulted in an unstructured interview based on the participant’s experience with the Ayers case. The interview with Elijah was condensed due to one interview starting late and another going over the allotted time. Information identifying
participants, such as approximate age, educational background, former occupations, current position, titles and responsibilities and other personal information have been redacted to ensure anonymity. Among the senior level administrators asked to participate in this research study, three are alumni of Alcorn State University. Table 8 lists the pseudonyms of the research participants, approximate age group, race, gender and approximate years of experience.

Table 8

Research Participants at Alcorn State University

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Virgil</td>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35-45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elijah</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>African American</td>
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<td>10-20</td>
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Themes

Three themes emerged during the data analysis of Alcorn State University. First, Alcorn State University officials have put and are putting plans in place to ensure student success and help them overcome academic and financial obstacles that may prevent them from reaching their ultimate goal of graduating. Second, Alcorn State University faces challenges that appear more threatening because of the institution’s size and location. Third, Alcorn State University has benefitted from programs and funding received under the Ayers settlement. However, the removal of these funds from the institution will impact greatly the degree to which the programs gained under the Ayers settlement will remain operational.
**Student centeredness.** Student centeredness has become a buzzword in the higher and adult education. “The term *student-centered learning* refers to a wide variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students” (Great School Partnership, 2014, para. 1). Student centeredness at Alcorn State University is evident in the productivity of the institution, the plans it is making for students to ensure their success. Virgil mentioned and defined what student centeredness looks like on the campus of Alcorn State University in its goal of becoming premier institution in Mississippi.

Another of the goals center around our desire to be a premier institution in Mississippi. And so among those goals we have becoming more and more student-centered campus. And we become a student-centered campus by providing diverse programs and services that attract students [and] that will continue to attract a diverse body of students. We become a student-centered campus by providing programs and services that allow students to be admitted to our programs, to progress through our programs and to graduate. For example, we provide special services to those students who need enhancement though various tutoring centers. We provide services those high-achieving students through programs like the Honors and Pre-Professional Program, which focuses on getting students, particularly students into the STEM areas and into the graduate and professional schools. We’ve certainly tried to market ourselves better so that we can attract high achieving students. We’ve put forth a special effort in marketing
so that we can get the highest achieving ACT students in here. We have programs like our honors curriculum program, what we believe to be a more challenging and more thought provoking curriculum. Students who wish to engage in an honors education.

Student centeredness at Alcorn State University is exhibited in the productivity, creating professional relationships, providing financial assistance, technology and online education, and academic programs. Virgil stated that the academic programs offered at Alcorn State University allow students to be successful and productive citizens. This will occur because of the educational opportunities that have shaped the students during their time at the university.

I think we’ve been able to provide an academic program that’s broad-based enough to attract students of many interests. We’ve been able to provide academic programs which allow our students to be successful, graduate in four years and go on to be productive citizens either as citizens in the workforce or as citizens who go on to seek higher degree programs. I am convinced that what we offer is attractive to a good number of students and is useful in Mississippi, the nation and the world.

**Productivity.** A small land grant institution in southwest Mississippi, Alcorn State university officials can tout any number of successes as proof of its commitment to students and student centeredness. The plans administrators put in place are to help students and ensure their success. One of the goals of higher education is to enable graduates to become productive citizens. The productivity of Alcorn State University
students, according to Benjamin, is not understood by elected officials and citizens of the State of Mississippi.

I think in terms of its productivity, it may not be as well understood. The number of medical doctors, scientists, technologists, engineers or pre-engineers, agricultural, that this university puts out given its size and relative to the proportion of these majors who graduate and to go on to professional schools. Virgil praised the Alcorn State University’s continued achievement of graduating a large number of biology graduates. Additionally, providing practical research to farmers through its extension program is an extension of the university’s land grant mission.

But what they don’t know about Alcorn is the kind of service which we provide to our constituents. They don’t know that as an HBCU, we have consistently over the past decade or so, graduated or had the highest number of biology graduates of most institutions in the country. They don’t know, for example, that we have a very vibrant extension program that provides services and programs to citizens all over the state of Mississippi. They don’t know of our emphasis on small farms and the work that we do with the Small Farm Institute to assist them in being effective entrepreneurs. They don’t know about the diversity of our student body. They don’t know about the diversity of our faculty. And certainly they don’t know about the research that goes on here in the areas of agriculture and the natural sciences. We have a modest but vibrant research program that goes on here. And the result of the research is often carried to small farmers through our
extension program. So it’s not just empirical research, but research that turns into practical application for our constituents.

Benjamin added to Virgil’s list high graduation and retention rates as well as the academic success of student athletes. All of these accomplishments further prove the productivity of this regional land grant institution.

Well I think number one we have strong graduation rates, high retention numbers. Compared to our peers, student athletes continue to excel in terms of graduation rates, progression rates. The number of student athletes who make honor roll. So those are some feathers in our cap. Things that we are proud of. Our short-term goal is to continue to increase graduate rates, retention numbers.

Student centeredness is also exhibited by the way Alcorn State University administrators have created relationships with professional schools, graduate schools and PWIs. In addition to focusing on STEM fields, one strategy Alcorn State University officials are pursuing include relationships with international and predominantly White institutions to allow Alcorn State University students to perform research at those institutions. Alcorn State University continues to make the institution and the education of its graduates relevant by providing additional opportunities for its students to succeed.

As Virgil explained:

I think we will continue our focus on the STEM areas. But one of our strategies in the last three of four years, we’ve signed a number of memoranda of understanding with PWI institutions and with international institutions. And we’re counting on those relationships to help us with research and to help us with providing opportunities for undergraduates and graduate students to do research
during the summers. We certainly have looked forward to those relationships in providing opportunities for our students to matriculate and graduate in professional programs and that is happening. We’ve been doing a very good job in that.

Despite the challenges Alcorn State University students encounter, the faculty is successful in educating students to become successful and productive members of society. As an institution of access, one of Alcorn State University’s chief aims, the institution provides access to higher education for a population of students with some educational or financial deficiencies. Virgil explained:

Number one, Alcorn has historically been an institution of access. By that I mean we’ve provided opportunities for students who might not otherwise have gotten a college degree and it’s because we’ve taken students who’ve come in, perhaps with some deficiencies and who were perhaps not quite ready for it, who weren’t ready for college, but we’ve worked with those students and they’ve gone on to graduate and to become very productive citizens. There are tons of examples of students who graduate so in that sense we are very different from other institutions, the PWIs.

By offering programs desirable to a diverse student body that allow students to be admitted, matriculate, and graduate and go on to attend graduate and professional schools, Alcorn State University administrators exhibit student centeredness. Tutoring services are provided for academically challenged students and Honors and Pre-Professional Programs cater to high achieving students. The productivity of Alcorn State University is evident in the number of STEM and agriculture graduates, high graduation
and retention rates, vibrant extension program, academic success of student athletes, and the relationships it has created with international and PWIs to enhance research opportunities for students. Additionally, acquiring academic programs with high global demand aid in student centeredness.

**Academic programs.** Diversity is a theme that resonates throughout Alcorn State University. Alcorn State University must keep up with these changes in order to keep relevant the education they provide to its students. Alcorn State University offers a broad variety of academic programs on its Lorman, Vicksburg, and Natchez campuses.

Benjamin stated:

> With more resources that one gets, we have to diversify. As I do sharing, when you look at the geopolitical issues taking place in the world, those drive changes in academia. If we are going to be the frontrunners and the vanguards of change, issues such as technology, the globalization of education, distance learning, millennial generation, the recession—all of these things have impacted higher education and produced profound changes. We either have to change or be left behind.

Diversity can be achieved by providing high quality programs of global demand to attract students of different races and ethnicities. According to Benjamin, these programs will attract other-race students to the institution because the courses are attractive to all students.

> I think the programs will attract the global, hits upon the global demand. And if there’s a global demand and our world is diverse, then yes
those who are other-race, meaning those who fit within that global population, then that will accrue towards greater diversification for Alcorn.

Two prominent programs offered by Alcorn State University are its nursing program and MBA program both offered at its Natchez location. Virgil lists some of the programs that Alcorn State University offers and hopes to offer that will upon the global demand and attract students like Benjamin previously stated.

In fact in recent years we’ve started a new degree program in sports management. We have a new executive MBA program. Well we have an MBA program and the Executive MBA program is a version or concentration based on currently approved MBA programs in Gaming and Hospitality. We are looking at new degree programs in some of the liberal arts areas. For example a new Bachelor of Arts program that would cater to students who have interest in generalist degree with some future design of either going on to graduate school or getting some job in an area. And that program is designed so that you do the general education core and you select the area of concentration that you want. We also have a new stand-alone social work program. We used to have a sociology/social work degree program. It’s been just last year that we were able to get approval for a stand-alone social work program. In the future we’re looking to expand our degree level. Right now we are approved to offer degrees at the associate degree level, at the bachelor’s degree level and the master’s degree level in nursing and we offer the specialist in education. We have the expertise and faculty we believe to offer a doctorate degree in agriculture or business or in education so we’ll be working on
that in the very near future. There are a couple of master’s degrees in the liberal arts area that we’re also looking at.

Alcorn State University officials seek to diversity its academic programs by offering degrees that respond to the global demand and attract other-race students. By offering new academic programs and proposals to expand the degree level in agriculture, business and education, Alcorn State University is poised to continue its tradition of academic diversity. Additionally, a part of appealing to the global demand of students is the use of technology and the implementation of online education.

*Technology and online education.* While Virgil admitted that Alcorn State University has challenges with technology infrastructure, Alcorn State is making strides in technology infrastructure and online education. Virgil mentioned technology as a factor that affects the programs and towards courses Alcorn State University can offer. According to Virgil: “Technology is certainly a factor. We’d like, for example, to do more online stuff and there are challenges with the technology infrastructure, which we are working on.” Online education is one of the ways Alcorn State University can generate additional revenue. According to Benjamin:

> We are pursuing online education as an additional revenue stream. We’re making a giant leap in that area. Distance learning is another major area as well as certificate programs. It should drive enrollment insofar that as we now are providing educational access to those who otherwise would not have access—access in terms of time, access in terms of entre into the university, access in terms of overcoming constraints—so we’re taking education within the purview of our land grant mission to the people through online technology.
To facilitate its move towards online education, Alcorn State University is currently offering hybrid classes. There will soon be a time when the university offers entire courses and programs online. Rachel added:

We are trying to move toward online education and we do have plans in place to make that a better offer to students. I think we have hybrid classes programs now—some online and some face to face—so we are working toward that.

Online education is viewed as another means to provide access to students as well as an additional way to increase revenue. However, Alcorn State University is experiencing some challenges with technology infrastructure. Until the challenge is overcome, the university is providing hybrid classes. Not only are administrators concerned about the productivity and academic achievements of its students, they are also concerned about students’ ability to take care of their financial obligations to the university. Administrators continue be student centered by providing ways to help students take care of these obligations.

**Providing financial assistance.** Administrators often refer to Alcorn State University as an institution of access. Alcorn State University students have obstacles accessing funds they need to pay tuition. HBCUs service African American students mostly from low socioeconomic backgrounds who may be unprepared for the rigor of college coursework. University officials have plans in place to help students should they encounter financial difficulty. According to Aaron, the student body of Alcorn State University may come to the university unprepared for the academic or the financial challenges.
We service a lot of students to come to school who are not completely ready. Now some of them are not ready financially. Some of them may not be ready academically. That doesn’t mean they don’t have the ability. People confuse, and I apologize if I drift. People think the ACT is an intelligence test. It’s not. It’s an achievement test. See, the fact that your score on the ACT in math may be 12 doesn’t mean that you can’t learn math, it means that you haven’t had it. But they get it mixed up.

In addition, the students who attend Alcorn State University are not wealthy. According to Benjamin, Rachel, and Virgil, 80% to 90% of students are Pell eligible. Cuts to the amount students receive in Pell grant affect their ability to pay for college. According to Admin R, the means by which Alcorn State University students pay for college include Pell grant, Parent Plus Loans, institutional scholarships which include academic, athletic and music scholarships and academic awards. Despite these means to pay for college, students continue to have financial difficulty. Benjamin mentioned the diverse financial needs of the growing student population due to the rising cost of higher education.

Our long-term goal is to broaden our revenue streams so that we can serve a growing student body, again with more diverse needs. Financial aid, scholarships, resources for books, travel—the cost of education is skyrocketing. We have to find a way to help individuals cover their expenses. And we at HBCUs have the students who cutting the Pell is affecting them, not being able to get the Parent PLUS Loans—that affects our students.
When asked about additional funds students can access to pay for tuition, The ASU Foundation was mentioned by a number of administrators. Rachel said: “Our Foundation is looking at our alumni base as well as any corporate funds they can raise.”

Benjamin defined the legal definition as well as the importance of the ASU Foundation.

The ASU Foundation is independent from the University. It’s within the IRS parameters a foundation to provide scholarships for our students. The ASU Foundation enables students to pay tuition through scholarships and grants. The ASU Foundation is very important because we couldn’t provide as many scholarships and alternate forms of aid without it.

Elijah addressed the importance of foundations to the higher education institutions in the United States in order to promote and market the university in the capitalistic society. The ASU Foundation does the financial things the university is restricted from doing by laws and regulations.

Well, I think any university, institution of higher learning, not only in America or anywhere where there is a capital society or socioeconomic structure will need to have an affiliated organization or institution that can keep allowing it to do things when you can’t use certain funds. You need support and assistance to get students in, for scholarships, to help promote the university, market the university, and to perform those activities and things that may be restricted by day to day regulations or laws. Particularly for private institutions, it is essential for their survival and their existence is dependent upon the use of and the visitation of corporate resources.
Virgil not only spoke to the importance of the ASU Foundation, but the logic underlying the distribution of the funds. The funds are there to assist student with financial difficulties, not to absolve them of their financial responsibility. By doing so, university officials teach students the economics of receiving a higher education and the expectation that they must contribute to their own education.

The university has a foundation which provides a significant amount of dollars for students who have a shortfall. You know based on the students that we serve, we don’t serve students who come in here with a pocketful of money. So they come in, many of them relying on federal funding and find out that federal funding will not pay for everything. Grandmother, mom or dad may have saved up a few dollars, but not nearly enough money to make up those shortfalls. So the Foundation has been very, very instrumental in helping students when they have a shortfall. We haven’t been able to pay everything, but a significant amount. A student owed for example $2,000. He or she might be able to get $1,500 from the Foundation. And it’s my belief that students ought to understand that they have a great responsibility for their own education and should provide something. Certainly we don’t want to provide an atmosphere where he or she is entitled. We want them to understand the economics of getting and education. Well that means students must understand and realize that they must contribute as much as they can to their own education and it takes planning to do that, you know. You don’t sit around during the summer. You get yourself a job during the summer and you don’t spend your money. You don’t put your assets on your back. You put your assets in terms of paying for your education.
By providing tuition waivers to out-of-state students, Alcorn State University officials are making higher education affordable and more accessible. Students at HBCUs are particularly vulnerable since many of the students are by no means wealthy. Alcorn State University administrators have provided out-of-state tuition waivers so that nonresident students can pay tuition at the resident student rate. Rachel explained that out-of-state students must meet certain criteria to be considered for the waiver.

So far we have received out-of-state waivers for students who meet criteria such as military status, the STEM programs. They fill out the application and the get the points for these areas and different criteria. And once they meet those criteria, they are selected to have the waivers.

Virgil explained the logic behind the tuition waiver and the problems they encountered challenges while trying to service the needs of out-of-state students. University officials must be able to cover the offset of tuition or decrease in revenue given by the waiver by recruiting additional students.

We’ve applied for and have been approved to offer tuition waivers and we’ve got tuition waivers open to the general population. The challenge though is that the funds for that waiver are so limited. It’s merely a teaspoon in the ocean. And the way it works is if we have a student that is an out-of-state student, that student is still an out-of-state student. We can provide a waiver. For example if we give a $2,000 waiver to that student, it’s like a loss in income and it has to be found from somewhere in our budget or we have to cover any waiver that we give. And somehow we’ve figured out mathematically that we can do that if we get \( x \) number of additional students as a result of the waiver, we can help to cover that
$2,000 shortfall. I think that two and a quarter or three and a quarter additional students for each waiver, the tuition that they would generate would be able to cover that. We’ve found ourselves though challenged because of the limited amount. Our initial proposal allowed us to offer only 40 tuition waivers, out-of-state waivers. We had for the first round last year. We’re in our second year of waivers now. Our first round last year we had 250 applicants for those 40 waivers. So we couldn’t even serve those many students who were deserving. We’re ironically or coincidentally looking at how we can expand the waivers so I suspect that in the near future, there will be a presentation to the board for a change in our ability that will increase our ability to increase the number of waivers that we would have to offer.

Unless a student receives some type of scholarship, he or she will need some additional funds to pay for college. Scholarships and grants provided by the ASU Foundation provides scholarships and grants to students with a financial shortfall and out-of-state students can take advantage of tuition waivers which will lower their cost of a higher education.

In summary, Alcorn State University has exhibited student centeredness in terms of productivity, the diversity of its academic programs, implementing technology and online education and providing financial assistance to students. Throughout each of the sections under student success, the theme of diversity is evident. Administrators have diversified the ways to support underperforming student and propel higher performing students. The institution’s productivity is evident by its ability to graduate students in STEM fields, the success of its student athletes and its graduation and retention rates.
Academically, Alcorn State University has ensured the viability of the institution by creating a high-quality curriculum, creating professional relationships with PWIs and international schools and providing financial assistance for students who struggle with paying tuition. Student centeredness is exhibited when administrators put policies and procedures in place to help students academically and financially. The institution’s chief aims of Access, Academics, Agriculture, Athletics and Advancement are each present within the theme of student centeredness. However, there are some challenges that Alcorn State University faces that upset the equilibrium of the institution.

**Challenges equal accomplishments.** Like any organization, there are challenges or threats that can hinder Alcorn State University from becoming the premier institution it would like to become. Alcorn State University stated that while the institution is fiscally sound, they must make sure that they have the tuition to cover the institutions bills. It appears that the obstacles the institutions faces equals the accomplishments. The financial equilibrium of Alcorn State University appears delicate and could tilt either way. Institutional officials must turn negatives into positives and speed up the momentum and dedication toward student centeredness and the productivity of its students.

Challenges that Alcorn State University must overcome include the institution’s location, lack of resources, enrollment issues, the public stigma of the majority population regarding HBCUS, and conforming to the norms of Southern culture in order to doing the business of the university in the state.

**Isolation.** The 30-min drive from Port Gibson to Lorman is quite rural. U.S. Highway 61 is a four-lane highway that continues south to Natchez. Fourteen miles south of Port Gibson, you take a left turn onto Mississippi Highway 552 that takes you to the
gates of Alcorn State University. The participants explain the rural isolation of Alcorn State University compared to other universities better than I ever could. After we both enjoy a brief chuckle, Virgil begins:

We’re in southwest Mississippi surrounded by counties with major socioeconomic challenges. The county south of us is Jefferson County and part of Alcorn sits in Claiborne County. Jefferson County is one of the poorest counties in the state of Mississippi. It has no industrial foundation. There are very few job opportunities other than in the school system. Many folk from Jefferson County are employed at the university in various capacities. So this part of the state is very different and as you can see, it’s rural. Quite rural. All of the challenges that come with being in a rural setting are present. Many of the citizens of this area are extremely poor and live at or below poverty level. And so that’s quite different from a region like the Tupelo area and the central Mississippi area or the coastal area of Jackson [County]. And while there is some farming in this part of the state, a good bit of this part of the state, there are hills and dales. It is not flat enough to be extensively farmland. And the write off though is there is a lot of logging, a lot of forestry industry. So folk do work in the forestry industry. But it’s a different part. It’s a totally different part of the state. We’re confronted with health issues. Jefferson County just last year or so was pronounced the most obese county in the country, not just in Mississippi. And all the health issues that go with the obesity issue, all those issues are prevalent here in this part [of the state].
Like Virgil, Rachel laughs before she begins her response but suggests that the family-oriented nature of the institution may be the result of the institution’s isolation. Alcorn State University’s location is unlike any other institution in the state.

Oh my goodness! Like I said, the isolation makes it different from every place I’ve worked—everything, everywhere. Getting employees to come here, they have to really want to work here because it’s 30 miles to the store and that type of thing—it is different in that. And it’s a culture of being a family-oriented institution which differs from most organizations where you just work. It’s more of a family.

Benjamin refers to the isolation of Alcorn State University by using the term “God’s Country.” He similarly compares southwest Mississippi to other parts of the state, but also compares Alcorn State University to the other public HBCUs in the state.

It is isolated. It is a like an island off to itself. We’ve been known as “God’s Country” because we’re like out in the rural, very rural area, so it’s off to itself which is different from Jackson State which is in the city, in an urban area and [Mississippi] Valley [State] is probably not as isolated as Alcorn. And Alcorn is actually larger than Valley so that is how we differ from the other [HBCUs in the state].

The isolation of the main campus of Alcorn State University can be a hindrance when it comes to hiring adjunct faculty. Natchez and Vicksburg are the closest major cities and both are approximately 30 to 40 miles away.

What are other things which hamper what we want to do? Sometimes our location is. For example when we need adjunct faculty, there’s not a pool of adjuncts in
this region sitting waiting for us to call to come in to assist us when we need
adjunct faculty. So sometimes location, being a rural institution is a challenge.
Sometimes it provides and advantage.

Alcorn State University is a unique rural institution in the State of Mississippi.
Rachel compares the institution profile of Alcorn State University with PWIs in the state
of Mississippi.

I think the isolation also is different from that as well. And then we’re smaller.
Our population, of course, is more African American than the majority
institutions. We have some different programs because we’re rural. We’re an
agricultural school. Of course Mississippi State is an agricultural school, but ours
is on a smaller scale because we are smaller than they are.

Usually, higher education institutions provide an economic boost to the
community where it is situated and can sometimes spur economic development.
Unfortunately, this has not happened in southwest Mississippi were Alcorn State
University is located. This was a nagging concern of Virgil.

You know a bee in my bonnet has been the lack of economic development in the
area. And a higher education institution should be able to be a catalyst for
economic development. So I would love to see funds that would help us to
develop the area in terms of providing economic development to the area. And
that would be good not only for the institution, but for the citizens of this part of
the state and for the state. I mean if we’ve got folk working who are taxpaying
folk, I think that is much more preferable to people who are unemployed, who are
under the public dole, or who are engaged in criminal activity because they’re not
prepared educationally in an economic way to provide for themselves. So funds, that would help us in terms of economic development in the area.

You drove down the stretch [on Mississippi Highway 552]. How many businesses did you see on the stretch? You didn’t see any. And that’s a shame you know. You drive down [Mississippi] Highway 7 going to Ole Miss, you see businesses that have been established. The closer you get to Ole Miss you know the more businesses you see. For our students to go to Walmart, they’ve got to drive 40 miles either to Natchez or Vicksburg, you know. And for some services, that’s a bit far.

The isolation of the Lorman campus from major cities and businesses in addition to the lack of economic development and the impoverished nature of the region makes it different from every other region and higher education institution in the State of Mississippi and possibly in the United States. The second largest public HBCU and the smaller state land grant institution, it is a telling statement that there is a lack of economic development on Mississippi Highway 552. The isolated campus also makes it difficult for university officials to hire adjunct professors. In addition to the isolated nature of the main campus, Alcorn State University must address find creative ways to generate revenue for the institution.

Lack of revenue.

There’s challenges working with limited resources and all the needs that we have. So we have to cut expenses to make sure that we stay within our budgeted means. So that’s a challenge we have to overcome every year to make sure we stay within our means of the amounts we are appropriated, as well as tuition and fees. We
have challenges to make sure we have enough tuition and fees to cover our bills and not to out price what students can pay. So those are challenges we overcome yearly.

The limited resources have made budgeting from year to year an astronomical feat to stay within its allotted means as Rachel plainly stated. This is an indication that the generating revenue for the institution is a major challenge that confronts college administrators. Alcorn State University needs more resources because of dwindling appropriations due to the number of higher education institutions in the state. Virgil spoke to the historical nature of Mississippi creating higher education institutions according to race and how it affects the state subsidy Alcorn State University receives.

The state has eight four-year institutions and a number of community colleges to support. A state as small as Mississippi with the population that we have probably can’t effectively support eight institutions the way it should. But again when you look back historically, this is the way the system was designed. It was designed to keep Black folk at Black institutions and White folk at White institutions. In these days and times when there shouldn’t be a difference, there is a difference. There is a real difference because of the way were are funded and more importantly because of the way we are perceived.

Moreover Benjamin agreed that dwindling state budgets have forced Alcorn State University to be creative in finding revenue to support the institution. The state subsidy alone is not enough to sustain the university.

A reality I’ve had to face as an administrator is doing more with less. Budgets continue to dwindle from the state side so you have to be creative in generating
new sources of income and revenue as you serve a more diverse student body with more and more pressing needs.

Aaron encouraged me to look at the higher education new funding formula for the State of Mississippi. Aaron did an excellent job of explaining its implications for Alcorn State University and the state appropriations it would receive.

Take into consideration that the funding formula itself—I don’t know if you have looked at it—but we’re going to look at the funding formula and see how it’s changed. Now keep in mind that graduation rates, retention rates, credit hours passed, diversity of the students, the ability for them to get employment in their major when they graduate.—Now how you control that, nobody knows.—Graduation rates, retention rates, and how well the local school district where you are seated is doing. You see, all of that is going to be in your funding formula. In other words, they want us to do community outreach to improve—all the schools, not just Alcorn—the elementary and secondary schools in the district. But if you’ve got like Fayette and Jefferson County, we know those are failing school districts so that’s going to count against us. But anyway if you look at the Ayers money ending and then you look at the funding formula, enrollment growth and retention are going to be critical for HBCUs. The thing really grates against you. You’re losing money that funds faculty and staff and programs and services. That’s going to end. You don’t have an influx of money by which to replace that and at the same time you’re battling a funding formula that may mitigate against you.
Like Virgil correctly stated, Alcorn State University is not on the radar of some elected state and federal officials, but some elected officials are quite knowledgeable about Alcorn State University. Those who are not as aware have their eyes on bigger more prominent majority institutions.

Let me begin by saying that there are some elected officials who are very knowledgeable about Alcorn both at the federal level and the state level. But as your question assumes, there are a lot of state legislators and some federal representatives who don’t know a lot about Alcorn, have never been to Alcorn. And so it’s an institution which doesn’t appear on their radar. They’re looking at the big institutions in the state and probably are more interested in those.

Rachel wanted to emphasize to elected officials the need for more revenue and the extent to which the revenue is needed to keep the campus operating. It is in the capacity of elected officials, particularly state legislators, to appropriate more funds to the university.

Well we hope that they always know that we need more funding. Some of them may not know to what extent and some of them may know and they do the best they can. We try to make sure they are informed about all of the needs and the resources that it takes to keep the campus going. So some of them may not know as much about that as they should.

Despite the budgeting challenges Alcorn State University faces, its economic condition is solid and the institution is fiscally sound. Benjamin attributes this to prudent spending, keeping overhead low and exercising vigilance. According to Benjamin:
We’re robustly well-placed, low debt university. We’re a small school. We’re growing relatively speaking. But I think the fact that we’ve been low debt is the biggest piece. We achieved that low debt status through prudent spending, keeping the overhead low, and being watchful in spending and being very circumspect in taking on huge loans. Just good stewardship.

Alcorn State University is fiscally sound and has been for many years, but it had been a problem in the past. However, it has not been a problem for at least a decade as Rachel stated.

Well, we keep our books straight so that we have unqualified opinions, that is no findings or nothing wrong from our auditors to make sure that it’s a clean audit and to make sure that everything is under control. We have that as an achievement because in the past years that was a problem. So since I’ve been here and during this time, I’ve been working to make sure our opinions and our financials, our records, are accurate and to make sure the University is fiscally sound.

Since the lack of revenue is an issue for Alcorn State University, college officials have plans for increasing revenue for the institution. One of the ways is to take advantage of the huge amounts of land, entrepreneurial opportunities and intellectual property income. Virgil elaborated:

Well we’re looking at ways where we can take advantage of the huge amount of land that we have. We’re trying to figure out various entrepreneurial opportunities for the institution. For example, we are well on our way to establishing a farmer’s market in Natchez in conjunction with the city of Natchez. We believe that will provide a revenue stream for us. But we’re also trying to encourage our
researchers to focus on intellectual property so that the university can take better advantage of the income stream that might result. Of course, we don’t like to do it particularly because of the clientele that we serve but in terms of income stream, we have to look at increasing tuition from time to time.

Furthermore, Rachel added athletics, corporate sponsorships and auxiliary enterprises as additional means to create revenue. Rachel reluctantly admitted that the ways to generate additional revenue were limited.

Well, there’s not many ways to generate additional revenue but we are looking at trying to make our athletics more viable as well as corporate sponsorships and any auxiliaries we have on campus, we are looking at trying to improve them. Our printing services are going inside as well as outside to bring revenue in. All of our auxiliaries are doing that.

Alcorn State University seeks to maintain an effective, productive and world-class faculty which, according to Elijah, has the “breadth of knowledge and intellect there that far exceeds the ivory towers of the northeastern United States.” Additional revenue is needed to bolster faculty and staff salaries to make them competitive with their peer institutions. Retaining faculty and staff is an issue for Alcorn State University due to its location and historically low salaries. While Benjamin mentioned a number of raises approved by the College Board in the past five years, Virgil and Rachel both added that the salaries Alcorn State University offers are not comparable to their peer institutions. Benjamin affirmed: “Oh, absolutely. Our president has just given our faculty a raise recently. I think the university has had three board-approved raises in the past four to five years.” On the other hand, Virgil cited low faculty salaries as challenge.
One of the most challenging realities that I’ve had to face is that our salaries are low. Faculty salaries are low. They’ve been historically low. And we are typically below the state average. We are typically certainly significantly below the SREB, the Southern Region Education Board, and the national average for faculty averages. I’ve said that they have been historically low. A solution would be to provide funding to raise our salaries to at least be comparable to the salaries in the state. A one-time allocation for that would probably be a significant allocation which neither the board nor the legislature would probably support. And that just tells you the severity of the problem. So that’s one reality that I’ve had to face and deal with. And it’s tough because you have good faculty people who will come to the institution and they can’t stay because they get other offers that are so much more lucrative or won’t stay because they get other offers that are so much more lucrative.

Furthermore, Rachel avowed Virgil’s statement on faculty salaries. She call the low uncompetitive salaries a reality she has had to face as an administrator.

There are lots of realities. Well, we’re not as competitive as salary-wise as we would like to be. So that’s a reality check. You know you have got to love it. It’s not about the money. You have to love it to work here.

Alcorn State University officials must reengage alumni called “Alcornites” to engage more with the university. Virgil explained that because of their station in life and desire to make their own lives better, it may be a challenge for alumni to give back, but giving consistently, sending students and talking positively about the brand of Alcorn State University are things alumni can do to help the university.
Historically, alumni at HBCUs have not been able to or have not in engaged in giving the way we’d like to see. And that’s not just Alcorn, that’s HBCUs in general. You have a few out there that are more successful than others. But when you consider this, when a person who’s coming to Alcorn who’s come out of a meager situation, when they finish their focus is on trying to improve their state in life. And so they just don’t have the extra dollars, nor do they have the big bucks, nor do they own the companies nor do they hold high positions at those companies to be influential in encouraging companies to support the institution.

But alumni could always give more. The unfortunate perception is that in order to give to the institution, you have to give a large amount. If you give a small amount and you give it on a constant basis that certainly makes a big difference.

The other thing alumni can do is help with recruiting. As you may know, the pool of high school graduates in this state, is dwindling. Most of our students come from within the state and so our alumni can help us with recruiting. They can certainly help us with speaking positively about our brand.

Benjamin added that alumni as well as faculty can give a little bit more to help the university shore up its finances. Every little bit makes a difference.

Well, what they can do is what all of us can do which is just give. Whatever we’re currently doing, do a little bit more. Whatever they’re currently giving, give a little more. For our faculty, whatever amount they contribute to the school, give a little more.

Rachel concurred with and emphasized the points Virgil made. Alumni should use their influence to recruit and send students to the university as well as give of their finances.
Give! That is it. Give! As well as they can give, they also have their influence to send students, to recruit students and send them to Alcorn. And they are working on getting plans together to cater toward bringing more students into the university as well as them giving.

Elijah believes that advancement with the proper presidential support can help Alcorn State University reach its fundraising goals. There are a number of quantitative goals and qualitative measures and different categories of accomplishments and goals the hybrid advancement and foundation staff hope to accomplish to bring more funds to the university. Elijah plainly spoke about the lack of prioritizing and commitment when it comes to advancement.

I haven’t had the chance to work at a predominantly White institution but from observing conversations with colleagues at those institutions, we have a lack of commitment and prioritizing when it comes to advancement and fundraising at HBCUs. And that is something that is evident from the presidential level through the main stakeholders which is the alumni. Yeah, the lack of commitment from both. There’s a lack of prioritizing and commitment to the role and purpose of advancement at an HBCU in my opinion. And particularly public HBCUs because most of the alumni have the opinion that the state is paying for everything so there’s no need for them to be called on. And I say that not to be begrudging or belittling of one particular person. It’s just a reality that the majority of the presidents at HBCUs past and probably in the recent past have not met those obligations or made this role a priority in the sense of every day management of the university. Presidents do not put the amount of resources in advancement to
the level that those in advancement would like to see. The possibilities, the potential, the impacts you could have and the results you can generate when you do make those investments would be endless. To me, we need about 15 staff persons in this entire unit to be adequately staffed. This division is a combination of two units: Advancement and the Foundation. But we have mixed the two as a hybrid coordination effort to get greater use of our staff and client resources. But 15 staff persons is what I would say, 12-15 would be ideal for a university of this size and for the endowment growth goals that we have in place.

Elijah rattled off a list of goals both quantitative and qualitative for the division.

Since the department is not fully staffed, Elijah explained that advancement are unable to move alumni to a different level in the movement portfolio and instead must to alumni the same way every year instead. If the division of advancement is fully staffed, it will be able to generate funds that will more than sustain the university.

We’ve increased the number of donors by 50%. We’ve gone from averaging about 900-1,000 donors to about 2,300 donors a year, so that will tell you how many new donors we’ve added. The retention of donors is our challenge. We get them because what we’ve done is that we’ve had sporadic activities and events that have attracted smaller donors, but we don’t have the staff in place to cultivate those small donors to retain them and move them to the next level of giving so that we can keep them as consistent and retain donors over time. So every year, we’re having to go back and try to appeal to those same donors again in the same way they gave the last time and not really moving. So move management of prospects has been stalled or stagnated because of the lack of staffing. Once you
have attracted a donor and you have them in your giving portfolio, move
management involves moving the donor from the level they’re on or at currently
to another level.

Alcorn State University officials are proud of its fiscal responsibility and cite it as
one of the reasons it has remained and will remain competitive as contender in
Mississippi higher education. Although the number of higher education institutions and
the funding formula may not provide the necessary funding for Alcorn State University to
operate, administrators plan to utilize the institution’s assets such as land, agricultural
expertise, athletics, research, and auxiliary enterprises to generate more revenue for
funding and increased faculty salaries. Ironically, the division which could do the most to
raise additional funds has its hands tied because the division is not adequately funded to
hire the staff to move donors from one level to another. Notably, the best way to increase
revenue is to increase enrollment that will in turn allow Alcorn State University to
provide competitive salaries for faculty and staff.

**Enrollment.** Increasing enrollment of the student body at Alcorn State University
is of utmost importance. When coupled with the fact that state appropriations dollars are
dwindling, increasing enrollment is the one way for Alcorn State University to get more
revenue in order to move the institution forward. Rachel lists increasing enrollment as
both long-term and short-term goals of the university.

We are working very diligently. Our main focus is our enrollment. As you know
at most institutions, the enrollment is going down. Our short-term challenge is to
make sure that we work on ways to make sure our students are able to afford to
come to school so we can increase our enrollment. It does present a challenge for
us because, like I said, our enrollment, we’re trying to make sure we turn it around and start it in the right direction, but it has been decreasing as well as state appropriations dollars. They’re always dwindling.

Virgil stated the short-term and long-term enrollment goals in this way. “Our short-term goal is to consistently experience an increase in enrollment every year. Our long-term goals have to deal with getting our enrollment up in the area of 5,000 or more in the next four to five years in 2020.” While Alcorn State University has the mission to recruit and enroll students from southwest Mississippi, the institution seeks to concurrently roll high school students and enroll more National Merit Scholars. This too will add to the diversity of the study body. Benjamin asserted:

We target those areas within our state delegated mission which is southwest Mississippi. The number one recruitment goal is to afford opportunities to students who wish to come from southwest Mississippi. That’s our state mandate. We cannot abrogate that. At the same time, we are prepared to offer opportunities for high school students who have not yet graduated and even junior college students who wish to be concurrently enrolled. In our honors program, we are seeking to get more and more National Merit Scholars into the university because that benefits all students—the more diverse our student body is.

In addition to generating more revenue, it is imperative that Alcorn State University increase its enrollment. With the nature of the failing schools in Jefferson and Claiborne counties and the lack of economic development in the area, Alcorn State University must look also recruit outside southwest Mississippi and increase its
enrollment. Another challenge Alcorn State University faces is one that every HBCU faces—the stigma of the majority population about HBCUs.

**Public stigma of Alcorn State University.** The public perception of Alcorn State University, like the public’s perception of HBCUs in general, is an obstacle that administrators must continue to overcome. Historically speaking, Mississippi governors would punish college presidents who opposed them in the gubernatorial election. According to Sansing (1990), this was a common practice of elected governors until 1940. In 1878, the Mississippi Legislature reduced Alcorn University’s funding, reconstituted it as Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College and founded Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College now Mississippi State University as the state’s second land grant institution. This was the beginning of unequal funding for Alcorn A & M College. Elijah asserts that even now HBCUs are still needed and should not be reduced or merged.

Funding was taken back [from Alcorn University] because of the president didn’t like the governor at the time. Hiram Revels [former U.S. Senator and the first president of Alcorn University] endorsed somebody else for governor and all that kind of stuff and it just got crazy. So we suffered from that but also just because of Mississippi’s racial history of discrimination and prejudices against these institutions. But as an alum and someone who truly values my education and what it afforded me the opportunity to do beyond these walls, I take exception to the fact that these schools are not needed or that we can reduce them by merging or that type of thing. We have just as much to offer our constituency base and others.
The nursing and business administration programs have diversified the ASU-Natchez campus. Historically, the Board of Trustees transferred the associate’s degree in nursing from The University of Southern Mississippi to Alcorn State University in 1978 with the directive to add a bachelor’s in nursing (Sansing, 1990). Then again, the same level of diversity at the ASU-Natchez does not exist on the Lorman campus. Virgil explicated that due to public perception of the majority population about HBCUs, Caucasians are not comfortable as they should be at Alcorn State University and people are lead to believe that Alcorn State University offers an inferior product. Conversely, Virgil also added the story of the father of a Caucasian nursing student who simply praised the nursing program at Alcorn State University. Although many other-race students graduate from the business and nursing programs, few sing the praises of Alcorn State University.

For example in our nursing program housed in Natchez has a huge percentage of students are Caucasian students, but we’ve not been able to infuse the student population with the type of diversity that you will find in Natchez here on the Lorman campus. And I will tell you it’s because of the entrenched public perception, particularly the entrenched public perception of the majority race people about HBCUs. They think that we offer an inferior product and the whole stigma of going to an HBCU as a majority person in this state. Folk have just not gotten to be comfortable as they should have and yet we talk to many Caucasian students who come here. I was just in a meeting a couple of weeks ago with a parent whose daughter went through our nursing program. He said to me, “Man, I don’t know what you guys did. But my daughter was an average student. She
came out here and she did extremely well. After she graduated, she has been
gainfully employed and has done very well since then.” He simply praised the
program, but you don’t find many like that.

Aaron emphasized that the Mississippi Legislature created statues that created
racial designations for higher education institutions and began the stigma that exists
towards HBCUs. Now, that public perception has led the majority population to believe
that Caucasian students who attend HBCUs could not be admitted to a PWI and are
uncomfortable wearing Alcorn State University Braves paraphernalia.

My point is that when you look at it and you think about Ayers, it’s really funny
that we are being told that we are the reason that there are no White students here,
but the state statute said no White students. It’s for Negros. And so that led White
students to believe that they didn’t need to be here. As a matter of fact, I’ve had
White students to tell me that they told people they were at Alcorn, “You couldn’t
get in anywhere else? You couldn’t get into Delta State?” “No, you know I’m just
closer to home.” “Why you want to be at home?” which is insulting and funny at
the same time that you assume that they came to here because they couldn’t get in
anywhere else. My Lord. So with that kind of attitude in their community, they
were not going to be encouraged to come here. They didn’t want to tell people
they were here. That’s why I’m meeting kids—and it’s getting a lot better now—but
you know time heals things. We’ve got a White football coach now. But I
would see students, White students, I know were in our nursing program at
Natchez. I would meet them in Walmart with their LSU shirts on and they’re
working on a bachelor’s degree in nursing at Alcorn. “My husband is at LSU.”
“Ok, I’m good with it. You don’t have to explain it to me.” But you could tell they were uncomfortable with meeting me. I just laugh. They’re wearing Mississippi State, Ole Miss. I just say, “Go ahead on now” and you’re working on a bachelor’s degree at Alcorn. Now for whatever reason, they’re more comfortable it appears to me because you see more of them wearing the paraphernalia. So I don’t know.

The public perception and stigma of the majority population regarding Alcorn University existed when the institution was established in 1871 for the education of Negro citizens. The Mississippi Legislature told races of students by statute which institutions they could attend. Unequal funding began in 1878 when the Mississippi Legislature reduced Alcorn University’s land grant appropriations and funding. From 1871 to 2015, the 144 year stigma continues to exist because the majority population believes HBCUs offer an inferior product and majority students attend HBCUs are not academically prepared to attend a PWI. The stigma also exhibits itself Caucasian students not wearing Alcorn State University paraphernalia and having to explain to other Caucasians the reasons why they attend Alcorn State University. Finally, the Southern culture is the final challenge HBCUs must overcome to benefit Alcorn State University.

*Southern culture.* When I heard this statement in the context of the interview, I found it somewhat strange because I am a Southerner who lives in the South. This perspective was foreign to me and I initially considered it an outlier. Benjamin hails from another region of the country and found that Southerners tend cultivate personal relationships before getting down to business. He found learning Southern culture was a
challenge and can be an impediment for someone who is not from the South represent an HBCU.

Well, I was from the so-called North so I moved to the South, so it’s just learning the culture. Well Southern culture is very friendly. Mississippi is the hospitality state. Well, you want to build relationships first with people then you work on business whereas up North it’s a little bit fast paced, more business oriented so it’s about the business at hand but again this is all stereotypical.

In summary, the challenges facing Alcorn State University appear to be numerous when you consider its isolation, lack of resources, enrollment issues, public stigma, and Southern culture. The institution’s isolation in a depressed area with little economic development makes it difficult to hire adjunct professors because there is not a pool of applicants living in the area. The lack of revenue exists because of the number of institutions the state must support and the funding formula that makes obtaining additional resources from the state difficult for university officials. Administrators are finding a number of ways to increase revenue using its resources and reaching out to corporations and alumni. While university officials cannot change the funding formula and location of the institution, Alcorn State University administrators must focus on increasing enrollment, enrolling student outside of southwestern Mississippi, and concurrently enrolling high school students. The challenges can become triumphs by educating constituents, combatting stereotypes and negative perceptions, and securing more resources to allow the university to increase enrollment and retain more faculty and staff. Additionally, administrators not from the Southern United States have the added burden of creating relationships with state officials before actually take care of
institutional business. Finally, administrators at Alcorn State University talked about the issues they had with the Ayers case.

**Problems with the Ayers settlement.** Alcorn State University officials have implemented various facets of the Ayers case. Some administrators who participated in this research study worked at Alcorn State University in various capacities until the case reached its conclusion. These administrators have some pointed opinions about the Ayers case and whether it has truly benefitted HBCUs in the way it was reported in the media. Regarding the Ayers case, Benjamin said, “I would like to say that it was needed. It was something very important. It was a landmark decision for the state.” Rachel recalls the 29 years it took for the case to reach its conclusion. Initially, the case was about equity and bringing HBCUs up to the level of PWIs.

It’s very long, long drawn out process as far as the Ayers case is concerned. My thought is that it was initially started to make sure that the HBCUs and universities that had not been given equal chances, equal resources in the past. The case was initiated to try to bring some equality and to just bring the HBCUs up to or just start bringing them up to a level where they could compete or be with the majority institution because in the past they had not been. So I think initially the purpose of the Ayers case was to bring some equality or try to bring them up at least to the level of the majority institutions.

Aaron stated that the genesis of the case was about equity, but the resolution of the case became about lack of diversity at HBCUs. To control the endowment created by the state, HBCUs had to achieve and maintain a certain level of diversity. Alcorn State University did achieve that diversity metric.
I think the *Ayers* case when it was filed was about access and equity. Twenty years after that when it finally made it to court, they made it be about diversity. And the judge at that time determined that the HBCUs were at fault. I think that it was not in his [the judge’s] will to do anything necessarily for HBCUs. I think his mind was beyond that. The suit was filed about HBCUs and African Americans. When it was settled, it became about diversity. The items and things that took place for Alcorn and Jackson and Valley were intended to benefit other-race students—non-Black—including scholarships and whatever else you were doing. Any programs that you asked for were designed to attract non-Black students to the HBCUs when that wasn’t really what it was all about. So by the time it made it to court, White schools because of athletics and other programs had a *number* of Black students on their campuses. They had a number of students there due to aesthetics and all that. So the HBCUs then became saddled with the burden of having to meet a non-Black enrollment goal to access any of the money. Alcorn did that. We are the only one that I know of who reached that minimum 10% other-race enrollment three years in a row, so that gave us access to the money. Virgil stated that the funds Alcorn State University received as a result of the settlement was not nearly enough to make up for the years of underfunding and the temporary infusion of funds to start a program but does not sustain the program over time is also a problem. The funds provided to HBCUs in Mississippi did not level the playing field between HBCUs and PWIs.

My initial impression of the *Ayers* case was that it was going to provide resources to help HBCUs in the state to catch up after so many years of unfair play in terms
of support from the state. That was my initial impression. So I thought we would get funding to support new programs, which we did. I thought we would get funding to support new services, which we did. And I also thought that the playing field would be leveled, which did not happen. While we got additional funds, those additional funds in the whole scheme of things were miniscule in terms of what we should have gotten over the years. It’s hard to build up a program in a short period of time with a few more dollars thrown at you than it is to have a program that has been supported, fundamentally supported over the years and you’ve have been able to nurture and grow because of that support that has come over the years. And so it’s in some ways been a disappointment from my initial view to how I view it at this time. Now I also thought that with Ayers funding, we would be able to certainly attract more students, more non-African American students if you will, and specifically more Caucasian students, and in a couple of programs we have been able to do that.

Virgil took issue with the fact that institutions that had historically been discriminated against had to prove that they deserved the funds they had been denied for decades, and in the case of Alcorn for a century. If the necessary funds had been provided so Alcorn State University could build up programs and services and improve infrastructure, then the conversation regarding the Ayers settlement would be different. Well, I think if we didn’t have the stipulation of having to prove ourselves because that’s what the final selling of it was. You’ve got to prove yourself to the public in order to get these funds. I think if we had been provided substantial resources to bringing the best and brightest faculty and to provide the best and
modern facilities, we would be having a different conversation today. *Some of* that has happened [Virgil spoke at a louder dynamic]: the business building in Natchez. A wonderful facility. You look at the faculty we have established there. Great faculty. Again a diverse faculty. We’ve been able to attract a number of students, but see we’ve not been able to build the infrastructure that we would like to have. We’ve not been able to provide the services and personnel we would like that we believe are comparable to the PWIs in the state.

Each of the administrators pointed out problems with the settlement that impeded the ability of Alcorn State University to become a premier higher education institution in Mississippi: the irony of the *Ayers* case, other-race scholarships, capital projects, the diversity mandate and the settlement ending.

*Irony of the Ayers case.* The *Ayers* case was filed by African American to benefit the public HBCUs in the State of Mississippi. When the case made it to trial, lawyers made the case that the entire higher education system in the State of Mississippi had been sued, including the three public HBCUs. As a result, lawyers representing the state wanted to put forth answers and testimony that benefitted the Mississippi higher education system, but did not benefit the three public HBCUs and the issues the case was originally intended to remedy and rectify. Aaron spoke on behalf of Alcorn State University and the other HBCUs represented in the settlement.

Like I said at the risk of the redundancy department, the original plaintiffs, all those people, their suit was filed on our behalf. When it made it to trial, we were lumped in with the other schools because they said the plaintiffs sued the state.

The judge and all of the other attorneys said because we were state-supported, we
had been sued as well. So just like they were telling Ole Miss they didn’t have
enough other-race students, we didn’t have enough other-race students. And that
became very problematic. I think that, personally, I think that [Judge] Neal
Biggers chose to live in Oxford. Rather than to pursue greatness, he decided he
wanted to live in Oxford. The judge at that time, the federal judge, Biggers had an
opportunity to reshape education and how he could write his own epitaph for
history, but he wanted to live in Oxford. So he didn’t pursue greatness, he decided
to maintained the status quo, to protect the state and its money. “Yeah, we’re
going to give Alcorn, Jackson and Valley all that big money [then Aaron
whispers] but it’s got to benefit us.” And that’s what wound up happening.
Continuing with the same logic, defense attorneys had a set of answers to
questions that benefitted the IHL system and employees at HBCUs had a set of answers
that benefitted their institution. This clash resulted in lawyers choosing not to allow
certain state employees to offer testimony in the case. Aaron explained:

When they were having the hearings, I did not get a chance to testify. But when
we were meeting with the [U.S.] Justice Department, they had [position deleted]
directors from each of the HBCUS to come and we met with our attorneys. I
always felt like they weren’t comfortable with what our answers were going to be.
They have the answers they want us to have because keep in mind they were
saying “the [higher education] system [of the State of Mississippi] was sued.” In
our minds, “Y’all were sued to help Alcorn.” So this answer you want us to give
is not the answer I want to give because my answer is different from yours
because your answer isn’t true. You’re talking about the whole thing, but that
doesn’t help me. So we never got a chance to say anything directly to the [U.S.]
Justice Department because I felt like the attorneys always representing us were
not comfortable. If we went to Jackson, we met with them, we went over
questions and answers, but after meeting with us—the woman at Valley and me
and the woman from Jackson—I just think they felt like they got around that.

HBCU presidents were in a particularly precarious position because they are hired
by the IHL Board, worked with them closely and were evaluated by them based on their
job performance. There was no leeway for HBCU presidents to advocate for their
institution when the answers provided to them were to benefit the higher education
system. Aaron continued:

Vincent [pseudonym used to replace participant’s name] at Valley was right. The
people you are working for have been sued over you and at the same time they
want you to walk the party line. They want you to sing the company song. And
you know if you sing the company song, you’re not going to get anything to help
you. So we were in a very tough predicament. Presidents, people can say
whatever they want, were in a bad spot because at the same time while you’re
trying to do this over here for Ayers, they’re going back to those same people for
normal day-to-day operations. You’re still submitting a regular budget, annual
funding. You’re asking for programs. You’re asking for this so it was a very
unfair position, an unenviable position. It was almost untenable. They were in a
very untenable position of having to push, and you know a lot of people accusing
them of not being more boisterous and forceful. See they don’t know what they’re
talking about, but realize what you are doing. Those are the people that they work
for that you’re asking them to go against. In this hand, they’re taking directions from these people. They’re being evaluated by these people on how well they are doing their job, which they should be because it is a normal process. But in this hand, a lawsuit has been filed to help the institution at large so they were in a very unenviable, untenable position.

The irony of the case is that the judge and the lawyers stated that the plaintiffs sued Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University because they sued the higher education system of Mississippi when in fact the plaintiffs sued the higher education system on behalf of the HBCUs. This contention became evident when directors met with justice department lawyers who were uncomfortable with the answers the directors provided regarding their questions. By singing the company song, Mississippi HBCUs would not reap the benefits intended by the spirit of the plaintiffs. Presidents were in an even more acrimonious position because their employers placed them in a position where they had to sing the company song to benefit the higher education system, not the HBCUs they represented. The second problem administrators have with the settlement is the scholarships awarded to other-race students who attended Alcorn State University as provided by the settlement.

**Other-race scholarships and stipends.** The Ayers settlement also provided other-race scholarships for students who were “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies,” namely Caucasian students. These scholarships and stipends influenced Caucasian students to enroll at the ASU-Natchez campus in larger numbers. Aaron explained how the other-race scholarships and stipends worked at Alcorn State University.
And then there was a grant of just $700 a semester called a Diversity Grant at Alcorn. I can’t speak for the other schools. So you could get $700 a semester for just being non-Black. Now when we first started out, it was saying non-African American so that meant *anybody* could get it. We could give it to Jamaicans and Nigerians. So the court then double backed and said “Non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa.” They made sure you understood that they didn’t want anybody Black to get that money. So they doubled back and told us to change that because if you said non-African American, then you know Jamaicans aren’t African American, Kenyans and Nigerians. But they didn’t want them to have that money. So we had to switch and say “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa *or the West Indies.*” Nobody with that background could get that money. In other words, they wanted to make it clear who they wanted to have the money. So that’s a large part of my experience with it.

The settlement provided the interest off the $5 million endowment to be used for the other-race scholarships, but the public was lead to believe that HBCUs had $5 million in scholarships. This too proved to be a problematic issue for Alcorn State University as Aaron recalled:

Initially, we had a very tough time on both sides of the community with the scholarships. They said $5 million. Well what people didn’t understand was that it was an endowment. We never were given the money. We were given permission to *spend* the interest off that money. We weren’t even allowed to have the money to invest. The *State* invested the money and they would give us the interest. Now not only did they do that, they also told us what we could *do* with the interest.
Only 60% of the money could be used for scholarships. The other 40% of the money had to go to what they called Program Enhancement. Now but in the public mind, you’ve got $5 million in scholarships. So when White students called about the scholarships and you tell them “We’re out,” they’re mad because “You’re holding my money. You’re spending [the] money.” That wasn’t true. So it was dishonest to have people believe that you had $5 million in scholarships because you didn’t. You had the interest off the money. So that was problematic. It was problematic in the Black community because Black students felt like White students were getting paid to come to school. “I’m out here. I want to be here. They don’t want to be here. They’re just coming because of the money.” Well, it was limited. And also the money wasn’t in the White students mind because they said—it was really funny to me—because they said it was for them, they thought they were special. Black students were angry because they thought they were getting free money. If both of them had looked at it, the criteria were the same. White students getting a scholarship had to have a 22 ACT [score]. Now you can argue that they make [higher standardized test] scores faster, but they still had to have the same criteria that the Black students had to have in order to get the scholarship.

If the case had been settled differently, Rachel would have preferred that some of the other-race scholarships be provided to deserving African American students. As stated earlier, many African American students have difficulty playing for the difference of a higher education because the Pell Grant does not cover all college expenses.
Our scholarship dollars that go with the programs are geared basically toward offering to non-Black students or other race students. If it were settled differently to say all students, to give some of those scholarships to some of our Black students who needed it as well.

Designers of the Ayers settlement made sure that White students benefitted from Ayers funds which in the spirit of the plaintiffs were intended to build up the HBCUs. To circumvent the court’s initial decision not to award the money to African Americans, Alcorn began to award funds to people of African descent who do not identify as African American. The court doubled back and added the provision: “No descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies.” Concurrently, both the Caucasian and African American communities were misled regarding the amount of money that was available for the other-race scholarships. Both communities believed colleges had $5 million in scholarships when in truth they could only use 60% of the interest off the $5 million endowment. If the case was settled differently, Alcorn State University officials would have offered some of those scholarship dollars to deserving descendants of sub-Saharan Africa and the West Indies. Next, the Ayers case provided capital funding for building projects on the campus of Alcorn State University, but administrators claim the funds did not go far enough to remedy the discrimination claim lodged and proven by the Ayers case.

**Capital projects.** Alcorn State University benefitted from capital projects and capital improvements. While administrators appreciate what Ayers funds did for the campus, it is not nearly enough to make up for century of neglect and diminished resources. Benjamin stated:
When it comes to funding capital infrastructure, I don’t think there could ever be enough. You’re talking about a growing U.S. population. And why is the population growing? Because of immigration. When you talk about the need for constantly upgrading the infrastructure for technology, when you have older buildings coming offline needing renovation—so that answer to your question is “No” and I don’t think it’s ever going to be enough.

In addition to Elijah asserting that capital improvements have not gone far enough to remedy the decades of discrimination, he also listed facilities on the campus of Alcorn State University that would benefit from the use of additional capital funds. Namely, the athletics facilities are subpar and are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Oh, wow! Athletic facilities is a good one but of course nobody wants to talk about it about athletics as not being primary to a university setting. But in America these days? Our collegiate athletics are very slim pickings. Our athletics facilities are beyond subpar in terms of being a NCAA Division I institution. We don’t have a track. We don’t have dressing rooms for a number of our sports including Title IX with some of our women’s sports. They don’t have dedicated dressing rooms. We have a building here called the “new gym” that’s 40 years old this year and it would take about $35 million to turn it into a modern facility for this day and age. We have a student union that’s 60 years old. It’s over 50 years old. It doesn’t have any ADA capabilities. The gym also does not have any ADA capabilities in the internal part of it. On the outside of it, they’ve got ramps. You have to go on one level or the other.
While Elijah stated that the structural integrity of the buildings on campus are good, many buildings have had to be retrofitted for technology support. Most of these same buildings also not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Elijah also talked the system of roads on campus needing an overhaul and HBCUs in the state either not having or having an inadequate performing arts center.

Infrastructure-wise, I think the state has done a good job of helping the university invest in its utility infrastructure system: water, sewer, gas, light. The State has done a great job in that. Building infrastructure which is also a part of the capital infrastructure, we could use I would think another $200 million in building infrastructure and I could lay out some facilities for you. Now classrooms, I think we have done a great job in modernizing classrooms. This administration building is 40 years old. For someone who’s in a wheelchair, the hallways are very narrow and the person would have a very difficult time getting into the bathroom doors. In my opinion, they’re not ADA compliant. And the way this building is set up for electrical, everything had to be retrofitted for technology support. The bones of the building are great. It’s a strong building when it was built, but it needs a rehab and all of our buildings need to be rehabbed in order to be modernized. So we can go down the line. We don’t have a performing arts facility for the cultural edification of our community and our student body. The roads. We didn’t get into the roads. There needs to be a total rehabbing of the road system here on campus. We’ve been layering and layering and layering on top of each other for years and that creates a lot of potholes and things.
Elijah spoke to the issue of student housing. The new residence halls were not built using state funds or bonds. The Alcorn State University used its own bond rating to build those new modern facilities.

Student living and housing, the last few years we’ve done a good job. We’ve done that independent of the state funding because that’s privately—it’s a bonded project, and it’s bonded in the private market not using the State’s credit rating. That’s the new housing complex, the Medgar Evers complex, in the back. We have a number of facilities in the last four or five years that have been brought to a modern look.

Virgil mentioned that Ayers capital improvements on campus have improved academic programs to a degree. Potential students and parents look at the accommodations a college and university can provide and whether facilities are attractive and safe for students. While Ayers settlement has benefitted academic programs of business and nursing on the Natchez campus and biotechnology and Honors and Pre-Professional Programs on the Lorman campus, the funds received are not nearly enough to make up for the years of neglect.

And then again as I mentioned earlier, we’ve not gotten nearly enough funds over the years that would help us to improve our facilities and infrastructure. I mention the MBA building in Natchez that we’re very proud of, also the nursing facility there. Both of those have been beneficiary areas of Ayers funding. We also have a center in Vicksburg that is supported in part with Ayers funding. We have several renovated buildings on the campus for example Dumas Hall is a wonderfully renovated building. It was the old School of Business building. If you
look at a photograph of that building before the renovation and you go through the building now, you’ll see a totally different building. It looks like a brand new building. We also have the biotechnology building which is a new facility constructed on the academic side using Ayers funding. And we have used some funds to renovate the facilities for the Honors and Pre-Professional Programs. But again, those renovations and improvements in facilities while they have helped, they are not nearly enough. How do you make up in a short period of time for all of the years of neglect in terms of facilities? And it’s a reality. Folk are looking to see what kind of accommodations does your institution provide? What kind of accommodations are provided by your institution that are attractive and that I would feel safe in leaving my child and where my child would feel safe? We’ve gotten some buildings and the buildings are functional, but not necessarily attractive to provide the most conducive atmosphere for studying and learning. Despite all of that though, I think we have been successful in what we’ve done over the years.

Benjamin spoke of the expectation of parents and students for the higher education institutions to have better facilities. They are not expecting functional buildings, but aesthetically pleasing buildings with modern amenities. Benjamin added:

You know our students are expecting top class facilities. Many of them want facilities better than the ones they’re leaving in terms of their high schools, their homes, and their communities. They expect it. Their parents expect it. The alumni expects that so we must prove and give our students and staff, faculty the best facilities that we can offer.
Elijah succinctly expressed what all the administrators said his goal would have been regarding the Ayers settlement had it been settled differently. “Ha! Parity with our sister land grant institution in the state of Mississippi. That’s what my ultimate goal would have been.” Restated different, Elijah would like Alcorn State University to be equal to or equivalent with Mississippi State University.

Alcorn State University officials all agree that the funds received from the Ayers settlement to improve the facilities are not nearly enough to make up for past years of neglect regarding facilities. Some older buildings are not ADA compliant, athletics facilities are subpar and do not comply with Title IX and must be retrofitted to support technology infrastructure. While newer buildings have benefitted academic programs but in the historical scheme of things, the new and improved facilities do make up for more than a century of neglect. Next, diversity among faculty, students, academic programs and services is a point of pride for Alcorn State University.

**Inclusion.** Alcorn State University was the only university to reach the diversity metric to receive the endowment set forth by the Ayers settlement. Diversity is a priority at Alcorn State University, but university uses the word *inclusion* instead of *diversity*. Seeing that Alcorn State University has made a substantial investment in achieving student diversity or inclusion, it was the first and only institution to enroll a 10% population of other-race students for three consecutive years, According to Benjamin:

We’re a leader in that area. Yes, again as it appertains to the Ayers settlement, there were diversity metrics that were set within the lawsuit as you know and Alcorn was the first school to meet those. The president has made significant capital investment in diversity. Let me look at the language. The language we use
is inclusion. We have a Director of Inclusion and Equity. And one of Alcorn’s chief aims is *access*. That’s what we focus on—access, academics, agriculture, and athletics. So when you talk about manifesting certain things, you have to begin with a vision, goals and mission. And so one of our chief goals is access. Access embraces diversity and inclusion.

Diversity is an initiative of IHL for all eight institutions of higher learning. In previous years, all eight higher education had to submit a diversity report to IHL to show how each institution planned to be more diverse in recruiting students and faculty as well as business practices with other-race vendors (Hamilton, 2014). Alcorn State University recognizes the importance of diversity in higher education as Rachel explained.

Well, one of our initiatives from IHL and one from the university is to diversify the institution because we do believe that having more diverse conversations at the table will enrich our campus experiences, so we do solicit or try to attract more diverse populations. We have a diversity officer that checks this and have programs and things to try to attract a more diverse population so we’re working on that.

In the student centeredness theme, the importance of offering diverse academic offerings and academic support programs supported the institutional aims of access and inclusion. Having a diverse faculty and a diverse student body enriched the campus experience because more diverse conversations occur at the table. Virgil expanded on Rachel’s previous point.

And in conjunction with the diverse academic programs, I mentioned earlier the diverse faculty and the diverse student body. We have some outstanding faculty
members we are training from all over the world and this I believe is a major positive for the institution. We’ve been able to maintain an effective and productive faculty.

At Alcorn State University, administrators believe that the new academic programs that resulted from the Ayers settlement has helped to enroll other-race students. Benjamin mentioned the global demand of the courses being offered as the reason Alcorn State University is more diverse.

I think new academic programs will attract other-race students insofar that it attracts the global. It hits upon the global demand. And if there’s a global demand and our world is diverse, then yes those who are other-race, meaning those who fit within that global population, then that will accrue towards greater diversification for Alcorn.

Alcorn State University received control of The University of Southern Mississippi’s Natchez campus in 1977 with authorization to add a bachelor’s degree in nursing in addition to the associate’s degree that was already offered (Sansing, 1990). The nursing program on ASU-Natchez campus has enabled Alcorn State University to achieve the diversity metric set forth by the settlement. According to Virgil:

Well one major factor was the nursing program. The nursing program is located in Natchez where there is a good concentration of other-race students that matches the Vidalia area, the area right across the river that provided a good concentration of other-race students. Our emphasis on those memoranda of agreement with other institutions, international institutions also helped us to get other-race students.
Rachel mentioned that in addition to the academic programs, other-race scholarships and stipends have already increased the numbers of non-African American students at Alcorn State University. Rachel affirmed: “I do. I do. They have already enticed them. They offer good programs and they offer scholarship opportunities as well as stipends and so they’re recruiting for those programs. So I do think they are. They will.” Virgil asserted that the implemented programs have attracted other-race students. Virgil stated: “I think so. At least some that we have implemented. The MBA program, the MBA program in hospitality certainly play a major role in attracting other-race students.”

Athletics has helped increase the minority population at Alcorn State University, particularly in tennis, soccer, baseball and softball by recruiting international students to the university. The degree to which Alcorn State University recruits international students is significant. As stated by Benjamin:

Our athletics program certainly helped to drive student diversity. So we have a very diverse athletics program. Our athletics program is even more diverse than the larger university body. It’s a significant degree. We had even a partnership with Russia at one time a few years ago. Our tennis team has a significant proportion of students who are international, the same with soccer. The football team which is winning is doing some awesome things. Quite a significant number of students are international.

Virgil said recruiting other-race and international students as part of its chief aim of access as well as international agreements with other countries. These memoranda of
understanding with international institutions have brought larger numbers diverse students to the Alcorn State University.

I mentioned earlier that access was a major tenet of the institution. And so with that access, with access as a point of departure, we have purposefully recruited students, other-race students as well as international students. We have established international agreements with other institutions in Argentina, in Nicaragua, in Russia. And so we are able to attract a number of diverse students. I should mention also a number of institutions in Africa we’ve had relationships with. And so when you look at our faculty, when you look at our students, you see students from this country who you would consider students of diversity whether Asians or Indians or Hispanic or Caucasian international students.

As restated by Aaron, the diversity mandate and the Ayers settlement pushed Alcorn State University and other HBCUs further into the international student market. To boost student diversity, Mississippi HBCUs began to recruit other-race and international students to play lesser revenue sports at a Division I NCAA university.

It also pushed us further into the international student market. And we used that and the lesser revenue sports that White students commonly play in order to attract them here. You know soccer, softball, tennis. Those programs enabled us to reach that 10% enrollment because those students wanted those opportunities to play. So you see that at all of us now [meaning HBCUs]. If you look, you will see that the number of students in the nonrevenue sports, many of those students are non-Black when you look at your tennis, baseball. Well let’s say tennis, softball,
soccer then baseball. Look at those programs at the HBCUs, you’ll see that those are non-Black and they are the result of the Ayers program.

In the final analysis, the settlement got turned around. Instead of shoring up programs to attract other-race students, HBCUs now had to prove that they deserved the funds that should have been theirs from the beginning by recruiting, enrolling and subsidizing other-race students. The funds were withheld from the university until it met the diversity requirement. Virgil expressed his disappointment in the settlement.

Now let me tell you one of my greatest disappointments. Ayers was supposed to be a program that would help us to catch us, that would infuse resources in our institutions and to help us make our programs better so it would attract students from all races. And the programs that we have developed since then are of the caliber that they should attract individuals from all races. But it seems to me that in the final analysis when the settlement occurred, the onus was on us to get nonminority students into the institution than there was on shoring up programs and services so that we could attract nonminority students and that was a legislative effort. So it seems to me, I’d like to say that I believe that the Ayers case got all turned around. When we complained about the lack of funding and lack of programs that were perceived as unequal and were unequal because of the lack of funding, we were told, “OK. The problem is not a lack of funding. Your challenge is to get in more other-race students.” And so the focus was moved away from the state having to provide us with funds to help bring us to putting the onus on the institutions to attract more White students in whatever way we could.
We had to do something additional to earn those funds that should have been ours, in my opinion.

The provision in the Ayers settlement that withheld endowment from HBIs that had been discriminated against was not fair to HBCUs. The reason Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University have not reached the required threshold is because White citizens in the State of Mississippi intentionally legislatively created a system of higher education that made HBIs separate and different.

And in fact the funds were actually tied up until we reached a certain level of nonminority enrollment. Fortunately here at Alcorn, we were able to achieve the benchmark. Jackson State and Mississippi Valley were not initially able to achieve those benchmarks so we were receiving funds before the other institutions were. But again I think the whole affair was unfair to Jackson State as well as Mississippi Valley State. Here is a system that was legislatively created in the state. They wanted us to be a separate institution. They wanted us to be different from the other institutions and institutionally, they made us different. But then they said, “Ok, rather than making you or helping you to become equals in higher education, instead of the focus being on helping to bring us up, they turned the thing around and now we have to do something to earn those funds which should have been ours.”

Alcorn State University achieved the diversity metric set forth by the state because it made a significant capital investment in inclusion as a part of its chief aim of access. Diverse academic programs hit upon the global demand that attracts students from all races. In fact, administrators attribute academic programs to increasing the
population of other-race students. In addition, faculty and student diversity adds new voices and ideas to conversations thereby enriching the educational experience. In addition to the academic programs, athletic programs have encouraged other-race and international students to play lesser revenue sports in Division I of the NCAA, so much so that the diversity of student athletes exceeds the diversity of the student population.

Finally, the disappointment of the Ayers case is that all HBCUs had to something to prove that they deserved the funds when the institutions were been made to be separate institutions historically and were denied funding based on its separate status based on race. When compared to providing funds to shore up academic programs in order to attract a more diverse student population, the state preferred Alcorn State University achieving student diversity by any means necessary instead of providing the necessary funds. Lastly, what will Alcorn State University officials do now that the Ayers funding is about to end?

**Settlement ending.** Alcorn State University administrators were asked what will happen now the Ayers funding is about to end. Virgil stated that Alcorn must replace funds that supported faculty salaries, operational budgets and several academic programs. The funding will be missed.

I can tell you very definitively that we will miss the funding. We’ll miss the Ayers funding. We’ve been able to hire faculty members. We’ve been able to support the operational budgets of academic programs and once gone, those costs will have to be subsumed in our budget. Some of those costs are significant, for example our MBA program. Most of our faculty members were initially hired using Ayers funding. While we have been weaning folk off of Ayers over the last
several years since that first step down, it’s going to be difficult to manage and
will require some judicious planning. It will definitely put us in a “rob Peter to
pay Paul” situation to keep those programs going.

As Virgil stated and confirmed by Aaron, Alcorn State University has been
subsuming the cost of a certain of number of faculty members each year to alleviate the
stress of having to take the financial burden all at once. Aaron contemplated the options
for Alcorn State University and the academic programs that were gained under Ayers and
their future once the funding was removed.

So with what’s happening to us now, as I see it, our problem now in a way is what
do we do with Ayers ending? Ayers was all right. Everybody wants to talk about
how we benefitted from it. To me, what do you do now that it’s ending? I know
the MBA program and faculty on the master’s level are on Ayers [funding]. There
are other individuals on this campus that are employed on Ayers money. Now, do
we use those programs on services? Or do we get rid of something else? Do we
consolidate something? But you’ve got to make a decision on how you are going
to replace that money and what you are going to do about those programs and
things. We’re probably less than 5 years away from that. So what our discussion
has been is trying to transition one or two people a year off until we get to there.
Do it slowly so by the time we get to there, we don’t have to take that hit at one
time. Now I have no idea how effective that will be, but our plan is to transition
people a little bit at a time in order to get them off of there.

It seems that a likely possibility of the Ayers case is that some of the programs
that were gained under Ayers may not exist in the future the same way they did when the
funds supported the programs. Not only will the funding be missed, but also create a financial hardship on the university. However, there is one certainty in the matter—the Ayers funding will end.

Now I can tell you that because when the Ayers funding ends—that I’m certain of—if you have not transitioned those people to something else, then you’re in trouble. You’re going to lose the program. When it ends, it creates a financial burden because if you don’t get an increase in funding, you’re going to take a step backward. You’re going to either cut something somewhere else, you’re going to cut somebody or you’re going to wind up letting go something that you, for lack of a better term I’m going to say, gained under Ayers. And do I know, for example, that the MBA faculty is on Ayers funding. People teaching in the MBA program, they’re paid out of Ayers. Now when that money ends, the university has got to figure out where their salary is going to come from if they are going to keep that MBA program. Now in that regard, you must now plan to transition them off and find a way to fund them or you don’t have it [the program any longer] because it is clear that the Ayers funding is going to run out. And I know that we’ve already had discussions on that. Now I can tell you I don’t know what the results are going to be, but I know we are discussing the impact of the money ending. See people are thinking about it beginning. What happens when it ends?

Now you’ve got live people working on this. You’ve got programs that are funded by this, you know. You’ve got to find a way to transition those people and that’s a financial burden when budgets are being cut.
Alcorn State University officials are concerned about what happens once the Ayers funding ends. Currently, these funds support academic programs, operating budgets and faculty salaries. These significant costs will create a financial burden for the university and cause the university to take a step backward by placing upon the university the added responsibility of finding ways to replace the funding. Administrators will have to decide whether they will keep the same level of programs and services, consolidate them, reduce them or eliminate them. Sadly, it appears that the programs gained under Ayers could very well not exist after the funds are removed from the university.

Chapter Summary

In summary, Alcorn State University can gauge its success by becoming more student centered in its approach to higher education in each of the following areas: student productivity, diverse academic programs, improving technology infrastructure and offer online education and providing financial assistance to its student population. This has resulted in the productivity of the institution in regards to graduation and retention rates, the academic success of student athletes and the number of biology and STEM graduates and students who go on to attend professional and graduate schools.

Next, some of the challenges the university are related to the location of the institution, the lack of revenue, enrollment issues, the public stigma of Alcorn State University by the majority population and the way business is conducted in the South. Finally, university officials have a number of issues with the Ayers settlement. The irony of the case was that the lawyers surmised that plaintiffs sued the HBCUs when they sued the state system of higher education. The plaintiffs sued the state on behalf of HBCUs. The people who testified during the case were expected to sing the company song including
presidents of HBCUs in Mississippi, but doing so would not benefit Alcorn State University and other HBCUs in the ways the original plaintiffs anticipated. The case provided scholarships for students who were “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies.” Despite this requirement, Alcorn State University was the only HBCU in Mississippi to achieve the 10% other-race enrollment for three consecutive years as a result of its nursing program, international student population and athletics. Now that the settlement is ending, there is serious concern among university officials who must scramble to replace those funds that supports programs and salaries. By meeting the diversity requirement, Alcorn State University had to prove it deserved the funds they were denied for almost a century. Replacing those funds will create a financial burden for Alcorn State University and the outcome of the academic programs gained under Ayers at this moment is uncertain. In Chapter 6, the research findings at Mississippi Valley State University will be discussed.
Chapter 6

Mississippi Valley State University

Driving west on U.S. Highway 82 from Greenwood in Leflore County sits a university to the left of the highway on 400 acres of land. The first thing you see are two reflecting lakes, retention pools to hold water, that keep the campus from flooding. Between these reflecting lakes is are two roads, one that leads on the campus and one that leads off campus. Between two roads that lead on and off campus is the police guard shack. Once you pass the guard shack between the two roads, you will see the imposing four-story William W. Sutton Administration Building. Prominent buildings and structures on campus include the Business Education Building, the Science and Technology Building on left side of the campus, the James H. White Library in the middle of the campus behind the administration building, and the Rice-Totten Stadium on the right side of the campus. Between the administration building and the library is Lois Aron Chapel. Buried there are the founding president and his wife, James Herbert and Augusta Charter White. Also noticeable on campus is the renovation of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation complex on campus. Among the renovation, sit buildings that have outlived their usefulness but continue to foster learning among faculty and students. Among these are the Walter L. Sillers Fine Arts Building, the Fielding L. Wright Science and Math Building, H. G. Carpenter Auditorium, and the Jacob Aron Student Union. Since I graduated, a new men’s and women’s dormitory has been built, but even more disturbing to me was the number of dormitories that were boarded up and are uninhabitable. Among the male dormitories include five-story Leflore Hall, the three-story athletic dormitory and among the female dormitories include two-story College

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Hall I, five-story University Hall and five-story Edna Horton Hall. Affectionately called “Valley,” “The Valley,” “Mississippi Valley” and “Mississippi Valley State,” it is on the main campus of Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena where the field research and interviews for this research project were conducted.

**Background of Mississippi Valley State University**

According to the Mississippi Valley State University administrators interviewed for this research project, state officials, namely Speaker of the House of the Mississippi Legislature Walter Sillers, a gentrified farmer from Rosedale, saw the need for a higher education institution for Blacks. When Sillers saw a mechanical cotton picker in 1936 on the Flowers Plantation in Clarksdale, he wondered what would happen to masses of Blacks once they were no longer needed to provide manual labor on the cotton fields and plantations. The Mississippi Legislature chartered Mississippi Vocational College in 1946 with the following stipulations: the institution would provide teacher education and vocational education as part of its mission to Black constituents and the institution would be located in the Delta. Mississippi Vocational College opened during segregation in 1950 as the youngest higher education institution in Mississippi. In 1964, the name was changed to Mississippi Valley State College. In 1974, the institution received university status and became Mississippi Valley State University. Mississippi Valley State University operate a branch campus in Greenville with Delta State University and Mississippi Delta Community College at the Greenville Higher Education Center.

**Mission.** Excellence the educational endeavor and student centeredness are two major points in the mission of Mississippi Valley State University. The institution also hopes to improving the quality of life for people in the region.
Mississippi Valley State University, as a Carnegie Classified Master's University, provides comprehensive undergraduate and graduate programs in education, the arts and sciences, and professional studies. The University is driven by its commitment to excellence in teaching, learning, service, and research—a commitment resulting in a learner-centered environment that prepares critical thinkers, exceptional communicators, and service-oriented, engaged, and productive citizens. MVSU is fundamentally committed to positively impacting the quality of life and creating extraordinary educational opportunities for the Mississippi Delta and beyond. (Mississippi Valley State University, 2012, para. 1)

Vision. Mississippi Valley State University envisions itself as a public square and crown jewel of the Mississippi Delta that will collaborate with community leaders to solve problems affecting the region. As a result, Mississippi Valley State University will enhance quality of life in the region and provide access to a higher education for the citizens of the region.

Mississippi Valley State University aspires to become the educational crown jewel of the Mississippi Delta, and in so doing, the institution will attract students of diverse backgrounds as a result of its innovative academic programs; commitment to developing entrepreneurs; and globalized focus intertwined throughout the academic curricula and support services. In its quest for distinctiveness, uniqueness, innovation, and longevity, the University will become the public square of the Mississippi Delta, responsible for engaging an ever-expanding group of collaborators focused on identifying and implementing solutions to the problems that have plagued the delta region for generations. As a
result, Mississippi Valley State University will serve as the catalyst for an enhanced quality of life and increased educational opportunities for the citizens of a revitalized Mississippi Delta (Mississippi Valley State University, 2012, para. 2).

The president of Mississippi Valley State University has articulated a trendy slogan that has been embraced by all stakeholders: “One goal, one team, one Valley.” This is the president’s message to all constituents. Laurel explained the president’s vision and expounded upon the six-word vision statement of Mississippi Valley State University.

I think the long-term goals that we have at the university include the president’s, it’s sort of a trendy, mission he’s created: “One goal, one team, one Valley.” And that one goal being student success, one team being uniting with the community to form partnerships, and one Valley is school pride and spirituality. That’s a long-term goal.

Participants

I contacted five senior level administrators at Mississippi Valley State University by postal mail, email and office visits to participate in my research study in each of the following divisions: Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement, Budget and Finance, President, and Student Affairs. Two administrators agreed to participate during the study and three administrators declined to participate in the study and referred me to other participants. While two participants are not administrators, they are knowledgeable of the Ayers case and how it was implemented throughout the campus and in certain departments. Another participant volunteered to be interviewed in the place of the person
in charge of the division. The participants were interviewed during the months of October and November 2014 on two separate visits. Being that the mascot of Mississippi Valley State University is the Delta Devil, the administrators were given the pseudonyms Daniel, Ebony, Vincent, Imnah, and Laurel in the order they were interviewed. Two of the five persons interviewed are African American males and three participants are African American females. Each interview lasted approximately 20 min to an hour. The interview of Daniel, Ebony, and Imnah occurred in the office of each participant. The interview of Vincent occurred in a classroom adjacent to a suite of offices and the interview of Laurel via telephone. Semi-structured interviews occurred for Daniel, Ebony, Imnah, and Laurel. Ebony asked for the interview questions prior to the interview. The interview of Vincent was somewhat unstructured because of the participant’s direct experience and knowledge of the Ayers case. The interview with Laurel was condensed due the participant only having 20 min to speak with me via telephone while she headed to a meeting.

Information identifying participants, such as approximate age, educational background, former occupations, current position, titles and responsibilities and other personal information have been redacted to ensure anonymity. Among the senior level administrators asked to participate in the research study, three are alumni of Mississippi Valley State University. Table 9 lists the pseudonyms of the research participants, approximate age group, race, gender and approximate years of experience.
Table 9

Research Participants at Mississippi Valley State University

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Themes

From the analysis of interview of administrators at Mississippi Valley State University, three themes emerged: student centeredness, major challenges and the Ayers settlement. First, Mississippi Valley State University officials are committed to making the campus student centered. By understanding the demographics of its student population, they are able to implement plans, strategies and programs to facilitate their holistic and academic development. Second, the location of Mississippi Valley State University, negative public perception, obstacles to creating change, obstacles generating revenue, facilities that are inferior to the facilities of other university campuses, and policy traps that can potentially reduce the amount of revenue are all major challenges Mississippi Valley State University administrators must overcome. Third, administrators provided a historical perspective of the issues that surfaced during court trials, provisions Mississippi Valley State University received, the student diversity mandate explicated in the settlement, and diverse opinions administrators have about whether the settlement will accomplish the intended goal of increasing other-race student enrollment.

Student centeredness. “The term student-centered learning refers to a wide variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and
academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students” (Great School Partnership, 2014, para. 1). Imnah explained student centeredness in this way: “Now the president talks a lot about student-centeredness. And student-centeredness is student-centeredness. Everything that we think about doing, implementing, planning—the students must be first and foremost thought about. How will this affect our students as a whole?”

**Student development.** Two of the areas Mississippi Valley State University officials show student centeredness are in the areas holistic and academic developments of students. Everything program implemented at the institution must be centered around the growth and development of students. Laurel hopes to enhance the development of students in the following way.

Well, I want to be able to provide a robust program and services that will help to holistically develop students outside of the classroom. A lot of them complained that there were not things to do there as a student so it was a pretty big challenge that I have tried to overcome. We’ve implemented a lot more programming for them this last year to keep them involved and engaged.

In a speech given by an Mississippi Valley State University official in May 2015, the official told the alumni group that Mississippi Valley State University had increased the freshman to sophomore retention rate by 10% and had increased the number of graduates by 4%. Ebony confirmed the statement made by the Mississippi Valley State University official. Ebony commented: “Our retention rate? It’s increased.” Imnah stated
that focusing on the retention of freshmen and sophomore students are both long-term and short-term goals to help students achieve academic success.

Long-term goal—even if it’s a short- and a long-term goal—is to focus more on our freshman and sophomore students, to give them more attention so it can help with our retention and enrollment issues. So to implement programs that will help, like our First Year Freshman Experience and Sophomore Year Experience. You know, implement programs to help those students to be academically successful and help to develop them.

Imnah continued to talk about how proper and improper academic advising affects students, their ability to pay fees and graduate on time, and the need for alumni to give back to the university. Everything is connected.

Like the other day, we gave a student $3,000. Those funds came from donors helping with the students. The student didn’t have money to pay and they’re graduating in December. They have a job waiting, but they have to have their degree. Our students are poor. You know this as well as I do. This is a poor area. They don’t have $3,000 to give to finish school so it’s imperative that we connect with our alums, get them to understand, get them to get other alums on board so we can continue to help this community because without them, it’s not going to happen. And then it goes back to that first and second year experience. You are misadvised. Ok, so by the time you become a senior, you’re a second-year senior, you can’t get any loans or anything else because of the academic advisement you got before, so you’re tapped out. So where are they going to get that money from? So but if you were advised correctly at the very beginning, then this problem
wouldn’t be here at your senior year. So things have to be in place because this matters at the end. [Imnah hits the desk twice for emphasis.] Everything’s connected. [Imnah’s hands come together with fingers spread apart but touching to create a sphere.]

Mississippi Valley State University is concerned about the holistic and academic development of students as evidenced by increased programming and the implementation of the First Year Experience and Second Year Experience for freshmen and sophomores. In addition, Mississippi Valley State University officials are also concerned about its clientele of its students.

**Clientele of students.** Mississippi Valley State University has traditionally provided educational access to African Americans from low socioeconomic backgrounds in the Delta region, many of whom are underprepared for college level work. After affirming my experience growing up in the Delta and attending Mississippi Valley State University, Imnah explained her perception of the Mississippi Delta.

The culture is different. I think my experience from working in a different region is that the population is more exposed to other things. More in this area than in other places I’ve been. The students, faculty and staff, they are just more exposed to different things than this area. And that’s what I see and it might not even be that, but that’s what I see.

Mississippi Valley State University has provided access to students who normally would not have achieved a higher education. Taking a historical view, Vincent commented that Mississippi Valley State University has served its purpose as a higher education institution.
And sure enough, it served its purpose because Black folk weren’t going to college in any numbers. There were a few people, the few what I would call the upper-class Black people who would get out and go to Alcorn or a few to Jackson State. And a few would get out and go out of state to Tennessee State or Tuskegee—places like that. But the vast numbers of Black folk, many of them weren’t even finished high school. But when Valley opened in 1950 as Mississippi Vocational College, it began to draw upon the Black population of the Mississippi Delta. Yet, there were still not masses of them.

Mississippi Valley State University draws its students primarily from the Mississippi Delta, an area where the most low-performing schools in the state are located. Daniel talked about the public perception regarding the role Mississippi Valley State University plays and the reality of teaching underprepared students.

They visualize that Valley isn’t needed as much as other institution because of the obstacles that we have to overcome. They visualize, and this is true, our students when they come here are not as prepared. Look at the ACT scores, the average ACT score coming in is less than the other institutions. So that picture, they see it not as work as it is. It’s a very good work. They don’t think of it as work or [recognize] the value of it, I guess.

In addition to enrolling large numbers of underprepared students, Mississippi Valley State University also enrolls large numbers of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Mississippi Valley State University administrators talked about the students’ ability to pay for college and lack of wealth and low socioeconomic status. According to Daniel and Ebony, the percentage of Pell eligible students is over 90% and
98% respectively. When I asked about the ways students pay for tuition, Daniel responded in this way: “Loans. Very few students pay out of the pocket and that in itself states the type of students we have. We don’t have wealthy students here.” Ebony added that students get help paying for tuition through scholarship dollars and federal funds to which the institution has access.

There’s other federal funds that we have access to. We have access through FESOG [Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant]. There is corresponding federal funding that the state has allocated to the institution based on various factors. So those are some funds available to assist students. Scholarship dollars.

One way Mississippi Valley State University officials are helping to alleviate student tuition is by waiving the tuition of all out-of-state students. Daniel commented: “Yes. It was granted. Out-of-state students don’t have to pay [an] out-of-state fee. They still pay tuition.” Ebony explained Mississippi Valley State University’s proposal to waive out-of-state tuition for all out-of-state students was granted by IHL.

So a couple of years ago, all of the institutions did a proposal in regards to out-of-state tuition and Valley has one fee and it’s called “One Fee at the V.” So there’s one fee, the same fee for in-state and out-of-state students.

Despite the Mississippi Valley State University’s commitment to educate underprepared or low-income African American students, students are expected to compete in the global environment. Vincent explained to state officials and attorneys about the success of Mississippi Valley State University graduates during the Ayers case.

They went all through how are my students doing and can my students compete, can they go to graduate school. I said, “Look, I sent students from Valley to some
of the most prestigious graduate schools in this country.” And I said, “And they have great jobs. They are teachers. They are lawyers. They are doctors. They are legislators.” I said, “So don’t try to limit us to just poor Black students who can’t go anywhere else.” I said, “They could have gone other places, but they chose Valley and they got a good education.”

Like Vincent, Laurel explained the importance of diversity to enable Mississippi Valley State University students to compete globally. The world is diverse and not exclusively one race or ethnicity.

Well you know, one of our goals is to make sure our students can compete globally. In order for them to be able to do that, they have to be exposed to a global atmosphere. Students get set in that mode of what it means to participate, to compete with students having a diverse background. It helps us to meet that global market goal. Having students being competitive, they are exposed to all different types of cultures, differences in general, and they are more equipped when they leave because of that. They are better equipped. We hope that if some people have not been exposed to diversity that when they come to us they get that exposure and they are able to translate that out in the world.

In summary, student centeredness at Mississippi Valley State University encompasses the holistic and academic development of students by initiating student programming and incorporating academic advising and the freshmen and sophomore experience. While the student clientele consists of low-income, underprepared African American students, Mississippi Valley State University officials are making tuition affordable to attract out-of-state students. Despite the socioeconomic and educational
background of the students, Mississippi Valley State University officials expect its
students to complete. In addition, Mississippi Valley State University administrators
would like to offer programs to attract students that would impact the region, state and
country.

*Potential programs.* When asked about academic programs Mississippi Valley
State University would like to offer, officials mentioned wanting to offer programs that
would impact the region and the state and would do be of interest to potential students.
When asked about the university’s short-term and long-term goals, Ebony remarked that
additional programs would help enrollment: “That would again be enrollment [which] is
always going to be number one. And probably additional programs that could enhance
our enrollment that would be of interest to other people.”

Vincent mentioned Mississippi Valley State University requested programs in the
STEM field for science prestige. “So when they asked what new programs we wanted,
we put down things like biogenetics and things like that trying to get high science
prestige.” Ebony further delineated programs that would possibly enhance enrollment.

For one, we’re looking at a general studies degree. You know you have a lot of
students who attended Valley and have a lot of credits but not necessarily enough
in any one field. So we’re looking at something where those students can come
back and complete [their degree]. And then I touched on the general studies
degree to attract nontraditional adult students. And then also we are strengthening
our presence again over in Greenville at the GHEC center. And then we’re
looking at allied health, which that could include medical technology, nursing,
you know some other fields. If you don’t qualify for one, there could be some
other options that you could go into. It can have a significant impact on future enrollment. Allied health which would be significant because of the area that we are in. We’re in the Delta and we have many health needs. I don’t think you can ever have too much health here.

Administrators were asked if they believed whether new academic programs would attract other-race students. According to Laurel: “I think it would be a strong truth for marketing and recruitment, yes, offer what some or our competitors in the market are able to offer.” Daniel begrudgingly mentioned that is that Mississippi Valley State University does not offer programs with high research and science prestige. One hindrance is the U.S. Supreme Court ruling and the IHL policy that prevents program duplication at nearby institutions. Mississippi Valley State University is in close proximity to Mississippi Delta Community College and Delta State University. The STEM programs offered at those institutions, namely nursing, will not likely be implemented at Mississippi Valley State University because both institutions already offer them.

We don’t have many of the degree programs that IHL is pushing. We’re not heavy into science and inventions and things of that nature. When we started, we were education. This is what our goal was to get educators for people in this area and the funding thrust is more into science, technology, and engineering.

In summary, Mississippi Valley State University officials are planning and implementing strategies that center on student success by focusing on the holistic development of students through various programs and the academic development through intentional advising and the First Year Experience and Second Year Experience
to aid in student retention. College officials also understand that their clientele are predominantly African American students who may be underprepared for college and are from low-income households. Despite these challenges, Mississippi Valley State University is able to offset tuition for out-of-state students with the expectation that their students will be successful and compete globally against other individuals. While administrators at Mississippi Valley State University are committed to student centered in the implementation and planning of student activities, there are some major challenges that have crippled the institution in the past and threaten to derail it from its course if they aren’t corrected in a prompt manner.

**Major challenges.** Mississippi Valley State University officials face some major challenges when it comes to moving the institution forward in a positive direction. For the past eight years, the student population has been decreasing which results in reduced revenue and smaller budgets. Mississippi Valley State University appears to have more challenges than its productivity indicates institutional officials must shift gears from neutral to drive and get the momentum started so that the institution can move forward. It takes a lot of energy to begin to move forward, but once things are momentum has started, the task of moving the institution forward becomes a lot easier. There are six things which can stifle the growth of Mississippi Valley State University and possibly threaten its survival. The disadvantages include the institution’s location, public stigma of Mississippi Valley State University, changing institutional culture, customer service, the ability to increase revenue, the number of facilities that need repair or replacing, and other policy traps which can cause the institution to lose programs and revenue.
Location. Mississippi Valley State University is located in the Mississippi Delta where economic development in the area has all but dried up and the population is dwindling. There are very few opportunities for students to interact with business and industry. Laurel commented that the institution’s rural location is a drawback for recruitment.

Well, I think that the location of the institution, the fact that it is in a rural area, is probably one of the drawbacks for recruitment because of where it is located. Other than that, I think, everything else I love about it. Looking at where it is located, it’s kind of hard for recruiting students and faculty and recruiting faculty and staff. The location.

Daniel compared the delta with other regions of the state and the inability of the institution to interact with industry. This has not happened at Mississippi Valley State University because corporations and industries in the area have either closed or moved. Very little industry is moving to this region of the state.

It’s really. You can’t even compare them, unfortunately. Economically, this area is depressed—I guess a good word is. You don’t have the industry here. The opportunities for our students are less here. And because you don’t have the industry, you don’t have the interaction between this institution and industry here. With other institutions, the potential is greater there because you have industry in the area of the other institutions.

Thinking about an ideal university town, Imnah framed the economic development in the region by contrasting what exists in university towns and what does
not exist in Itta Bena. What exists in university towns across the country should exist at Mississippi Valley State University, but it does not.

The university community in and out, there will be shops around the university. There will be a university town. You go to a predominantly White school and surrounding the area are what? University towns. You have a Starbucks, a Kinkos [now FedEx Office], whatever. A chicken wing place. Those kind of places our students will be able to get jobs. They wouldn’t have to go far. Different companies, they could get internships. There would be opportunities to do vast amounts of things. But Valley would look different, much different than it does now.

The depressed area of the Mississippi Delta and its decreasing population are evidence of the lack of industry in the area. It is difficult to find employment and make a living in an area where industry is not present. Eventually, people will move to areas where they can secure employment and earn a decent wage to improve their station in life. Added to its location, Mississippi Valley State University suffers from negative perception by the public and the media.

**Public stigma of Mississippi Valley State University.** Mississippi Valley State University suffers from a negative perception and self-image that is partly due to the historical nature of racism and prejudice against African Americans and African American institutions. Three attempts to close or merge the university has played a major role in the negative perception it currently faces. University missteps and miscues have also found their way into the media. These self-inflicted wounds also shape the perception elected officials and citizens regarding Mississippi Valley State University.
Merger or closure. According to Vincent, there were three attempts to close Mississippi Valley State University. The first attempt was to reduce the program offerings to one program: general studies.

In 1984, the state College Board said it was going to reduce Valley to one degree program—that would be general studies. Everybody [who] comes to Valley has to major in general studies. And that was a pretext to closure because at that time we had 31 degree programs and the [IHL] Board said, “We will reduce it to general studies because Valley doesn’t need to have all these programs. They can’t support it. They don’t have the graduates. They don’t have students who can do these things so we’re going to reduce it to one program.” Well now, that was a pretext to closure because here was the thing. You said one program—general studies. That means you couldn’t be a teacher. You couldn’t graduate with a teaching degree. You couldn’t graduate with a degree in science, English, business, accounting.—None of that. So what are people going to do? Go somewhere else and get a degree in the field they were training for. And they knew that. That’s why they did it. I was at a College Board meeting in 1984. And they asked the executive secretary at the time Dr. E.E. Thrash. They said, “If we put this in, how long will Valley last?” And Dr. Thrash grinned and slapped his leg [as Vincent hits the desk], “About 12 years at the most.” So it was on purpose! [Vincent’s pitch goes up.] It was on purpose. But the way we beat it. Everybody at that time wasn’t for it. The attorney general that was there at that time was named, I believe it was Pittman. Ed [Edwin] Pittman, I believe. And they brought him over to give a legal opinion on whether or not the university could be cut
back to those programs. And there was some behind the scenes manipulation. And
the attorney general’s opinion was that, “No you can’t do that.” The Board
couldn’t do that because Valley was created by the legislature and in its
purpose—that’s why I preach this today. Teacher education and vocational
education saved Valley because what the attorney general ruled was, “You can’t
change those programs because they were included in the founding mission. The
legislature created that and only the legislature can take them out.”

The second was a legislative attempt to close Mississippi Valley State University.
The Attorney General ruled that the Board of Trustees did not have the authority to close
Mississippi Valley State University since the institution was created by the Mississippi
Legislature. Also, the Board of Trustees could not reduce Mississippi Valley State
University to one program in general studies because in its founding mission, Mississippi
Valley State University was established to offer programs in teacher education and
vocational education.

So that saved Valley for a minute. But a year or so later, the College Board said,
“Well if we don’t have the authority to close it, we’re going to recommend to the
legislature that they have the authority, they can do it.” In 1986, they passed a
resolution to the legislature that Valley be closed. And it was tight. Everybody
said, “That’s not going to happen,” but they weren’t playing. They were for real.
Now some people said they were doing that to force the legislature to give Valley
and the Black schools more money. But they would have been just satisfied—by
“they” I mean the White legislature and the College Board who recommended
that, IHL Board of Trustees. Even if Valley was closing, they wouldn’t have
minded. What happened was fortunately by this time we had some Blacks in the legislature and a gentleman named Douglas Anderson, a Black legislator, a senator from Jackson, Mississippi. And he was chairman of the Universities and College Committee and that’s the committee the bill had to come through to close Valley. He put it in his back pocket and he sat on it until hell froze over. [I laugh.] Oh, they beat on him. They demanded that he bring it out and they told him they would force an override. He sat there. And during that time, we started doing our thing. When I say “we” I mean the historically Black colleges in the community: Valley, Alcorn, Jackson State. That’s one time we quit worrying about who is going to win football and all that and we all came together and even the people from Tougaloo College and Rust College. All the HBCUs public and private, we pushed together to defeat that thing and we did.

In the first attempt, the Attorney General ruled the Board of Trustees could not reduce the university to one program and it did not have the authority to close the institution. In the second attempt, public outcry and African Americans in state government prevented the Mississippi Legislature from closing Mississippi Valley State University. The third attempt was to merge Mississippi Valley State University with Delta State University during the Ayers case.

So now the question is, “Well if we can’t get the Board to close it and we can’t get the legislature to close it.” Act One was the Board trying to close it. Act Two was trying to get the closure through the legislature. Act Three was the Ayers case. Understand we have a new commissioner [of higher education] named Dr. [William] Ray Cleere, and what he proposed for the solution to desegregation
through the Ayers case was to merge the eight colleges into four—Valley and Delta State were supposed to merge and we were going to be in Cleveland, Alcorn and Southern Mississippi, Jackson State and Ole Miss, and on down the line [to include Mississippi State and Mississippi University for Women]. That’s when it went to court. That was in the early 1990s. I think it went in 1992. But that was not the first time Ayers went the court. The first time was in ’87 and Judge Biggers ruled at that time that it was constitutional [meaninmg that the state had satisfied the burden of sufficiently segregating its system of higher education]. But in ’92 they took a different approach. Instead of just saying “close it,” we’re going to say “merge them.” Merging means close the Black school and a few of the Black teachers and students go to the White school. But coming back to Valley. So that was the proposal and that’s when it went to trial. Now everybody knew that was a pretext to closure. No question about it.

At the conclusion of the trial, no Mississippi higher education institutions merged or closed. Attempts to close Mississippi Valley State University from 1984 to 2005 over a period of 21 years has taken a toll on the image of the institution and an emotional toll for faculty, staff students and alumni whose fate lay in the hands of the College Board, the legislature and a federal judge. It could be perceived that something must be wrong with Mississippi Valley State University if they are attempting to close it. This is one perception that pervades the mind of Mississippi residents. The perception of elected officials regarding Mississippi Valley State University must also be examined.

Elected officials. Elected officials, namely members of the legislative branch of government, fund higher education in the state of Mississippi. Ebony remarked that
elected officials do not understand: “The need for Valley to be sustained. Period.” Daniel
explained that the role Mississippi Valley State University plays as a higher education
institution is misunderstood by elected officials.

The role Valley plays. I believe that elected officials see an institution that is
located in the Delta but that’s all they see—it’s an institution. And they don’t see
that the students we get here, and they’re just as good as any other student, but
they start at a lower level so Valley has to work much, much harder to produce a
product because when they graduate, they are at the same level [of students who
graduate from other universities] if not higher. So they don’t understand what it
takes, I believe, to bring the students up to where they should be so they can be
proficient and productive citizens. They just see an institution and believe, “Hey,
look. You get students like everybody else.” They don’t see the population
dwindling in the area because the population in the Delta is going down. To me, I
perceive it’s no big concern of theirs. Big deal. So dwindling population, students
that are not as prepared academically as in other areas because they have less
opportunities. The students are just as good, but less opportunities here.

Imnah does not believe it is an issue of what elected officials do or do not
understand. The issue is whether elected officials understand a culture of a people and
whether they wish to see Mississippi Valley State University thrive instead of survive.

[Imnah sighs.] I think they understand all of it. It’s the fact that do you want to
help to take Valley to another level. Do you understand Black people? That’s the
thing. It’s not even about Valley. It is about a culture. It’s about a group of people
that you’re not understanding to help financially bring to another level. I think they understand it all, not that they don’t.

Negative public perception of Mississippi Valley State University resulted from three attempts to close or merge the university. Mississippi Valley State University administrators believe that elected officials do not understand the need to sustain the institution, the amount of work it takes to produce quality graduates or the culture of African American people. In addition to threats to close and merge the university and the perspective of elected officials, it is the perception of elected officials and citizens about Mississippi Valley State University that must be changed.

_Citizens._ As a part of the vision statement “One team,” Mississippi Valley State University is attempting to build partnerships with the local community and industry. However, university officials have encountered resistance from individuals in local communities. Laurel spoke to the economic impact Mississippi Valley State University and the influence it can have on the region.

Yeah, perhaps that we are a strong _force_ in the area and can be very influential in the region so long as our doors are open for students and people, the employees alike. We are one of the top employers in the area so that has some economic impact.

Some citizens have a perception that Mississippi Valley State University graduates students who enter college are prepared for college like students at other institutions. According to Daniel, this perception is not true.

I perceive they don’t understand that this institution will produce a product just as good as any other institution. We don’t have the number of programs, OK. But
the programs that we have here, I don’t think the citizens visualize that the product is just as good in those programs as any other institution.

The stigma of some citizens is so strong that it has prevented them from ever stepping foot on the campus. Ebony explained that some people in the region have never stepped foot on the campus of Mississippi Valley State University.

My opinion, just given where we are and maybe people not understanding Valley friendliness, sort of speak, [have] never been on campus. A lot of people right here in the region have never been to Valley and so they don’t know. I think there is some type of stereotype about Valley just being for African American students who are historically poor. So that’s just my opinion.

In addition, citizens believe university officials do not know what they are doing and have feelings of distrust rooted in past events that they refuse to let go. Imnah commented on her experience working with citizens in the town where Mississippi Valley State University resides. It has taken an extraordinary amount of effort for university administrators to prove to citizens that Mississippi Valley State University is willing to be a partner with the community.

You know I’ve been working with Itta Bena. What we are trying to do is partner with the community to bring the community together on board with Valley. And for a long there has been this stigmatism, I guess that’s what you call it, with Valley in this community. It’s like this wall is built up here that Valley just wants to be its own little playground and not extend itself outward. And that’s not true. And what we are trying to do is to expose the community with Valley by opening up the university and how we can partner with the community. Before I came, it
seems like there have been so many negative events or whatever has happened with the university and the community. And it’s been a journey and it’s going to continue to be a journey to get rid of that negative aspect of how the community feels about Valley. And the citizens here, what I’ve learned, they hold on to stuff. They can’t let it go. First of all, they don’t trust us that we know what we’re doing and it takes so much to show them that we do. And when you talk to either corporations, foundations, well the citizens of the area, the first things that comes up is all of the negative things that’s been in the press about Valley years ago. How about what’s going on now? They hold on to things too long and it stops us from progressing and moving things forward.

Imnah continued by sharing the theme of many conversations she has had with individuals in the university’s attempt to create relationships with citizens, foundations and corporations. Citizens in this region of the state find it difficult to let go of the past.

I’ve had many of those conversations because with our job responsibilities, go out and we speak to corporate foundations, citizens and everyone that we can cultivate a relationship with and those kind of conversations are often when I’m talking about Valley. And “Oh, Valley was this” like we just talked about—the past. They bring up all the information. Now when you go and you speak to someone like that or you’re just not aware where they are coming from, you have to have all of your information together to make sure that you are going to expose and explain to them the things that are being put in place, the new things—what the new president is doing, what is his mission, what are his goals, where does he want to take the university and how is he changing the culture within in order to
do that. So those are the kind of discussions you will have to have when you go out to present Valley to naysayers.

Mississippi Valley State University officials must move citizens and community officials past the mountain of negative perception and convince them of the institution’s ability to influence and spur economic development in the region, its continued legacy of graduating competent students and the capability of administrators, faculty, and staff to be a catalyst for change in the area. The negative events imprinted on the minds of citizens must be replaced with positive events and experiences in order for citizens to let go of the past. If this can occur, Mississippi Valley State University campus can be a viable institution in the region and promote economic development in the area. Unfortunately, some entities on the Mississippi Valley State University are fighting the change the university desperately needs to make to improve operations and the institution for the better.

**Difficulty creating change.** The institutional culture at Mississippi Valley State University is a hard thing to break. The major reason is because the university has traditionally hired its graduates, many of whom who have not gone to graduate school, attended or worked at other institutions. These individuals have a vested interest in maintaining the institutional culture and traditions. There are a number of reasons that prevent change from occurring at Mississippi Valley State University. Among these include the perception of administrators as “outsiders,” the process of hiring family members and ineffective employees.

“**Outsiders.**” Ebony talked about finding different methods to accomplish goals and change Mississippi Valley State University administrators seek to implement. These
alternative methods are sometimes necessary because people view them as “outsiders” and are not receptive to their direct approach.

Sometimes you have to figure out alternative methods to accomplish goals because sometimes people who are not from the Delta are sometimes considered “outsiders.” We feel direction or instruction or assistance is not openly welcomed. So you still have to figure out, work and still get your job done. Sometimes you may have to figure out another way to do that where it is accepted.

*Hiring family.* Imnah pointed out that change is also difficult to implement due to the university hiring members of the same family who are stuck in the routine of always doing things the way things have always been done. Part of this is due to members of the same family working at the university.

Well, what I found when I first came is that you have good people who are working here, but they’re all set in their ways of doing things and it’s hard to make a change. Even if the change is for the better, it’s always a *fight* to make things different or to implement new things so they can flow better or even make the university as a whole better. It seems it’s always a fight. It’s like that family that’s here that holds on like this. [Imnah interlocks her fingers tightly.] You have mom, son, husband, wife that are working in the same place so you have to be very careful. You just have to be careful.

*Hiring ineffective employees.* Change is further difficult to implement when employees are hired for positions of which they have no knowledge and placed in positions that are not suited for their personality and skill set. Imnah has implemented
staff changes, training and best practices to make the division more competent and efficient.

Staff changes involved moving people around that may be best suited in another type of job responsibility. The staff is so new and most of the staff were just placed in the position without training and knowledge about what really this department is within the whole university. So implement training for those staff both in-house and at conferences so they can get an understanding of what we really are and what are the best practices. Best practices means you have to be very careful how you funnel funds so the staff can have a better understanding of the best practices for what we do.

*Customer service.* One very important change this administration seeks to accomplish is improved customer service throughout the university community. Imnah exclaimed that having accurate data is the only thing more important than providing excellent customer service.

[Imnah gasps then sighs.] You’re talking about the university! [Imnah spoke emphatically.] *It is imperative!* It is the second thing to *data based.* Customer service is so important. If you don’t know how to treat your customers and your friends and you’re cordial, you lose customers. You lose alums. You lose corporate foundations because you are not in the habit of having good customer service skills. Now, the president has given me a responsibility. We are putting a program together to actually train the entire campus on customer service from the phone to when someone comes in the office. Every aspect of it, including internal departments because we’re all customers with each other. How do you treat each
other? How do you expect to get anything done if you don’t have good customer service skills? Then externally, I had someone to call me and this is before I did the changes within this department. And someone answered the phone and they said, “Now Imnah, you are trying to raise funds for your university and the person that answered the phone,” he said, “that was just horrible. Do you understand what kind of effect that’s having on your university?” Of course, I know. So it all has to change one way or the other whether they like it or not.

When it comes to creating change at Mississippi Valley State University, the perception of administrators as “outsiders” makes it necessary for college officials to create alternate methods of creating change. The biggest obstacles are the employees some of whom are related to each other and many who were hired without the requisite skills, knowledge, and training. Once the Mississippi Valley State University officials can begin to combat negative public perception about the university and create change on the campus, then the institution will have an easier time finding revenue to sustain the university.

**Generating revenue.** The bottom line is revenue drives university operations. Enrollment drives tuition which in turn drives state appropriations via the funding formula and improves revenue. In order to implement the programs, build and repair facilities, implement programming for holistic and academic development, Mississippi Valley State University must locate and tap new sources of revenue. Ebony remarked: “Money affects the programs and courses Valley can offer. Money doesn’t necessarily have to come from the state. You can find other funding streams. The state subsidy is not cutting it nowadays.”
The subsidy Mississippi Valley State University receives from the state must be divided among eight institutions. Appropriations from the state have dwindled because of the number of institutions among which higher education funds must be divided. Ebony continued: “You can’t get everything you need from the state because those funds have to be divided among 8 institutions.” Daniel remarked: “The economy has affected my ability to recruit and hire staff because my budget has been cut. And when the economy goes down, you don’t get as many students. You don’t get the students, you don’t get the funding.” Mississippi Valley State University administrators are looking at ways to generate revenue, educate constituents on the importance of philanthropy and increase enrollment.

Generating more revenue for Mississippi Valley State University is imperative. By creating relationships with customers and industry, finding alternative funding such as grant funding and creating new partnerships, increasing enrollment, increasing endowment and brainstorming to find ways to generate funds for the university this can be achieved. Daniel addressed the importance of having customer relationships to increase revenue.

We’re going to have to get relationships with customers, the people that we work with, and I’m talking industries. We’re going to have to try to get funding if we can through grants. We have to try to get more students and that will cause more funding to come here. Those are, I guess, the major ones. You hate to raise tuition and all that, but that’s going to be inevitable. We’ll have to do that.
The alternative funding streams Ebony mentioned included “grant funding and new donors from new partnerships.” Imnah addressed the issue of increasing the endowment as additional revenue stream.

We have an endowment. Right now as part of the retreat and that plan will be a plan in there to increase the endowment. We have an annual scholarship fund to help with our student scholarships and we also have fundraising. And it’s a constant thing for the athletic department that the alums and even the corporation and foundation who are interested in that aspect of the university, they send their funds in for that particular area.

The retreat Imnah mentioned provided staff the opportunity to brainstorm and come up with ideas on how to raise funds for the university are both short-term and long-term goals. This retreat would be include of every department within the division. Since the retreat, Mississippi Valley State University has already surpassed the past fundraising record and is poised to raise $1 million in private funds for the first time in the university’s 65-year history in FY 2015.

And what we are doing in January [2015], we’re having a retreat. So we’re going to come together for three or four days. And from that retreat, we will come up with a plan for fundraising that will be inclusive of all of those departments: how everyone connects—a timeline, the measurements—how we are going to get there? We’re going to do goals. Are we going to come up with a capital plan, how long is that going to last. And it’s all going to be data driven. You know, how do we increase our alumni participation? How do we get them to give? On what do we need to train them because they don’t know about giving or what is their
concept about giving? Finding tools to implement programs so we can reach our goals when it comes to fundraising. How do we get new companies and foundations with the same goals that the university has to get them on board to have them to help us to raise funds or to give us funds for endowment, annual scholarship funds and all that? And we’re going to come out of there with some programs that will help us to raise funds like a President’s Society Campaign.

Those are the kinds of things we will end up with once we end up with the retreat. Pursuing relationships with industry, grants, new donors and potential students who enroll and pay tuition to the university, and tools to implement programs and reach fundraising goals are ways Mississippi Valley State University plans to generate more revenue for the institution. An important component of the capital campaign is to educate the constituents about the importance of giving back to Mississippi Valley State University.

_Educating constituents._ In order to increase giving, Mississippi Valley State University officials must educate both students and alumni on the purpose of giving back and saying positive things about their alma mater. Imnah remarked that alumni can do the following things to help Mississippi Valley State University.

You know alums can do? They can get their friends that _know_ that are Valley grads, connect with them. We need your help. You’re an alum. Get in contact with the school. Give them your information. Be a part of what we’re doing. Come back and speak in the different classes with our students _as_ an alum. Tell them where you work, how did you get there? Your experiences _at_ Valley.” To increase the number of active alums.” That’s what we have to [do]. They have to
be like a stool. You’re here and you have to use all these legs to get other alums to get them connected with Valley. I think alums really need to be trained about giving. This is what it’s all about. You know who sustains most of the schools especially predominantly White schools? Alums. We don’t have the luxury. We have just started implemented or starting back, it’s going to be this [school] year in the spring term [2015], our pre-alumni club. And the SGA is going to get involved and the student leaders and all of that so we can train students how to be an alum. Start there with them giving $5 or $10. They’ll observe giving, how they feel about giving, and they’ll get in the habit of giving back to the university. They need to understand when they give why they are giving and what they’re giving to. And you have some testimonies from students.

Ebony added that alumni should speak positively about Mississippi Valley State University to help promote the university’s image. Ebony suggested that alumni: “Say positive things about Valley. Share the good news about what’s going on at Valley. Let people know that we are working to improve—to thrive, as the president says, not just to survive. We are working to thrive.”

Educating students and future alumni will go a long way to endure the future, viability and sustainability of Mississippi Valley State University. In addition to generating revenue from external sources, Mississippi Valley State University must also generate revenue internally by increasing its student enrollment. Ebony commented that the current presidential administration hopes to increase enrollment, alternative funding streams, increase alumni participation.
Enrollment. One major reason the revenue at Mississippi Valley State University has decreased is that the university has had issues increasing student enrollment. Vincent replied: “Enrollment at the HBCUs is still very critical, you know.” Laurel added: “For short-term we are working on our enrollment management strategy to make sure that we enroll students to get our enrollment back to where it needs to be.” Daniel remembered a time when Mississippi Valley State University had peak enrollment. According to Daniel: “I do know in roughly 2000, 2002 in that area, we’ve had more students than we’ve ever had.” Ebony affirmed that the enrollment of Mississippi Valley state increased in the 2014-2015 academic school year. Ebony stated: “Our enrollment did slightly increase this year. The first time in, I believe, 10 years. Our enrollment is 2,222 students.”

Recruiting students is not the exclusive function of admissions. Academic departments recruit students they feel will be a good fit for the academic programs it offers. Daniel exclaimed:

Oh, we recruit! We recruit! Our faculty go out to high schools. Our faculty go out to community colleges. Yes, we recruit. And I know admissions does also but I know we recruit and I know math and computer science recruit. Now I don’t know about the others.

When recruiting students, Daniel explained that the goal is to recruit students. The focus at the department level is not on recruiting diverse students.

Not so much as this department. I can’t speak for the entire institution. What we do is we present what we have. “This is what we have. We hope it will be a good fit for what we have.” We look at your ultimate goals and we prepare you for your ultimate goals. I don’t care about diversity. I care about diversity. I don’t strictly
go for diversity. I go for students. I want students. I know we are better if we have diverse students. I know that.

In addition to focusing on retaining freshmen and sophomore students mentioned in the student centeredness theme, articulation agreements with community colleges and memoranda of understanding are ways Mississippi Valley State University plans to increase enrollment. As Ebony explains:

We are working with MDCC [Mississippi Delta Community College] for the students who want to continue after their two-year degree and come right on and be in a program and finish. We enter into MOUs [memoranda of understanding] with international universities.

Enrollment at Mississippi Valley State University is critical. The admissions office and faculty in academic department recruit students. College officials work with local community colleges on articulation agreements that would allow their students to complete their junior and senior years at Mississippi Valley State University. Improving the retention rate by focusing on freshmen and sophomore students are critical as the institution seeks to increase enrollment and the revenue of the institution. Unfortunately, one hindrance to increasing enrollment are the number of facilities that are subpar and dormitories that are offline due to maintenance issues.

**Facilities.** The Ayers case was filed because of the subpar physical plant at Jackson State University, the institution where the child of Jake Ayers attended. Mississippi Valley State University also had a subpar physical plant due to minimal and inadequate funding. Mississippi Valley State University still has buildings on its campus from the 1950s and 1960s. The Itta Bena campus desperately needs to renovate its closed
dormitories and build new buildings to replace inadequate and outdated facilities.

Mississippi Valley State University officials have similar visions regarding the facilities at Mississippi Valley State University. According to Daniel:

If money was no issue, we definitely would have better facilities. If we had better facilities, we would have better students because students go where the facilities are better. We’d have better facilities. We’d have more programs, more diverse programs. We’d have more cutting-edge equipment here.

The facilities of a higher education institution are a major factor that influences the decision of students to attend an institution. Ebony affirmed what Daniel said about having better facilities and their importance in student choice.

We would have enough of everything. When I say everything, we would have an improved student union. All of our student spaces will be state of the art, I’m sure. Residence halls for students would be again state of the art and places where students would want to live because if you look at the research, that’s where students base their decision on—residence halls—where they are going to live. That’s a big factor when students are looking at campuses and trying to make a decision.

Imnah echoed the vision Daniel and Ebony articulated for Mississippi Valley State University. Imnah commented: “If money were no object, our buildings would, it would look more like an upscale university. The buildings that we have that are run down would be renovated. New buildings, landscaping.” Daniel was informed of the age of the buildings on Mississippi Valley State University’s main campus compared to the buildings on other university campuses.
I was in a meeting last week and in this meeting we were talking about the age of the facilities. There are what, eight institutions in Mississippi? We were founded in 1950. *The youngest*. Facilities, we are the institution with the oldest facilities in Mississippi. Listen to what I’m saying. Our buildings that were here in 1950, 1955, those buildings are still here. Other institutions have buildings that are a lot younger than that. So facilities-wise although we’re the youngest institution, we have the oldest *facilities*. If money was no issue, we *definitely* would have better facilities.

One of the short-term goals of this presidential administration is to renovate old facilities, particularly housing that is offline as Ebony so aptly explained. The boarded up, fence enclosed and rope cordoned buildings are currently an eyesore on the campus of Mississippi Valley State University.

Well, I think right now the short-term goal is to renovate our old facilities like some of the dormitories that are being renovated to beautify the campus and to make it more student centered. Outside of *Ayers*, our priorities for capital improvement include student housing. That’s our priority, to renovate some of the housing that’s offline.

The lack of state of the art facilities, namely residence halls, student union and classrooms are just a few reasons Mississippi Valley State University’s enrollment declined over the past 10 years. During my field study, it was a depressing eye sore to see dormitories that were bustling with students in the 1990s boarded up, roped off with a yellow rope and surrounded by a fence. Imagine the impact this sight has on potential high school students who are choosing where to attend college and pursue their higher
education. New, modern, updated and renovated facilities are an absolute must. Finally, university officials must be aware of policy traps that may cause the institution to lose revenue and programs if they are not paying careful attention.

**Traps in higher education policy.** The term *trap* was used by Vincent to describe policies and procedures that could negatively impact HBCUs. Among these traps are enrollment and retention issues, not graduating enough students from degree programs, accreditation for programs and certification examinations. Vincent believes the new general studies program, the same program College Board officials tried to limit Mississippi Valley State University to close the institution, will possibly take students from other programs putting the university in jeopardy of losing those programs. Imnah spoke to the importance of addressing enrollment and retention issues at Mississippi Valley State University.

[Imnah sighs.] If we *really* focus on academically making or assisting our students to be academically successful, then our economic future is very bright. That means that we have to focus on our freshmen and our sophomores. Those two years are so important. And that will help with our enrollment and our retention because once those first and second years are settled and they have a foundation, going forward the juniors and seniors, it’s an easy task. We have to pay attention to those two years [Imnah speaks softer] or we will continue to fail. Not “fail” fail, but we will continue to have our retention rate not get any better and our enrollment won’t.

Enrollment and retention are not the only traps. Vincent pointed out that a program’s inability to graduate a designated number of students will place the future of
that program in jeopardy. Other barriers Vincent listed include testing examinations for certification and program accreditation.

Well that’s one of the things they try to emphasize: “Well if you don’t have your enrollment.” And you see there are a lot of traps in it. It’s not just enrollment. Four years ago, the state College Board put something in called the Accountability Measures and those Accountability Measures say that you have to graduate 10%, so many people per year out of your program or else they will close that program down. And they target the programs that they figure we are going to have trouble getting people out of. Teacher education is on the brink because we’re not graduating teachers. And part of the reason we are not graduating teachers is because they put up all these barriers: The Praxis I and the Praxis II. Students left teacher education in droves because they say, “Well, how am I going to pass that thing?” And then you have other programs that have to be accredited on a national level: social work by the Council of Social Work Education, teacher education by NCATE [National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education], and all these other programs. And they say you don’t graduate students out of here. That’s why it’s so critical.

Finally, Vincent is skeptical of the College Board approving a new general studies program for Mississippi Valley State University. He believes it is a Trojan horse designed to draw students from other majors and allow the Board of Trustees to take programs away from the university.

Now another trap that I believe is coming up. The board finally approved after all that stuff trying to give us a degree in general studies to shut us down, they finally
approved a program in general studies. And I kind of fear that. Now it sounds nice in the beginning but sometimes that’s a trap. And the trap is if all of our students run to general studies, then we are going to lose students in science, math, English, teacher education and that kind of thing. And those programs are not going to graduate enough people and they are going to shut them down. So in every gift, you have to watch it. “Beware of Greeks bearing gifts.” It looks nice. Just like they did that Trojan horse. They pulled it up there and the people jumped out and killed them all. So there are a lot of tricks but I am fully confident and I have no doubt in the world and no fear that even with the Ayers benefits coming to a close soon that the historically Black colleges will be sustained, including Valley because you can try to kill a college but you can’t kill people.

In summary, there are five major challenges that must be overcome in order to get the forward momentum of the institution moving in the right direction. First, the location of the institution in the rural Mississippi Delta with its decreasing population and lack of economic development does not allow the institution and its students to interact with industry. Second, the public stigma of Mississippi Valley State University by elected officials and citizens is the result of the past university missteps and mistakes and three attempts to close or merge the institution with a PWI. This administration must continue to make strides to overcome past negative perceptions of the past. Third, creating change at the university is difficult when officials are considered “outsiders” and reticent employees who were hired because they were related to someone despite the fact that they did not possess the knowledge, training or skill for the job are engrained and indoctrinated in the institutional culture. Fourth, Mississippi Valley State University
officials must generate additional revenue by externally creating relationships with new donors and industry and pursuing new grants and by internally educating constituents on the importance of giving and focusing on increasing enrollment at the institution. Fifth, policy traps must be avoided which on the surface appear to help the university, but beneath the surface threatens to decrease the university’s revenue and program offerings. The third theme focuses on administrators’ knowledge of and experiences with the *Ayers* settlement.

**The Ayers settlement.** The *Ayers* case was filed to ensure equity in funding for four-year public HBCUs in the state of Mississippi. The issue at the settlement became the lack of diversity and the lack of other-race students that attend Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. This theme will discuss the history of the case, pertinent issues regarding the racial identification of Mississippi Valley State University, provisions in the case, diversity among students and faculty and administrator’s problems with the *Ayers* settlement.

**History of the Ayers case.** The importance of the Ayers case was not lost on Vincent. During the inception of the case, Vincent assisted the plaintiffs in doing research as a recent doctoral graduate. Vincent summarized the basis of the lawsuit, his research findings and the lengthy litigation that ensued. Regarding the impact the *Ayers* case would have on HBCU:

Well I realized it when *Ayers* started. The case was filed in 1975 and many of us young educators in the state, particularly those of us who had come back with our degrees and had a little bit of I would say—I won’t say radical. I wouldn’t consider myself radical, but I—was of the “new generation.” I had a degree and
had the advantage of knowing how to do research. I had just finished my
dissertation so we were called upon to help the plaintiffs in the case. I wasn’t a
plaintiff in the case, but I helped do some of the original research to validate the
need for Valley: I looked back at the history, how the college was created, had it
had been treated right, had it had been funded and all that. And when I started to
look at that, it confirmed what I already knew that the Black schools—Valley,
Alcorn, and Jackson State—were significantly different and had fewer resources
and fewer facilities. There was a difference between the Black schools and the
White schools. All you had to do was look was walk up on the campus of Ole
Miss and Mississippi State and walk on the campus of Valley, Alcorn and Jackson
State and the difference was daylight and dark. When we started looking at the
hard research, we started looking at the budgets and funding and all that and the
programs, it wasn’t even close. So that’s when I realized that the Ayers case
would have an impact, but that was a long haul because that was 1975 and this
thing didn’t finish up until 1990-something. [The final court case was in 2003.
Legal proceedings ended in 2004.].

**Issues of race.** The defense attorneys, the lawyers for the State of Mississippi,
argued that Mississippi Valley State University was the only institution that was created
to address the issue of race and that Mississippi Valley State University was created to
prevent the integration of Delta State University. Vincent points out that in every state,
there are higher level and lower level institutions within the state system of higher
education although no one wants to admit it. Finally, Vincent points out the irony of the
case after it was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. The state lawyers who represented
HBCUs in day to day operations with the IHL Board were the same lawyers on the defense who were advocating for the merger and closure of Mississippi Valley State University.

*Racial identity of institutions.* The plaintiffs in the case charged that the State of Mississippi maintained a dual of system of higher education that was not funded equally. The defense lawyers argued that the only institution that was created to address the issue of race was Mississippi Valley State University. Vincent addressed this issue and explained how they debunked the argument.

[The state lawyers argued that] we are the only university that was specifically created to address an issue of race. Alcorn, of course in 1870s, addressed the issue of race. We were all created as Black schools now. This is one of the issues I have with some of the people when the Ayers case came up [and] said, “Well, we don’t need Valley anymore. It was created as a Black institution. And since we’re saying we are going to desegregate, we don’t need a school just for Black folk only.” It’s funny how people take something that *they* did and try to twist it against you. Even some *Black* folk were running around and saying that. And I objected to it. I said, “Bull!” I said, “Every school in Mississippi was created as a racial institution.” Ole Miss was created in 1848 for White folk. Mississippi State in 1878 for White folk. Alcorn, Valley, Jackson, Delta [State]—every single one of them—and MUW [Mississippi University for Women] for White women. So why are you going to pick Valley?” “Well it was created for Black folk.” *Every single one* of them was created to address the issue of race. Valley was the last school in 1950 and that was well before desegregation.
Prevent integration. Integration in higher education institutions did not occur until after James Meredith integrated the campus of The University of Mississippi with federal troops in 1962. This was eight years after Brown v. Board of Education (1954). Again, the state lawyers argued that Mississippi Valley State University was founded to prevent the integration of Delta State University.

Now the other point is they claimed that when Walter Sillers and the rest of his people in the legislature got together to say, “We’re going to create a Black school in the Delta,” they said, “Well, they were doing that to keep Black folk out of Delta State.” I said, “Bull!” When they started talking about creating Valley in 1936 and even when they enacted legislation in 1946, White folk were not worried about Black folk going to White schools in Mississippi. [Vincent’s pitch goes up] They weren’t ready for that then. I mean, look. When James Meredith went to Ole Miss in ’62, they had a riot, a war to go there. So no. Their purpose, what they said was, “We need something to do with all these uneducated Black folk.” And of course now, they weren’t going to let them go to White schools. They weren’t going to let them go to White schools anywhere. So they created Valley.

Institutional classification. In 1981, institutional missions were assigned the eight public higher education institutions in the State of Mississippi. Vincent pointed out something that is seldom talked about but is definitely true. There is a hierarchy of institutions in state systems of higher education. There are higher-level institutions and lower-level institutions. The comprehensive institutions are Mississippi State University, The University of Mississippi, and the University of Southern Mississippi. Jackson State
University is an urban university and the remaining institutions including Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University, are regional institutions. Vincent continued:

I think we’re going to see a reversal in this thing of all students running to the historically White colleges because what’s happening is that they are finding out that those schools really don’t want everybody. They want your top youth. They’re going to go there and show them all of this fabulous stuff, especially these athletes. You see every state has lower level institutions too. They don’t want to admit it. But that was to say that that [lower level] college serves a purpose too. Now like I said, they built this college in the delta for Negros, and they didn’t expect us to come out with any degrees in sociology, in language arts and things of that nature. And once we got it, we’re here.

Irony of the Ayers case. The last point Vincent pointed out the daily working relationship with college administrators and state lawyers who opposed them in court and advocated for the merger of Mississippi Valley State University with Delta State University.

Here’s the irony of the Ayers case. [Vincent’s pitch goes up.] Technically by the fact that I worked for Valley which is a state institution, they were my lawyers—the attorney general. But they were the ones who were representing the state trying to close it. It’s ironic, but that’s the way it came out.

The historical issues of the case brought out in the interview with Vincent include the state denying the racial identity of all state higher education institutions and the fallacious argument that Mississippi Valley State University was created to prevent the
integration of Delta State University. In addition, there is the unspoken fact is that there are higher and lower level institutions in every system of higher education. Finally, there is the issue of lawyers that assisted Mississippi Valley State University in daily operations and working relationships advocating for its demise during the Ayers case. Next, the funds Mississippi Valley State University received as part of the Ayers settlement benefitted the institution in academic programs, infrastructure and capital projects.

*Ayers provisions.* The Ayers settlement provided funds for capital projects, landscaping and infrastructure and academic programs. When I asked about the importance of the Ayers case to the operation of Mississippi Valley State University, Imnah informed me that an attempt by state officials was made to raise funds for the $35 million private endowment promised by the state to HBCUs. Only $1 million donation by Bill and Melinda Gates has been raised. Imnah stated:

> We realized that maybe 3 months ago that there was an Ayers fund or that we were supported by the different disciplines underneath the Ayers funding. Now the reason why I knew that is because in IHL, they have this division that actually manages the Ayers funds. One of the young ladies who is the director was initiating or implementing a fundraising strategy to raise more funds for the Ayers [endowment] because most of the funds will be dissipated in 2017. So they went around the different HBCUs and sort of like did a commercial to be a part of the marketing piece of raising those funds. So I was in charge of putting that together with the faculty, students, alumni, of those individuals who actually received the funding in those different departments. They interviewed and then they made a
little video of it and IHL was going use that as a piece of the marketing tool to help it raise funds.

**Capital projects.** In addition to standardizing admissions requirements for all eight universities, the *Ayers* case provided funds at Mississippi Valley State University for programs, capital projects, sewage and infrastructure. However, one administrator asserted that *Ayers* did not provide funds for capital projects on campus. I even asked twice clarify Ebony’s position.

We didn’t do any capital projects with *Ayers*, only Academic. [I rephrased the question.] Building is a capital project. So the only, again just academics. So maybe a computer lab or something like that, but again it’s strictly academic. So nothing—no construction, no renovation or anything like that to any buildings with the *Ayers* fund.

While Imnah was not certain of capital projects funded by *Ayers*, she did speak about the renovation of the library that was completed with *Ayers* funds. Since its renovation, it has become one of the one of the crown jewels of the campus.

I know our library was renovated last year. Now I don’t know if *Ayers* funds were used to do that. Our library is beautiful. We have an opportunity now to use it for some small events. The president’s inauguration reception was held there as a different type of facility. The other stuff I don’t know.

Daniel and Vincent were quickly able to rattle off the facilities that were gained under the *Ayers* settlement but Daniel incorrectly included the recently built Business Education Building. Daniel asserted: “We have a new science building right now. I’m in the old science building. The new science building, the new building drove beside this
morning. The new business building right behind it. The library was totally renovated.”

Vincent correctly identified the two main facilities that were gained under the *Ayers* settlement. Vincent said: “Now out of the *Ayers* case we got the J.H. White Library expanded. It’s double the size you might say. We got the new science building. Those are the two principal new facilities that came up.” Facilities were not the only things gained under *Ayers*, funds were provided for landscaping and infrastructure.

*Landscaping and infrastructure.* Vincent delineated in more detail the extent of the landscaping to beautify the campus and repairs to campus infrastructure. The work was necessary because the institution’s physical plant was in desperate need of repair. This was one of the reasons the plaintiffs filed the *Ayers* lawsuit.

Now we got infrastructure, that is landscaping. One of the things they said was that Valley was a barren campus. Well here in the delta, the delta is native to hardwood trees, oak and all that. It takes a hardwood tree a *long* time to grow. And now after 64 years, we gotten some, a good growth of hardwood trees. But the point I’m making is they gave us some money to put in landscaping and you see some of it out there now—the ponds out front. Well, that’s part of the new landscaping—that’s a distinction. You go into any city where they have tall buildings and things and they have those ponds. But they’re not there just for decorations, they’re also for retention. One of the issues that Valley’s had ever since it’s been here. It was built in a slough that used to flood. So with those ponds, it’ll catch a little of that water and hold it some. Everybody thinks it’s a catfish pond, but it’s a retention pond. And they’re there for decoration too—they’re reflecting lakes. So we got some facilities. And we had to put a lot of that
money under the ground. The sewage, for example. Our sewage plant was messed up so we had to build that. You don’t see that. You cannot see drainage that is trying to keep the water off campus to keep it from flooding. You can’t see that but that’s where we had to put a lot of the money.

*Academic programs.* The *Ayers* provisions not only provided funds for capital projects, landscaping and infrastructure, the settlement also provided funds for academic programs. The *Ayers* settlement created new academic programs and enhanced existing programs. More importantly, Daniel stated that *Ayers* funds helped to recruit qualified faculty.

Now one good thing, I have 14 faculty. Every faculty, not adjunct, every faculty that we have here in this department have terminal degrees except one. So that, if you look at *Ayers* helping to get qualified instructors, everybody here has a Ph.D. except one person.

The provisions in the *Ayers* funding allowed Mississippi Valley State University to receive funds for capital projects, landscaping, infrastructure and academic programs. Nevertheless, Mississippi Valley State University must meet the diversity requirement set forth by the settlement in order to receive the funds from the public and private endowment.

*Diversity measure.* The *Ayers* case required HBCUs to achieve 10% other-race enrollment for three consecutive years in order to control the endowment. While Mississippi Valley State University has not reached that diversity threshold, institution officials recognize the importance of diversity in the student and faculty populations.
Importance of student diversity. In order for students to compete in a global society, students must be exposed to diversity. This means diverse people from diverse places with diverse thoughts and ideas different from their own. Laurel explained the importance of student diversity to expose students and equip them to compete in the global market.

Well you know, one of our goals is to make sure our students can compete globally. In order for them to be able to do that, they have to be exposed to a global atmosphere. And so students get set in that mode of what it means to participate, to compete. And with students having a diverse background, it helps us to meet that global market goal. Having students being competitive because they are exposed to all different types of cultures, differences in general and they are more equipped when they leave because of that. They are better equipped. We hope that if some people have not been exposed to diversity that when they come to us they get that exposure and they are able to translate that out in the world.

In terms of the mission of the university, having only African American students does not enhance the institution. Diversity the quality of education students receive better. Daniel asserted:

An institution, a class—everything that involves individuals is better with diversity. It gives you a broader look at something, a broader objective and that helps. That always helps. If we look at the mission and we look at diversity, the mission was teaching initially and if we only looked at African American students, that’s not enhancing us. We’re not because the world, our community is
not just African Americans. The diversity will better enhance the product of our students.

Ebony commented that Mississippi Valley State University is ready to educate students from diverse backgrounds. “We’re open to educate students from all walks of life from anywhere who are interested in coming to Valley to get an education. We offer a quality education that any other institution of higher education has available.” Vincent commented on the acceptance of other-race students once the state lifted the requirement that restricted certain race of students to certain universities: “We never denied a White student who wanted to come to Valley,” I said, “once the state removed the race requirement after Ole Miss. We welcome all White students.”

The number of international students has helped increase the numbers of other-race students, but not to the point of Mississippi Valley State University achieving the diversity measure set by the state. Daniel spoke to the impact of international students on campus diversity.

I think that has had an impact. Yes. Has had an impact. But also not only that, a lot of the athletes here, for instance soccer, or biology majors or chemistry majors and there are not many of us who go and play soccer.

Student diversity allows students to compete in a global market and enhances the quality of the educational experience. Mississippi Valley State University has never denied admission to other-race students once the requirement restricting the racial designation of institutions was removed. Equally as important as having a diverse student body is having a diverse faculty and staff.
Importance of faculty and staff diversity. Just as student diversity enhances the quality of the education and prepares students to compete globally, a diverse faculty and staff offer different ideas and levels of creativity. Innah talked about her plans to diversify her division.

I have two positions that are open that I’m getting ready to post in the next two weeks before the holidays. Those positions, I want to diversity our department. It’s very important that you have a very diverse staff because you get different creativity, different ideas, from your different staff members. We need diversification within our department. So I think that’s important. Now that’s the plan. Now for the entire university, I don’t know that goal.

Daniel also touted the diversity in his division. Daniel affirmed, “I can only speak for this department. We’re very diverse. We have roughly 15 faculty members here. We have individuals from Africa, from India, from the United States, White Caucasians here, Nigerians, Kenyans, African American people. We are very diverse.”

Diversity improves the educational experience by exposing individuals to people of different culture, different ideas and points of view. It is in a diverse world that students must be able to compete and diverse institutional leaders can help students smoothly make that transition. Finally, Mississippi Valley State University administrators have some differing opinions about the Ayers settlement.

Diverse opinions about Ayers settlement. First, administrators have mixed ideas about whether new academic programs can influence other-race students to attend Mississippi Valley State University. These opinions vary based on the number of years the participant has worked at the institution. Administrators new to Mississippi Valley
State University tend to be more optimistic about the diversity goals set forth by the settlement. Administrators who were at the institution for more than 15 years are less than optimistic about the institution achieving the diversity metric. The administrators had differing opinions on whether new academic programs and enhancements would entice other-race students to attend, whether the diversity goal would be reached and the limited funds Mississippi Valley State University received as a result of the Ayers settlement.

*Programs to entice other-race students.* The purpose of giving new programs and academic enhancements to HBCUs was entice other-race students to attend. I asked administrators if they believed academic program offerings could attract other-race students to Mississippi Valley State University. Ebony answered, “I believe so.” Imnah believed the financial package Mississippi Valley State University offers other-race students attracts them to attend, not academic programs.

I don’t think academic programs have anything to do with enticing other-race students. This is Valley. I think it just has to do with finances—can I get it, can I get a scholarship, I’m a minority here, do I get a full ride? In reality, I don’t think it has anything to do with academics.

Daniel answered that academic programs can possibly, but not necessarily, influence other-race students to attend. He gave an example of two programs in the state that are offered at Mississippi Valley State University.

Possibly. Now you want the truth, I’m telling you the truth, what we’re calling truth. And this is why I say possibly but not necessarily. We have a program here environmental health, a B.S. in environmental health. That program is not offered
at a lot of the other institutions. And the number of diverse students in that program may be 2%. OK. Possibly I look at the master’s in bioinformatics. We’ve had minorities. Now we’re not minorities here. We’ve had Caucasians graduate at a higher rate, so it’s possible that it will increase the diversity. I’m not trying to skirt question. So in one program it has. In one program it hasn’t.

Mississippi Valley State University administrators are not completely certain academic programs drive other-race students to attend HBCUs. Another problem they have with the settlement is the mandate to diversity the student population in order to control endowment.

_Student diversity mandate._ Ebony believes that the negative public perception of citizens has an influence on Mississippi Valley State University’s ability to recruit achieve that ten-percent threshold. “Of course we have a good bit of non-African American students, but I think we always come in shy of reaching that ten percent.”

Imnah believes that Mississippi Valley State University had achieved a minority rate of ten percent. “And I believe we do have 10%. I have the statistics. I know we have like 27 international students, 3 or 4% Caucasian, Hispanic. But I believe we do have that.”

Vincent believes that Mississippi Valley State University will probably not achieve the 10 other-race student threshold.

Probably not. And really that it’s kind of a fake question or issue because it doesn’t mean we won’t get the money. It just means that you’ll have to get approval from the College Board on how to spend it. It’s really not as big an issue as they make it out to be.
Administrators at Mississippi Valley State University were also mixed on the institution’s ability to achieve the diversity measure set by the state. Imnah did not believe Mississippi Valley State University sustaining 10% other-race enrollment for 3 years would be a problem.

Yeah, I don’t think we will have a problem with that and the reason why I say that is that we have a great soccer team. And I think the whole soccer team is Caucasian. Baseball, most of them are Caucasian.

Daniel and I shared a laugh when he in turn asked me, “In how many years?”

Then Daniel took a historical view of the issue.

I’ll answer the question by saying looking at our history, we have not done it. So I don’t think we could do it in the next 5 to 10 years unless we change something.

We have been trying. Well, the institution has been trying since 2000 and we haven’t reached that yet. So if history is a teacher? Nah.

Limited funds. The funds from the Ayers settlement provided other-race scholarships and stipends for Caucasian students, capital funds for infrastructure and capital projects, endowment for the HBCUs, and funds to support academic programs, faculty salaries and operating budgets. The funds decreased incrementally after a number of years until the settlement has been satisfied. The final issue Mississippi Valley State University officials have with the Ayers settlement is that the funds are limited and will run out. I asked Daniel what will happen once the Ayers fund runs out. He replied:

That’s a good question. That’s a good question. I’m just a peon. We’re going to have to come up with some strategies to replace those funds in our budget, our finances. And it’s going to be a task. It’s going to be a task because the population
is going down so we don’t have the students and the state muddied up the one of the criteria for funding your student body. Also we don’t have many of the degree programs that IHL is pushing. We’re not heavy into science and inventions and things of that nature. When we were initiated, when we started, we were education. This is what our goal was to get educators for people in this area and the funding thrust is more into science, technology, and engineering.

Daniel’s issue with the case is that salaries are tied to Ayers funding. With the funds ending, from where is the money going to come to supplement the salaries of those individuals?

When Ayers was passed, we knew it would be going out and if it’s going out, how can you put salaries on Ayers looking down the line. And I hate to assume but I guess the salaries back then when it was passed, the salaries that Mississippi Valley was a lot less for faculty at other places. That was a way to maybe bulk up the salaries a little. And trying to recruit, I hate to say better qualified, but better qualified faculty.

In the opinion of Vincent and Daniel, capital projects did not go far enough to remedy decades of racial discrimination against Mississippi Valley State University. While buildings are easier to get than academic programs, two buildings does not make up for decades of discrimination by the state. Vincent began:

And the limitations on the Ayers case is it funded, it built some facilities. Now that’s probably the most permanent thing, but we’ve always known you can get a building quicker than you can get programs. See when President White started with this school in 1950 on this campus, the first thing he did was to get buildings.
And of course the campus is on 400 acres of land. So he knew you can’t move the land and once you get buildings, it makes a difference too. We got some facilities, but it’s not enough. It’s not enough. And every time you try to get something for the historically Black schools, they tell you what you don’t need. Now I have some issues. I admit. I have some issues because even though we got the two buildings, they were not enough. You can’t solve 65 years of discrimination by building two buildings.

Daniel emphatically agreed with Vincent. The funds received via the Ayers settlement are miniscule to what Mississippi Valley State University should have received over the years. Daniel vehemently protested:

If the Ayers case was trying to eradicate the injustices that were done prior to Ayers, there’s no way. The case was filed in 1975 and ended in 2004. How many years is that? '85, '95, 05, ’15. Forty years. You can’t make up all of the injustices that were done in 40 years. So I’m saying, to answer your question. If you just look at. No, that’s not. No, no, no! You can’t do it! You cannot do it. I’m adamant. No, you can’t do it. It can’t be done.

Administrators at Mississippi Valley State University have mixed opinions about whether new academic programs and program enhancements can entice other-race students to attend, whether the 10% other-race threshold and if the diversity measure would ever be achieved. The major issue with the settlement is that the funds are limited and will run out. Placing salaries on funds that will dissipate places an undue burden on Mississippi Valley State University and does very little to remedy the years of unequal funding and support by the state.
Chapter Summary

Three theme emerged from the analysis of interview data at Mississippi Valley State University. First, student centeredness is a major focus of administrators at Mississippi Valley State University. The institution has a legacy of providing college access to underprepared low-income African American students and fostering their holistic and academic development through the First Year Experience and Second Year Experience. The university would like to offer more STEM programs to boost its science prestige and attract more students. Second, the institution has major challenges—the institution’s rural location, public stigma, difficulty creating change, emphasizing customer service, difficulty generating revenue, old and offline facilities and policy traps—threaten to derail Mississippi Valley State University. The opinions of citizens and public officials have been shaped by university missteps in the past and three attempts to close or merge institution. Change is difficult to create because of the perception of administrators at “outsiders” and hiring incompetent and ineffective employees, usually family members for jobs in which they are not qualified. To generate more revenue, Mississippi Valley State University officials must educate students and alumni on the importance of sustaining the university and increase the enrollment. Third, college officials have different opinion on whether other-race students will be enticed with new and enhanced academic programs. Administrators also hold different opinions on whether Mississippi Valley State University will be able to attain 10% other-race student enrollment for three consecutive years. Lastly, university officials take issue with the limited funding provided by the settlement to remedy decades of discrimination and attaching salaries for permanent jobs with funds that will definitely run out. Chapter 7
will be a cross-case analysis of the themes that emerged from the Chapters 4, 5, and 6 regarding Jackson State University, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University.
Chapter 7

Cross-Case Analysis

Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University were three bounded cases for this multiple case study. In Chapter 4, the themes from data collection at Jackson State University were discussed. Chapter 5 explained the themes from Alcorn State University officials. Chapter 6 explained the themes that emerged from data collection at Mississippi Valley State University. This chapter will discuss expound upon themes that emerged from at least two of the cases or universities. Four major themes emerged across each of the three cases. First, Mississippi HBCUs are committed to providing a college experience that is student centered. Second, all Mississippi HBCUs have the major challenge of increasing revenue to support academic programs, operating budgets and faculty salaries through increasing enrollment, state appropriations, research activities, and in some cases auxiliary enterprises, and online education. Third, HBCUs face challenges that can thwart each institution’s forward momentum. Challenges of some institutions include location and isolation, low faculty salaries, institutional culture, and Southern culture. Each institution is confronted with the public stigma of HBCUs, the need for more, better and newer facilities, and policy traps that can cause HBCUs to lose programs or revenue. Finally, the Ayers case and settlement illuminated institutional differences according to race, the settlement’s diversity measure, and the limited and inconsistent funding provided by the settlement.

Student Centeredness

Student centered is one of the main themes that emerged from research study at Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University. Although student
centeredness was not mentioned by Jackson State University officials, the growth model college officials have put in place allows the institution to put measures in place to benefit students. Each institution wants to provide cutting age programs, particularly online education and STEM programs that will attract people from all backgrounds. Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University each services similar clientele. The students at the three public HBCUs in Mississippi are predominantly African American who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds which is evident by the high percentage of Pell Grant recipients, some of whom are not prepared for the rigors of a higher education. Table 10 shows the average ACT scores of entering freshmen at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University from 2008 to 2014.

Table 10

Average ACT Score of Entering Freshmen at Mississippi HBCUs, Fall 2008 to Fall 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ASU</th>
<th>JSU</th>
<th>MVSU</th>
<th>System Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

Table 10 shows the range of ACT scores for entering freshmen at Alcorn State University ranges from 17.1 to 18.8 over a from 2008 to 2014. The ACT scores for entering freshmen at Jackson State University ranged from 18.1 to 18.9 over the same
six-year period. Entering freshmen at Mississippi Valley State University had the lowest
ACT scores ranging from 17.1 to 17.4 over the same period.

**Academic preparation.** All Mississippi HBCUs desire to offer high quality
curricula that will attract students from many diverse populations to attend the institution.
Jackson State University offers the most diverse programs of all three HBCUs because of
it is a research institution that awards doctorate degrees. Mississippi Valley State
University, like Alcorn State University, is a rural regional institution but does not offer
the STEM courses and programs that IHL is rewarding in the funding formula. Table 11
shows the academic readiness of entering freshmen at Alcorn State University from 2010
to 2012. The percentages of freshman student taking one intermediate class range from
22.2 % in 2010 to 43.0% in 2011. Higher percentages of students were enrolled in
intermediate math each year. The percentage of freshman students taking both
intermediate range from 40.5% in 2011 to 44.9% in 2012.

Table 11

**Alcorn State University, College Readiness of Entering Freshmen (percentages in
parentheses), 2010-2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average ACT Score for entering freshmen</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen Headcount enrollment</td>
<td>1,159</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in 1 or more Intermediate Courses</td>
<td>(22.2)</td>
<td>(43.0)</td>
<td>(39.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in intermediate Math during first year</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(38.5)</td>
<td>(21.8)</td>
<td>(25.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 1

Alcorn State University, College Readiness of Entering Freshmen (percentages in parentheses), 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in intermediate English/Reading during first year</td>
<td>129 (21.0)</td>
<td>207 (35.0)</td>
<td>153 (29.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in both math and English/Reading during first year</td>
<td>104 (40.5)</td>
<td>255 (43.1)</td>
<td>232 (44.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 12 shows the college readiness of entering freshmen at Jackson State University. Of the freshmen entering Jackson State University, the percentages of students who took at least one intermediate course range from 34.7% in 2010 to 39.2% in 2011. A higher percentage of students taking on class were enrolled in intermediate mathematics each year. The percentages of freshmen students who took intermediate courses in both mathematics and English/reading range from 30.5% in 2012 to 45.5% in 2010.

Table 12

Jackson State University, College Readiness of Entering Freshmen (percentages in parentheses), 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average ACT Score for entering freshmen</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen Headcount enrollment</td>
<td>1,595</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>1,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in 1 or more Intermediate Courses</td>
<td>554 (34.7)</td>
<td>662 (39.2)</td>
<td>570 (37.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: The table continues...
Table 12

*Jackson State University, College Readiness of Entering Freshmen (percentages in parentheses), 2010-2012*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in intermediate Math during first year</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(32.7)</td>
<td>(33.5)</td>
<td>(41.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in intermediate English/Reading during first year</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21.8)</td>
<td>(28.9)</td>
<td>(28.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in both math and English/reading during first year</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(45.5)</td>
<td>(37.6)</td>
<td>(30.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 13 shows the college readiness of entering freshmen at Mississippi Valley State University over a three-year period. Over a three-year period, the percentages of students taking intermediate courses range from 40.4% in 2011 to 49.5% in 2010. The highest percentage of students taking one intermediate class were enrolled in mathematics. The range of percentages for students was enrolled in both mathematics and English/reading range from 31.3% in 2012 to 52.4% in 2010.

Table 13

*Mississippi Valley State University, College Readiness of Entering Freshmen (percentages in parentheses), 2010-2012*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average ACT Score for entering freshmen</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen Headcount enrollment</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in 1 or more Intermediate Courses</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(49.5)</td>
<td>(40.4)</td>
<td>(41.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 13

Mississippi Valley State University, College Readiness of Entering Freshmen (percentages in parentheses), 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in intermediate Math during first year</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in intermediate English/Reading during first year</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in both math and English/Reading during first year</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Taken together Tables 11, 12, and 13 show the degree to which entering freshmen come to Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University with deficiencies. Jackson State University has the lowest percentage of students taking one intermediate courses with the exception of Alcorn State University having a lower percentage in 2010. Alcorn State University’s numbers of students taking one intermediate class fluctuate from the 20 to 40% range, while Jackson State’ University’s numbers hold steady in the 30s, and Mississippi Valley State University’s numbers hold steady in the 40% range. Mississippi Valley State University consistently has the highest number of students who are underprepared for school. The highest percentages of students taking two intermediate classes were at Mississippi Valley State University for each of the three years. Aaron, an administrator at Alcorn State University, stated that the ACT is an aptitude test that measures what students have been taught and not their intelligence or their ability to learn. Daniel, an administrator at Mississippi Valley State University, stated that citizens and elected officials believe that they receive
students like everyone else. The fact is the students come to Mississippi Valley State University with lower ACT scores which results in higher numbers of them taking intermediate courses during their freshman year. This is a worthy work, but elected officials and citizens do not understand the amount of work it takes to move students from their initial level as freshmen to a level where they can compete on an equal level with students from other higher education institution once they graduate.

To assist students which academic difficulty, Alcorn State University provides tutoring services for those students who need academic reinforcement. All institutions have a First Year Experience program for first-time freshmen. These programs assist freshmen students to make the transition to college through intentional advising which in turn help the institutions retain students at a higher rate. In fact, Mississippi Valley State University has instituted a Second Year Experience program.

**Financial woes.** The financial condition of students at HBCUs is exhibited in Table 14. Mississippi HBCU officials all indicated the economic situation of the students that they serve. While most administrators stated that upwards of 90% of students were Pell eligible, College Navigator reports demonstrate that high percentages of undergraduates who receive financial assistance at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University.
Table 14

Financial Aid, All Undergraduate Students (percentages in parentheses), 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Aid</th>
<th>ASU</th>
<th>JSU</th>
<th>MVSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Undergraduate Grant</td>
<td>2,845</td>
<td>5,157</td>
<td>1,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Scholarships</td>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>(77)</td>
<td>(78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell Grants</td>
<td>2,540</td>
<td>4,323</td>
<td>1,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td>(69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Student Loans</td>
<td>2,846</td>
<td>5,095</td>
<td>1,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(77)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. National Center for Education Statistics (2015a, 2015b, 2015c)

All Mississippi HBCUs service mainly African American students who have challenges academically and financially. As a result of the financial position of students, each institution is putting in place plans to assist students to pay their financial obligations from university foundations, faculty staff campaigns and donations from alumni.

**Increasing Revenue**

In addition to a host of community colleges, the State of Mississippi has eight four-year higher education institutions that it must support. Higher education in the state of Mississippi is not fully funded. With the state fulfilling obligations to other governmental functions, the amount of money four-year colleges and university receive has been decreasing steadily since 2000. Each Mississippi HBCUs has some challenges when it comes to the revenue higher educational institutions receive. The main ways to increase revenue include increasing enrollment, state appropriations, increasing research activity, generating funds through auxiliary enterprises and online education. Each university will be discussed individually.
**Jackson State University.** Jackson State University is following an aggressive growth model driven by a sophisticated enrollment plan. Isaac at Jackson State University made it very clear that because of the lack of a sizable university endowment, Jackson State University must grow. It has to grow. Revenue increases as Jackson State University officials continue to increase enrollment, state appropriations, research activity, and more funds through auxiliary enterprises and online education.

**Enrollment.** The growth of Jackson State University is driven by an aggressive, sophisticated, data-driven enrollment plan and the strategic use of data. First, administrators look at places where they have traditionally received the greatest gains of students and target those populations. In addition, Jackson State University is also targeting nontraditional students including veterans who are interested in furthering their education through advanced degrees and continuing education through online classes and attending branch campuses. Higher enrollment results in more revenue for the institution. Increased revenue is the consequence of the institution offering adding academic programs, employing new faculty and building more facilities. Table 15 shows the headcount enrollment for Jackson State University from Fall 2009 to Fall 2014. Jackson State University experienced a steady increase in students each year with the exception of Fall 2010 and Fall 2012. The data mirrors the enrollment numbers cited by Timothy. Enrollment had increased from 8,819 students to 9,134 students in 2013 to 9,508 students in 2014.
Table 15

Jackson State University Fall Headcount Enrollment, Fall 2008 to Fall 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>JSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>8,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>8,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>8,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>8,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>8,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>9,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>9,508</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Appropriations.* Conversely, appropriations from the state that must be divided among eight institutions and amidst other state obligations. In reality, university state subsidies have been steadily diminishing since 2000. Table 16 shows the financial information of Jackson State University from 2008 to 2014. The state appropriation for Jackson State University is roughly 23% of the institution’s operating budget. State appropriations for Jackson State University jumped substantially in Fall 2010 and in Fall 2014 with minimal decreases in the other years. Administrators constantly expressed that the appropriations from the state are constantly diminishing, other methods of creating revenue are important. Jackson State University is increasing its revenue through aggressively recruiting and enrolling students.
Jackson State University Financial Information (in Millions), Fall 2008 to 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Operating Budget</th>
<th>State Appropriations</th>
<th>Annual Payroll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>$186.8</td>
<td>$42.5</td>
<td>$69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>$176.6</td>
<td>$42.3</td>
<td>$63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>$185.8</td>
<td>$48.5</td>
<td>$71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>$196.2</td>
<td>$48.2</td>
<td>$69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>$203.4</td>
<td>$48.1</td>
<td>$75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>$217.2</td>
<td>$48.0</td>
<td>$76.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>$223.0</td>
<td>$54.8</td>
<td>$86.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

**Auxiliary enterprises.** Jackson State University has the unique ability to generate funds through its auxiliary enterprises. The revenue created from these auxiliary enterprises is used to provide scholarships for students. By outsourcing dining services, Jackson State University now makes a profit instead of losing money by doing it themselves. Other revenue producing entities in the JSU Student Center include the JSU Bookstore and SodexoMAGIC, LLC and the following businesses that make up the food court: Chick-fil-A, Pizza Hut Express, 34 Payton Place named for Walter Payton, Market Place at Legacy and Bistro 1877 named for the year Jackson State University was founded and Simply to Go. Also adjacent to the student center in the Student Center Annex are the Barber Shop, Beauty Salon, JSU Nail Studio, Subway and Welcome Center (Jackson State University, 2015). Jackson State University is able to benefit from these auxiliary enterprises because the JSU Student Center is modern enough with enough space to attract businesses to the campus.

**Research activity.** Jackson State University is an urban university designated as a "high research activity” institution by the Carnegie Foundation.
has the capacity to create more revenue through research. Table 17 shows the research activity of Jackson State University from 2008 to 2014. With its vibrant STEM programs in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, Jackson State University can benefit from the 10% for research institutions in the funding formula.

Table 17

*Jackson State University Research and Sponsored Projects, Summary of External Funding (in Millions), 2007 to 2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Private, Corporations and Other</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>$54.2</td>
<td>$2.4</td>
<td>$2.1</td>
<td>$58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>$60.7</td>
<td>$3.0</td>
<td>$2.4</td>
<td>$66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>$62.0</td>
<td>$4.2</td>
<td>$1.9</td>
<td>$68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>$51.2</td>
<td>$2.6</td>
<td>$3.2</td>
<td>$57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>$44.3</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>$1.9</td>
<td>$48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>$28.7</td>
<td>$3.0</td>
<td>$4.5</td>
<td>$36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>$26.2</td>
<td>$1.3</td>
<td>$6.8</td>
<td>$38.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

The research activity of Jackson State University ranges from a low of $24.8 million in 2013 to a high of $68.1 million in 2009. Gideon mentioned an aggressive grant management process he implemented as an administrator. Upon his arrival, Jackson State University lost $2 million in to grants because they did not submit timely paperwork did not request reimbursement or retained people on the payroll after the grant had ended. Now, Jackson State University does not lose money.

*JSU Online.* One of the major ways Jackson State University plans to increase revenue is via its new online education programs called JSU Online. The online platform offers 4 undergraduate degree programs and 14 graduate degree programs. Table 18
shows the academic programs and degrees offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels through its online education site *JSU Online* (2015).

Table 18

*Jackson State University Online Degree Offerings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Child Care and Family Education</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Care Administration</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology (Concentration in Emergency Management Administration</td>
<td>B.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>M.B.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>M.S. Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education Administration and Supervision</td>
<td>M.S. Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Administration (Higher Education)</td>
<td>Ed. S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education (Concentration in School Counseling)</td>
<td>Ed. S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education (Concentration in Psychometry)</td>
<td>Ed. S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of Arts in Teaching</td>
<td>M.A.T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>M.S. Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Education</td>
<td>M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science &amp; Mathematics Teaching (Concentration in Biology)</td>
<td>M.A.T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>M.S. Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport Science</td>
<td>M.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the growth model followed by Jackson State University is driven by an aggressive student enrollment management plan has resulted in additional revenue for Jackson State University through enrollment, research activity and online education despite the fact that state appropriations is roughly 23% of the university’s operating budget. The growth model uses data to plan the strategy to advance the institution. While Jackson State University has benefitted from great gains under the growth model, Alcorn State University is following a fiscally conservative, low-debt model.
**Alcorn State University.** Alcorn State University is a fiscally conservative, low-debt university driven by prudent spending, keeping overhead low and being circumspect in taking on huge loans. Benjamin mentioned that Alcorn State University was able to achieve a low-debt status because of its judicious spending, keeping overhead low and being prudent in taking on huge loans. One such example of taking on huge loans occurred when Alcorn State University financed the Medgar Evers Housing Complex on the campus done independently of the state’s bond rating by using the institution’s bond rating. Phase I of the beautiful and modern four-building complex overlooking a lake on the back of the campus is simply breathtaking and awe inspiring. Regarding additional revenue, Alcorn State University must look to its student enrollment, state appropriations, and research activity.

**Enrollment.** Table 19 shows the headcount enrollment for Alcorn State University from Fall 2008 to Fall 2012. Alcorn State University had steady increases in enrollment from 2008 to 2011. From 2012 to 2014, enrollment at Alcorn State University has dropped in three consecutive years. This drop in enrollment affects the institution’s ability to generate more revenue from the state funding formula.
Table 19

*Alcorn State University, Fall Headcount Enrollment, Fall 2008 to Fall 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ASU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>3,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>3,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>3,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>4,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>3,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>3,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>3,639</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Appropriations.** From Fall 2008 to 2014, the state appropriations given to Alcorn State University are roughly 30% of the institution’s operating budget. Table 20 shows the operating budget, state allocations and annual payroll for Alcorn State University from 2008 to 2014. State appropriations have steadily increased from 2008 to 2014 even through the operating body and expands at a faster rate.

Table 20

*Alcorn State University Financial Information (in Millions), Fall 2008 to 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Operating Budget</th>
<th>State Appropriations</th>
<th>Annual Payroll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>$ 88.6</td>
<td>$25.1</td>
<td>$29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>$ 84.3</td>
<td>$26.0</td>
<td>$25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>$ 86.3</td>
<td>$27.3</td>
<td>$32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>$ 90.3</td>
<td>$27.4</td>
<td>$36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>$101.2</td>
<td>$28.2</td>
<td>$38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>$106.0</td>
<td>$29.1</td>
<td>$40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>$102.0</td>
<td>$30.2</td>
<td>$40.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

According to Table 20, state appropriations for Alcorn State University have steadily increased since 2008. The state appropriation funds have dwindled substantially
since 2000 and must be kept intact by continuing to successfully meet requirements of the funding formula. Less revenue impacts the university’s bottom line which in turn affects faculty salaries. Retaining faculty has been a problem at Alcorn State University because of historically low faculty salaries.

**Research activity.** Alcorn State University is a land grant institution that focuses on providing empirical and natural research that will benefit farmers in the local area.

While Alcorn State University is designated by IHL as a regional institution, the university has the ability to generate funds via its research activity by virtue of its land grant status. But according to the funding formula, regional institutions do not get funding for research activity, just the research universities. Table 21 lists the amounts Alcorn State University received in research and sponsored projects from 2007 to 2013.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Private, Corporations and Other</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>$23.0</td>
<td>$0.8</td>
<td>$0.8</td>
<td>$24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>$24.4</td>
<td>$0.2</td>
<td>$1.9</td>
<td>$26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>$27.1</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$1.4</td>
<td>$28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>$29.6</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$1.2</td>
<td>$30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>$27.4</td>
<td>$0.6</td>
<td>$2.0</td>
<td>$29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>$15.9</td>
<td>$0.4</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>$17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>$12.3</td>
<td>$0.5</td>
<td>$1.2</td>
<td>$14.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

The research activity at Alcorn State University ranges from $14.4 million in Fall 2013 to $30.8 million in Fall 2010. In addition to research activity, taking advantage of intellectual property of faculty, huge amounts of land the university owns, entrepreneurial
opportunities and auxiliary enterprises in addition to the efforts of advancement to raise additional funds are some ways Alcorn State University can bolster is revenue stream.

In summary, the low-debt model of Alcorn State University bodes well for the university in that it has kept the institution fiscally sound. Unfortunately, the low-debt model does not help the institution generate money. Beleaguered enrollment for the past three years, state appropriation and low faculty salaries, although there have been three board approved raises in the past five years according to Benjamin, have resulted from a less than ideal revenue. Rachel mentioned that making sure the institution had enough to tuition cover its bills is a yearly obstacle that the institution must overcome. Alcorn State University must increase enrollment and find additional sources of revenue to help move the institution forward. With Jackson State University utilizing a growth model and Alcorn State University utilizing a low-debt model, Mississippi Valley State University in its institutional model is what I am calling a set sail model.

**Mississippi Valley State University.** Mississippi Valley State University is driven by the motto “One goal, one team, one Valley.” In mid to late 2000, the administration took a laissez faire approach at Mississippi Valley State University that assumed that the students will come. I liken this to a sailboat that is drifting on the open sea. The captain did not realize there was a problem until data returned and said that enrollment was down for several consecutive years that affected revenue and state appropriations. While administrators were addressing enrollment issues, the retention of students became equally as important. While freshmen were enrolling in greater numbers, more freshmen left after their freshman year in even greater numbers. I liken this to opening the sail and using the wind energy to sail against the current. Once
administrators noticed the ship was way off course, it was too late. A vote of no confidence was issued and the captain was replaced. Now with a new captain at the helm, it is time to chart a course, set sail and sail with the current, not against it. The course has been set with the vision statement, “One goal, one team, one Valley.” Now the crew must sail on the course charted by the captain in order to reach their destination. Revenue issues that must be addressed are enrollment, state appropriations, research activity and faculty salaries.

**Enrollment.** According to Table 22, Mississippi Valley State University had steady decreases in enrollment from 2008 to 2014. The two years where enrollment increased were in 2012 and 2014 with by 27 students and 18 students respectively is not a significant increase to create a sizable growth in revenue. The Fall 2014 numbers mirror the enrollment cited by Ebony. A result of the decreases in enrollment was budget cuts. Daniel stated that the economic situation affected him because the lack of students caused the state to cut his budget. Enrollment is correlated to state appropriations that are shrinking.

Table 22

**Mississippi Valley State University Fall Headcount Enrollment, Fall 2008 to Fall 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>MVSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>2,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>2,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>2,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>2,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>2,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>2,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>2,221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appropriations.** The appropriation Mississippi Valley State University receives from the state fluctuates from 26% to 32% of the institution’s total operating budget.

Table 23 shows the financial information for Mississippi Valley State University from 2008 to 2014. According to the funding formula, smaller institutions get a larger percentage of their operational budget covered by the state appropriations. This is the case for Alcorn State University, Delta State University, Mississippi University for Women, and Mississippi Valley State University. Minus the jump in appropriation in 2010, the appropriations received by Mississippi Valley State University are consistent.

While the other institutions can look to research as a means to gain additional revenue, Mississippi Valley State University is limited in its capacity to do research.

Table 23

*Mississippi Valley State University Financial Information (in Millions), Fall 2008 to 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Operating Budget</th>
<th>State Appropriations</th>
<th>Annual Payroll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>$60.8</td>
<td>$15.8</td>
<td>$22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>$64.4</td>
<td>$15.8</td>
<td>$22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>$67.8</td>
<td>$18.2</td>
<td>$26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>$67.4</td>
<td>$18.0</td>
<td>$26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>$58.6</td>
<td>$19.3</td>
<td>$25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>$65.2</td>
<td>$18.7</td>
<td>$25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>$62.1</td>
<td>$18.0</td>
<td>$25.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

**Research activity.** Of the three HBCUs, Mississippi Valley State University has the least capacity to increase revenue through research activity. Table 24 shows the amounts of money Mississippi Valley State University received from grant related research projects from 2008 to 2014.
Table 24

*Mississippi Valley State University Research and Sponsored Projects, Summary of External Funding (in Millions), 2007 to 2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Private, Corporations and Other</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>$7.9</td>
<td>$1.2</td>
<td>$0.5</td>
<td>$7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>$10.7</td>
<td>$1.4</td>
<td>$0.3</td>
<td>$12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>$7.5</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
<td>$7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>$10.3</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>$0.9</td>
<td>$12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>$6.2</td>
<td>$0.9</td>
<td>$0.8</td>
<td>$7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>$5.9</td>
<td>$0.6</td>
<td>$0.3</td>
<td>$6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>$5.5</td>
<td>$0.6</td>
<td>$0.4</td>
<td>$6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008b, 2009b, 2010b, 2011b, 2012b, 2013e, 2014c)

The research activity for Mississippi Valley State University range from $6.5 million in Fall 2013 to $12.4 million in Fall 2008. Benjamin reminded me that Mississippi Valley State University does not have the STEM programs that IHL are pushing as part of its funding formula. STEM programs and graduate programs receive more weight in the funding formula. Benjamin continued by saying, “We are not the inventors here. We were created for teacher education.” Imnah said that the funding formula will not allow us to get all of the funds that we need. Maybe locating research grants in environmental health and bioinformatics, two degrees not offered anywhere else in the state, would yield meaningful revenue. Finally, Benjamin talked about the low salaries at Mississippi Valley State University as a reflection of its ability to recruit qualified faculty.

Since three administrators chose not to participate in the research study, I could not properly use the words of the participants to create a model for Mississippi Valley State University. Considering the institution’s recent history and my previous research...
project, the model I chose to create called set sail in an attempt to show that the course set by the captain must be followed by the crew and executed while moving with the current, not against it. Enrollment issues must be addressed as well as the challenge of facilities that will be discussed in the next section in order to grow the student population. With state appropriations decreasing and affecting faculty salaries, there is not much hope for Mississippi Valley State University to pursue research activities as a school that does not offer a high concentration of majors in STEM areas.

In summary, Jackson State University is in a great position due to its record enrollment, research activity, online education and auxiliary as ways to generate revenue. Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University are unable to generate revenue from auxiliary enterprises because spaces in both outdated student unions are not large and modern enough to attract off-campus auxiliary enterprises and businesses like the JSU Student Center has. Modern facilities begets auxiliary enterprises which begets revenue that can be utilized to benefit students. Alcorn State University has experienced a decrease in enrollment which results in decreased revenue, but its land grant function has some research activity can generate revenue for the university. Mississippi Valley State University after 7 years of decreasing enrollment numbers is attempting to enroll more students, but the Fall 2014 enrollment increase was only 18 students. With very little research activity, Mississippi Valley State University administrators will have to find additional ways to create revenue for the institution. The next section will discuss challenges at least two or all three HBCUs encounter that could impact university operations.
Challenges of HBCUs

All organizations face challenges including higher education institutions. HBCUs face a particular set of challenges some based upon the racial identity of the institution. According to HBCU administrators, they face a number of challenges. Some institutions face more challenges than other institutions. Among the challenges are the location and isolation of certain campuses, low faculty salaries, the public stigma of the majority population regarding HBCUs, engrained institutional culture, the need for more, better and updated facilities, being well-versed in Southern culture and norms as a prerequisite for doing business, and traps in higher education policy that threaten the survival of HBCUs.

Location and isolation. In the history of Mississippi higher education, state leaders debated over whether to located colleges in urban centers or in rural areas. In the 1800s, state officials preferred to locate higher education institutions in rural areas to prevent the moral degradation of students living in urban areas (Sansing, 1990). The campus of Natchez Seminary moved to Jackson in 1899 when it was still a private institution. When the state assumed control of Jackson College in 1940, it was already located in the capital city. While the location of Jackson State University in the urban capital city of Jackson has benefitted the city greatly, the isolation of Alcorn State University in southwest Mississippi and Mississippi Valley State University in the Mississippi Delta have caused some challenges for the two rural institutions. First, both institutions suffer from lack of economic development. For Mississippi Valley State University and Alcorn State University, there is very little industry or virtually no industry for the universities to build relationships with that could benefit students from
internships and research opportunities in their respective regions. Alcorn State University’s isolation and lack of commerce on Mississippi Highway 552 is further evident by the nearly 40-mile trip students must take to Natchez or Vicksburg to buy basic necessities. Second, the rural area of both is also reflective in lack of a pool of viable graduates to attend the institutions. The pool of high school graduates are not only dwindling in these locales, but also in the state. Third, the impoverished conditions and lack of industry both regions have contributed to the decreasing populations, particularly in the Mississippi Delta. Fourth, the location of the institutions makes it difficult for them to recruit and attract faculty and students. Particularly for Alcorn State University, the lack of a pool of adjunct professors for Alcorn State University causes some problems for the institution. The lack of economic development, a lack of a viable pool of graduates in the area, decreasing populations and difficulty recruiting are all issues that result from the rural location of Mississippi Valley State University and the isolated location of Alcorn State University.

**Low faculty salaries.** HBCUs have historically had low faculty salaries when compared to PWIs in the state, the state average and the SREB regional average. Both Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University have issues recruiting quality faculty because of their location and their low faculty salaries. Virgil at Alcorn State University mentioned historically faculty salaries as a problem because Alcorn State University is unable to keep talented faculty because they are lured away with more lucrative salary offers. Using the categories of institutions and the average salaries by the Southern Regional Education Board, I compared it to the average salaries for the same year that was reported in the IHL Fact Book, 2012-2013. Table 25 is a compilation of
tables from to sources. Only The University of Mississippi exceeds the regional average in the upper three ranks. Alcorn State University exceeds the regional average for the assistant professor rank. When compared to the state average, The University of Mississippi exceeds the state average in every faculty rank while Mississippi State University exceeds the state average in the upper three faculty ranks. Only Delta State University, Mississippi University for Women, and The University of Southern Mississippi exceed the state average for the instructor rank. Among SREB Four-Year 4 institutions, Alcorn State University has the highest average of faculty salaries among the regional institutions, but it still falls well short of the state and regional averages. Since a one-time subsidy to increase faculty pay from the state is highly unlikely, Alcorn State University must look to other sources for revenue. Among them includes research activity.
Table 25

Weighted Average Full-time Salaries Public Institutions, 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category/Institution</th>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Associate Professor</th>
<th>Assistant Professor</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SREB Four-Year 1</td>
<td>$119,807</td>
<td>$82,562</td>
<td>$72,324</td>
<td>$46,754</td>
<td>$75,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSU</td>
<td>$ 96,420</td>
<td>$74,741</td>
<td>$65,062</td>
<td>$42,705</td>
<td>$69,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USM</td>
<td>$ 88,795</td>
<td>$66,154</td>
<td>$59,848</td>
<td>$46,484</td>
<td>$64,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SREB Four-Year 2</td>
<td>$108,982</td>
<td>$76,560</td>
<td>$66,715</td>
<td>$44,620</td>
<td>$75,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSU</td>
<td>$ 75,773</td>
<td>$64,728</td>
<td>$55,827</td>
<td>$41,705</td>
<td>$59,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM</td>
<td>$112,473</td>
<td>$80,394</td>
<td>$67,630</td>
<td>$40,007</td>
<td>$75,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SREB Four-Year 4</td>
<td>$ 78,614</td>
<td>$64,745</td>
<td>$55,451</td>
<td>$44,529</td>
<td>$60,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASU</td>
<td>$ 70,983</td>
<td>$62,528</td>
<td>$57,644</td>
<td>$41,284</td>
<td>$56,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSU</td>
<td>$ 66,510</td>
<td>$54,077</td>
<td>$51,585</td>
<td>$46,272</td>
<td>$53,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUW</td>
<td>$ 61,433</td>
<td>$59,983</td>
<td>$53,241</td>
<td>$49,364</td>
<td>$53,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVSU</td>
<td>$ 64,686</td>
<td>$54,367</td>
<td>$48,537</td>
<td>$37,924</td>
<td>$49,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Average</td>
<td>$ 91,635</td>
<td>$70,095</td>
<td>$61,144</td>
<td>$43,128</td>
<td>$64,792</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Looking at Table 25, Mississippi Valley State University’s average salary is the least of all the eight institutions that is well short of the state average and the regional average for faculty salaries. Recruiting faculty is an issue because some people pass over jobs at the institution because they can be compensated handsomely elsewhere. Another issue it brings to the forefront is the ability of the institution to replace Ayers funds once the settlement has ended because some faculty salaries, academic programs and operating budgets are tied to the Ayers funding. While research activity is a meaningful way to create more revenue, Mississippi Valley State University is challenged when it comes to pursing grants because the institution does nto have the STEM programs or the infrastructure to do research.
Public stigma of HBCUs. Each of the public HBCUs in Mississippi suffer from the public stigma. The word stigma is used here instead of perception because perception can be either positive or negative while stigma is negative. The beliefs of the majority population regarding HBCUs are negative, hence the use of the word stigma. Dallas (2015) in an opinion piece about the Confederate flag in the upper right hand corner of the Mississippi State flag spoke about the coded rhetoric of “Confederate-flag-waving, hate-base that has been the back bone of the Grand Old Party in Mississippi” (para. 5).

Too many in the electorate, specifically a distressingly high number of the electorate in Mississippi, are still caught in the throes of years of entrenched race-baiting. The coded rhetoric that captivated them when Ronald Reagan swept the South in 1980 is now accepted “fact.” They believe the reason the middle class is shrinking is the result of welfare programs and welfare queens. They see [B]lack people, as well as other people of color, “taking over.” (Dallas, 2015, para. 4)

The stigma for HBCUs began at the inception of Alcorn University when it was designated a college for Negroes. The inferior nature of Black slaves was transferred to these Black higher education institution that were to teach vocational skills, teacher education and agricultural principles. These institutions were never intended to teach a liberal arts curriculum and graduate students with master’s degrees and doctorate degrees in a variety of areas. The stigma carried over from the curricular choices to the funding of the institutions. Funding was minimal and unequal to the funding PWIs received. The physical plants and buildings at HBCUs were also inferior to those at PWIs. The creators of the higher education system made these institutions different because of the historical
stigma of the majority people against African Americans. Vincent, Aaron, and Virgil all stated that the state made HBCUs separate institutions.

Administrators at HBCUs believe that that the majority population does not want HBCUs to grow. Vincent at Mississippi Valley State University said “the powers that be” are always telling HBCUs what they do not need. There is the stigma that HBCUs are inferior to PWIs. This is true for the most part. Nevertheless, HBCUs have experienced resistance when they ask for funds that will make them equal to PWIs. Jackson State University experienced this when the administrators proposed Mississippi Stadium, a domed sports facility that will also be able to hold conference meetings to take advantage of Jackson’s capacity to house and feed visitors. Administrators were told they did not need such a stadium. This occurred when Alcorn State University officials requested more funds. They were told that money is not the issue. What the university needs are more diverse students. In the case of Alcorn State University, shoring up academic programs to attract other-race students was not a priority. For Jackson State University, there is the perception that it is like other HBCUs when it has in fact the institution is positioning itself to compete with other majority institutions, not just other HBCUs. It appears that the power players in Mississippi mainly the majority culture do not want HBCUs to compete with PWIs in academic programs, faculty salaries, and aesthetic facilities. Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University will be unable to grow if they cannot grow their student enrollment. Innah at Mississippi Valley State University say that elected officials understand everything about the institution. The question is do they understand a culture of people and are they willing to do what it takes to help the institution, to thrive and not simply survive.
Acquiring finances for HBCUs is also a challenge. This can range from perceptions that HBCUs are poor and HBCUs are unable to manage their finances. Next, there is the stigma that Jackson State University has a problem managing its finances. While this was the case prior to this administration, this is no longer an issue. In fact, Jackson State University has gone from a $1 million deficit to a $14 million surplus in 3 years. Daniel at Mississippi Valley State University said that his budget was cut due to the institution not enrolling more students. Additionally, Alcorn State University must perform a miraculous budgeting act every year to make sure its tuition covers its fees. HBCUs have often been quoted as being able to do more with less. Now that the issue of managing finances is no longer an issue, this mantra needs to become obsolete. After years of doing more with less, HBCUs need to be given more in order to do more because in the scheme of higher education in Mississippi, this has unfortunately been the case for decades and, in the case of Alcorn State University, at least a century.

Then there is the belief that in an era of post-segregation, there is no longer a need for HBCUs. According to Vincent, every public system of higher education has upper level universities and lower level universities. PWIs want the best students. Students with academic struggles do not attend the upper level universities. These students attend institutions of access, lower level institutions that have the capacity to remediate students and grow them to become graduates and professional individuals who can contribute to society. Elijah states that HBCUs are still relevant and can still service its constituent base.

As a result of the public stigma towards HBCUs, the majority population wants to stifle and limit the growth of supposedly inferior HBCUs. With mismanagement of funds
no longer being an issue, HBCUs should not have to “do more with less” moving forward. Finally, HBCUs are needed because they do the work of educating a population of students with deficiencies who are not desired at upper level institutions.

**Institutional culture.** The institutional cultures of Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University have resulted from each institution hiring many of its own graduates who have ingrained in them the way things are done on the campus. Additionally, many of these individuals have not worked other places to see what how people at other institutions perform the same tasks. These groups of people are relatives or close acquaintances of people who are already employed at the institution. The ingrained belief at Jackson State University where “no one is let go” created a situation where creating change becomes an obstacle for any new administrator attempting to move the institution forward. At both institutions, people are moved from one job to another when they do not fit.

**Facilities.** Every college administrator made mention that aesthetics, namely the residence halls on university campuses, is a major factor in the decision making that drives student choice. Alcorn State University has made a significant investment in student housing by bonding its own housing project on the private market independent of the state’s rating. The new modern facility is a welcoming sight to on-campus visitors. Jackson State University with a student population bursting at the seams is in need of new facilities. One dormitory is slated to be built with administrators planning to build another down the road. The university acquired the Palisades, an apartment complex to house additional students and has already acquired a hotel near the Mississippi State Fairgrounds off I-55. Jackson State University recently proposed to the College Board its
plans to use issue bonds to buy land and build a new dormitory. On the other hand, Mississippi Valley State University has a number of residence halls that offline and nonoperational. This is an eye sore to visitors when they come on campus. While the institution is making do with modular housing, their term for mobile units, the boarded up buildings surrounded by fences and entrance ways guarded by a yellow rope makes students not want to attend.

Every HBCU campus has buildings that need to be replaced, not updated. The student unions on each campus are outdated. None of the HBCUs has a dedicated performing arts building on their campus like the Bologna Performing Arts Center at Delta State University or the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts at The University of Mississippi. Alcorn State University does not have dedicated locker rooms for women’s sports and a number of buildings are not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Fine Arts building at Mississippi Valley State University named for Walter Sillers does not have an elevator even after renovations initially included one.

**Southern culture.** Initially thought to be an outlier, this category was included because participants from two institutions mentioned it. Benjamin at Alcorn State University and Ebony at Mississippi Valley State University mentioned the problem they experienced doing business on behalf of their respective universities. While she is viewed as an “outsider” and others perceive her as not welcoming advice or direction or assistance is not welcome, she has to figure out alternative ways to get things done that are still accepted. Benjamin stated that it is the protocol of Southern culture to express
hospitality first. Southerners build relationships first before conducting the business of hand whereas the business practices in the North occur at a faster pace.

Here, there are two groups of people where membership becomes important. The “insider” group the privileged group. There are group members, norms, behaviors and conversations that occur among individuals in the “insider” group that may not occur with “outsider” group, people who are not members of the insider group. This has historically occurred in the State of Mississippi between privileged White “insiders” and unprivileged other-race “outsiders,” mainly Blacks. Privileged PWIs and unprivileged HBCUs and privileged Southerners and unprivileged Northerners. The Civil War brought about the schism between Southerners and Northerners. The result has been Southerners resisting Northern values regarding slavery, desegregation, integration, the organizations formed to counterattack to the Civil Rights movement, studies of their higher education system telling state officials to limit the number of institutions in the state, the mission and scope of institutions, the number of graduate programs and change the curricula to address state needs. Instead, Mississippi Southerners have marched to the beat of their own drum despite the consensus of the nation regarding the issues that affect it.

Bill Crawford, a member of the College Board during the Ayers case and settlement, mentioned how Mississippi schizophrenia affected race issues during the case. Crawford’s response to a question asked by Sid Salter about what most confounds Crawford about the State of Mississippi sums up why things are the way they are in Mississippi.

Two things, our lingering love to hate and our sand box mentality. Better the irony that evil seeds of hate and selfishness can grow in the same big hearts of
people who reach out to help others in times of need. Mississippi schizophrenia –
neighborliness and hate side by side. Can you not be a really Mississippian
without hating something? It may be as superficial as hating Ole Miss or as
sinister as hating people of different races or beliefs. Perhaps this need to hate
comes from the same selfishness that drives our sand box mentality – only what’s
in my own sand box matters and don’t you mess with it…friend.” (Crawford,
2015, para. 1)

According to Crawford, “Racism rooted in hate and selfishness, tainted all issues
in the Ayers case” (Crawford, 2015, para. 3). As plaintiffs fought for higher funding for
HBCUs, Crawford recalled his side yielding a little as possible. The fight created such
mistrust and ill will that every decision bogged down in to a quagmire and drained and
wasted resources. Crawford stated that Ole Miss chancellor Robert Khayat and
Mississippi State President Mack Potera urged the IHL Board to quit fighting because
both universities were pursuing Phi Beta Kappa status because it hurt the national
reputation of all the state universities (Crawford, 2015). This is reminiscent of the
argument that Brown I was decided not because it was morally the right thing to do, but
to announce to Europe that the United States no longer segregates its citizens according
to race. The case was not settled as Muhammad (2009) suggested due to the weariness of
the parties, the cost of further delaying any remedy, and the lack of public attention paid
to higher education. Crawford as a member on the College Board stated that the move
toward, not because it was morally the right thing to do, but because Ole Miss and
Mississippi State needed the College Board to stop fighting because hurt their chances of
gaining Phi Beta Kappa status (Crawford, 2015).
Traps in higher education policy. Isaac at Jackson State University and Vincent at Mississippi Valley State University pointed out policy traps that could be potentially harmful to HBCUs. Their collective experiences in higher education have made them aware of the traps that are potentially harmful to HBCUs. For Isaac, the comfortable jobs and working conditions of African Americans in central Mississippi that lulls them to sleep to the impending threats against HBCUs. African Americans in central Mississippi are comfortable in their station in life because they have nice paying jobs. In order to keep them alert, Jackson State University officials must keep its employees aware of impending threats. When a situation makes it to crisis level, it is usually too late to do something meaningful about it that could have prevented it from happening.

Vincent and Isaac mentioned some threats to HBCUs. Vincent mentioned the Accountability Measures that states that academic programs will no longer exist a university if a certain percentage of people must graduate from a program per year. Vincent saw the new general studies as such a Trojan horse. Students who have problems graduating will flock to general studies, leave other programs without the requisite number of graduates and places those programs in danger of being removed by the College Board. The irony is state officials attempted to reduce Mississippi Valley State University from 31 degree programs in 1984 to one program in general studies as a pretext to closure. According to Vincent, in every gift there is a trap so HBCU administrators must be vigilant. Similarly, this is already happening in teacher education. Students have circumvented the teacher education program because of the obstacle of passing the Praxis exam by graduating in mathematics or music instead of mathematics education or music education because Mississippi school boards will grant college
graduates an emergency license to teach while they pass the test within 3 years. Now the teacher education is in trouble at Mississippi Valley State University. For Isaac, state policies that can reduce state appropriations are the focus for which he is attentive and attuned. If the state refuses to pay for Fs or Incompletes per good public policy, someone has to keep track of the number of Incompletes professors give students. If not, the budget for the institution will go down and no one will know why. This strategic use of the institutional research arm can be used to drive decision making and keep track of issues that affect the revenue the institutions receives.

In summary, the location and isolation of Mississippi Valley State University and Alcorn State University respectively face challenges particularly because they are in rural areas with a lack of industry, decreasing populations and failing school districts where the pool of potential students has also decreased. Second, recruiting and retaining faculty is difficult for Mississippi Valley State University and Alcorn State University because of both their location and their historically low faculty salaries. These institutions are unable to attract and keep quality talent because they are lured away from the university with more lucrative offers. Third, the institutional cultures of Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University have been difficult to change because the institutions have hired graduates and family members who may not be qualified for the position in which they were hired and believe their job is secure because “no one is let go” was ingrained in the culture of its employees who are entrenched in doing things the same way because they have not been at other institutions where people do things differently. Fourth, exhibiting Southern hospitality as a prerequisite to getting to the business as the norm and “outsiders” having to find other avenues to get things done can be problematic.
for HBCU administrators. It reflects back to this history of the state championing against Northern values and upholding Southern values.

When considering all the HBCUs collectively, each institution has challenges regarding facilities. In growth mode, Jackson State University needs more dormitory space for its students. The situation is so urgent that Jackson State University has purchased an apartment complex in addition to the hotel the university already owns and are seeking to build another residence hall (Pettus, 2015). Jackson State University and is looking to build a multipurpose domed stadium. Alcorn State University in its low-debt model has privately financed student housing on the private market, but still has a need to make other facilities ADA compatible and athletic facilities conform to Title IX for women’s sports. Mississippi Valley State University is its set sail model is correcting the course and finding funds to renovate offline dormitory housing. Second, there are traps in public higher education policy that can adversely affect academic programs and revenue at HBCUs, particularly at universities with smaller student populations. Employees at HBCUs must leave their place of comfort and move to a posture of vigilance regarding the factors that can affect HBCUs. Third, the public stigma of HBCUs began when state officials founded Alcorn University in 1871 for Negro youth. The roots of this stigma go back to slavery when Black people were enslaved by White plantation owners. The institutions attended by Blacks are separate but definitely not equal and have receive the same stigma as Black slaves did prior to emancipation. The perception of HBCU administrators is that the majority population does not want them to grow, HBCUs are inferior to PWIs, HBCUs mismanage funds, HBCUs are used to doing more with less, HBCUs are no longer needed and the students at HBCUs are just like students at all other
college campuses. Finally, HBCU administrators had a lot to say about the Ayers settlement.

**The Ayers Settlement**

The Ayers settlement provided Mississippi HBCUs with funding for academic programs, capital projects, faculty salaries, operating budgets, a public and private endowment, and other-race scholarships meant to diversity the institution. Bill Crawford, a member of the IHL Board contends that after listening to chancellor Khayat at Ole Miss and president Potera at Mississippi State, IHL Board members conceded fighting and began to work toward a solution that resulted in a “win-win” for both sides. Crawford continued:

Despite strong arguments that we would eventually “win” in court, the board listened to our two exceptional leaders, With help from state elected officials, we moved to find a “win-win” settlement, one that would not harm any university but provides new funding, programs, facilities and desegregation opportunities for Alcorn, Jackson State, and Mississippi Valley. (Crawford, 2015, para. 6)

However, HBCU administrators do not see the settlement as a “win-win.” The issues HBCU administrators have with the Ayers case include the historical institutional differences and designations, the diversity measure and the limited funds provided by the settlement.

**Institutional difference according to race.** Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University officials took issue with the Ayers case regarding the identification of HBCUs. Officials at both institutions pointed out that every higher education institution in Mississippi was created as a racial institution. Further, racial
designations were reified by state law saying that citizens which institutions they could attend before *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) was decided. Black students could only attend Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University while Whites could only attend Delta State University, Mississippi State University, Mississippi University for Women, The University of Mississippi, and The University of Southern Mississippi. Before desegregation, out-of-state scholarships were provided by the state for African American students who chose to attend graduate school because legislative statute prevented them from attending PWIs in the State of Mississippi (Sansing, 1990; Williams, 2005). Students of history know that “separate but equal” meant the facilities for African American were never equal to the facilities of Caucasian Americans.

Regarding the considered merger of Mississippi Valley State University, Vincent at Mississippi Valley State University confronted the notion that HBCUs are no longer needed. Vincent said that the defendants or IHL state lawyers made it seem as if Mississippi Valley State University had control of its racial identity when it did not. He mentioned that Mississippi Valley State University was founded during segregation by a legislature that was entirely White. All higher education institutions were created according to race. Another argument attorneys for the defense posited was that Mississippi Valley State University was founded to prevent the integration of Delta State University. Integration of Delta State University was never considered when state officials began talking about founding a Black higher education institution in the Mississippi Delta in 1936. The issue was what to do with this population of Black people when they no longer need them to work in the cotton fields. When integration did finally
occur at The University of Mississippi in 1962, a riot occurred the night before federal troops escorted James Meredith to the campus.

**Diversity measure.** When the judge and court officials made the determination that HBCUs were being sued because the IHL had been sued, it made any potential settlement and argument on behalf of HBCUs very difficult. The arguments had to address the system as a whole and not the egregious acts of the state against HBCUs over time. In a supposed attempt to redress and correct historic wrongs, the focus of the case was not on making HBCUs equal to PWIs, the onus was on HBCUs to prove they deserved the funds that should have been rightfully theirs because of the century or decades of discrimination. According to Aaron, the *Ayers* case began about equity and ended up being about diversity.

The state determined that HBCUs were not diverse enough. Remember, the state legislatively created a system of higher education according to race. The state system of higher education did not become integrated until 1962 and now HBCUs in Mississippi are at fault for not having enough other-race students. The provision required HBCUs in Mississippi to enroll other-race students at a threshold of 10% for three consecutive years in order to gain control of the endowment. Alcorn State University was the first and only institution to achieve this diversity metric via its nursing program, its program for international students and athletics. Administrators at Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University both stated that controlling their portion of the endowment is not a compelling reason to reach the 10% other-race enrollment threshold. The private endowment is not fully funded. It does not mean that the HBCUs will not get
the money, it only means they have to ask the College Board for permission to spend the
interest on the endowment.

Table 26 displays the total unduplicated headcount enrollment by ethnicity and
gender for Alcorn State University from Fall 2008 to Fall 2014. While this exercise is
moot because Alcorn State University has achieved the 10% other-race enrollment
threshold for three consecutive years, Table 26 shows the percentage of other-race
students had decreased from 8.7% in Fall 2008 to 5.3% in Fall 2014. The White
enrollment percentages have steadily decreased while the other-race enrolment has
remained steady and the total enrollment has been decreasing since Fall 2011.

Table 26

*Alcorn State University, Total Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment by Ethnicity*  
(percentages in parentheses), Fall 2008 to Fall 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>3,252</td>
<td>238 (7.3)</td>
<td>2,967 (91.2)</td>
<td>47 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>3,334</td>
<td>214 (6.4)</td>
<td>3,066 (92.0)</td>
<td>54 (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>3,682</td>
<td>240 (6.5)</td>
<td>3,378 (91.7)</td>
<td>64 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>4,018</td>
<td>212 (5.3)</td>
<td>3,741 (93.1)</td>
<td>65 (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>3,950</td>
<td>193 (4.9)</td>
<td>3,694 (93.5)</td>
<td>63 (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>3,848</td>
<td>173 (4.5)</td>
<td>3,621 (94.1)</td>
<td>54 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>3,636</td>
<td>132 (3.6)</td>
<td>3,445 (94.7)</td>
<td>62 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008a, 2009a, 2010a, 2011a, 2012a, 2013d, 2014b)

Table 27 shows the total unduplicated head count enrollment for Jackson state
University by ethnicity and gender. Looking at Table 27, the total population has
increased as well as the percentage of White and other-race students. Jackson State
University administrators attributed these increased numbers of other-race students by
providing access to a higher education, namely their JSU-Madison location. During the
Fall 2014, Jackson State University was only one-tenth percent away from having its first year of 10% other-race enrollment.

Table 27

*Jackson State University, Total Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment by Ethnicity (percentages in parentheses), Fall 2008 to Fall 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White (percent)</th>
<th>Black (percent)</th>
<th>Other (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>8,374</td>
<td>497 (5.9)</td>
<td>7,890 (93.3)</td>
<td>68 (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>8,783</td>
<td>530 (6.0)</td>
<td>8,143 (92.7)</td>
<td>110 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>8,687</td>
<td>552 (6.4)</td>
<td>8,001 (92.1)</td>
<td>134 (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>8,903</td>
<td>575 (6.5)</td>
<td>8,117 (91.2)</td>
<td>211 (2.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>8,819</td>
<td>606 (6.9)</td>
<td>7,970 (90.4)</td>
<td>243 (2.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>9,134</td>
<td>588 (6.4)</td>
<td>8,239 (90.2)</td>
<td>307 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>9,508</td>
<td>623 (6.6)</td>
<td>8,566 (90.1)</td>
<td>319 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008a, 2009a, 2010a, 2011a, 2012a, 2013d, 2014b)

Table 28 shows the total unduplicated enrollment for Mississippi Valley State University by ethnicity and gender. In addition to declining enrollment, the percent of White enrollment remains in the 3% range while the overall numbers are decreasing. The percent of other-race students has increased from Fall 2008 to 2013 but fell 2% in Fall 2014. The table also shows that Mississippi Valley State University did achieve 10% other-race enrollment in Fall 2013 but it was not maintained in Fall 2014.
Table 28

*Mississippi Valley State University, Total Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment by Ethnicity and Gender (percentages in parenthesis), Fall 2008 to Fall 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White (percent)</th>
<th>Black (percent)</th>
<th>Other (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>2,929</td>
<td>107 (3.7)</td>
<td>2,761 (94.2)</td>
<td>61 (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>110 (3.9)</td>
<td>2,659 (93.3)</td>
<td>81 (2.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>2,636</td>
<td>98 (3.7)</td>
<td>2,435 (92.4)</td>
<td>103 (3.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>2,452</td>
<td>88 (3.6)</td>
<td>2,225 (90.7)</td>
<td>139 (5.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>2,479</td>
<td>84 (3.4)</td>
<td>2,233 (90.1)</td>
<td>162 (6.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>75 (3.4)</td>
<td>1,965 (89.2)</td>
<td>163 (7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>2,221</td>
<td>70 (3.2)</td>
<td>2,032 (91.5)</td>
<td>119 (5.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mississippi Board of Trustees (2008a, 2009a, 2010a, 2011a, 2012a, 2013d, 2014b)

**Limited and inconsistent funding.** HBCU administrators had a number of issues regarding the settlement. The purpose behind the funding was that HBCUs were given these programs to get them up and running with students so that the program can sustain itself. When the *Ayers* funds ends, the funding will no longer be needed because the programs will sustain themselves. HBCUs officials took issue with other-race scholarships, the inconsistent funding and the removal of funds that did not go far enough to remedy decades and a century of discrimination by the state toward HBCUs.

A substantial amount of the funds was set aside to recruit other-race students to HBCUs. Caucasian students had to meet the same requirements as African American students in order to receive the scholarships. No qualified White students were denied admissions to HBCUs after the state and College Board lifted the restriction limiting certain races of students to certain institutions. The announcement of the $5 million for other-race scholarships did not make mention of the fact that HBCUs could only use the interest from the $5 million on other-race scholarships. White students believed they were special and privileged because they were receiving these funds and Black students...
felt that they should have access to the funds because they really wanted to attend HBCUs. To make sure that the funds were intended for Caucasian students, the courts instructed HBCUs to include that any “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies” could not access to these Ayers funds. This includes people of African descent from other countries who do not consider themselves African American. This phase of the settlement is problematic for HBCUs and administrators because a substantial amount of the funds do not benefit the HBCUs, but directly benefit and subsidize White students who attend HBCUs. White students received a major benefit of the Ayers settlement because the court declared that HBCUs were not diverse and needed more other-race students. Again, the purpose of the lawsuit filed about equity became about diversity during the settlement.

HBCU administrators have a number of issues with the settlement. Usually, programs are supported over a number of years. This gives the program a chance to build up and to gain some momentum because they receive this support over time. This has not happened with the Ayers programs HBCUs gained under the settlement. The programs are supported for a limited number of years. The programs have not yielded the enrollment to sustain the program by the end of the settlement. Just as the programs are gaining traction, the funds are diminishing and will soon be extinct. Most administrators agreed that the funding schedule is inconsistent due to periodic decreases in funding. As a result, HBCUs will not only miss the funding but will have to come up with ways to make up for these missing funds.

Another issue is HBCUs will have to make up for the loss of appropriations when the state fulfills its obligation to the desegregation lawsuit. First, faculty salaries tied to
the academic programs are also a part of the Ayers funds. Faculty salaries are recurring expenses. Daniel at Mississippi Valley State University asked, “How can you place salaries on something that is going to go away?” Second, the money that supports the academic programs and operational budgets is tied to the funding. The question for HBCUs becomes, “Will be able to keep these programs and services at the same level once the funds are moved or will we have to reduce the program, merge it with another program or delete the program altogether?” This is not the likely scenario HBCU administrators thought they would have to consider when these programs were approved by the settlement. Regarding academic program offerings, it is very likely that in the worst case scenario HBCUs may end up with the same number of programs after the Ayers settlement as they had before the settlement if the funds taken away as the result of the settlement cannot be replaced.

Regarding capital projects, all administrators who were familiar with the settlement agreed that the capital projects did not nearly go far enough to erase the century or decades of injustice the HBCUs experienced over time. In the case of Mississippi Valley State University, a lot of the Ayers capital funds went to rebuild infrastructure underground because the sewage plant needed to be rebuilt. While some buildings were built to benefit academic programs, some of the programs and improvements were probably on IHL’s to do list that were added to Ayers capital funding projects.

Chapter Summary

In summary, student centeredness is a goal of Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. Each institution is aware of
their clientele, their academic preparation, and the financial woes of their predominantly African American students. Regarding revenue, each university is different and situated to take or not take advantage of different revenue streams. Jackson State University is enjoying record enrollments while Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University are having struggles increasing its enrollment. With appropriations remaining a proportion of the operating budget, Jackson State University as a research institution is positioned to benefit from revenue that comes from research activity. Alcorn State University can benefit to a lesser degree because it is a land grant institution, but Mississippi Valley State University has very little capacity to benefit from research activity because of its lack of programs in STEM areas. Next, there are some challenges that are unique to two institutions. The location and isolation of rural institutions cause unique challenges for Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University regarding recruiting faculty and students, decreasing population in the regions and lack of interaction with corporations and industry. Administrators at the same institutions also admitted to dealing with the label of being a “northerner” or an “outsider” because collegial conversations must take before taking care of business. Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University have some problems recruiting faculty because of their historically low faculty salaries. Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University has the additional burden of attempting to change the institutional culture with people who are graduates of the institution who are stuck in tradition and are resistant to change. All three HBCUs must overcome the majority population’s stigma of HBCUs, the need for better, more and new facilities, and the traps in state higher education policy that affect the long-term viability of academic programs and short-term
viability of reduced revenue. Finally, HBCU administrators take issue with the Ayers case in that institutional difference according to race was held against HBCU administrators when they were not responsible for creating the system that resulted in the difference between the institutions. Diversity measures should not be in place in order to control the endowment because the *de jure* system of higher education made a difference between institutions who served different races and funded them accordingly. HBCUs should not have the additional burden to meeting a diversity measure to prove they deserve to be in control of the funds. Additionally, the limited funds received by HBCUs were not consistent due to the step downs included in the settlement schedule. A majority of the funds were used for other-race scholarships to attract students who were “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies” to attend HBCUs. HBCU officials will have to find funds to replace the Ayers funds that support faculty salaries, operating budgets and academic programs once the state has satisfied its obligation. Chapter 8 will answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1 and offer a discussion on research findings, implications for research findings with literature review and conceptual framework, recommendations for future research and conclusions for the research study.
Discussion, Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion

Now the biggest benefit of the Ayers case up until now is that it quieted the wolf that was at the door. Like I say, that wolf isn’t dead now. He’ll lay down for a while and will try to come back. The wolf doesn’t leave. He lies down a little bit. He’ll stop howling at the door and go over there and lie down, but he’s still watching. And he’ll come back and that’s what we say when we say, “The wolf is just sleeping. He isn’t gone.”

Vincent, an administrator at Mississippi Valley State University, used the metaphor of a wolf to demonstrate the external threats to HBCUs and Mississippi Valley State University. The wolf vigorously attacked Mississippi Valley State University when it attempted to reduce its 31 programs to one general studies program, to close Mississippi Valley State University via the Mississippi Legislature, and to merge Mississippi Valley State University with Delta State University during the Ayers case. The wolf, external forces that wants to see the demise of Mississippi Valley State University, is asleep but the wolf is not gone. These are the traps that Aaron at Jackson State University and Vincent at Mississippi Valley State University spoke to that threaten the viability of HBCUs. According to Vincent, employees who are comfortable with their lives must experience a little discomfort so they can attend to the external threats that seek to stifle the growth of HBCUs and ultimately lead them to their demise. It seems that no other types of institutions have to justify their importance and need for survival more than HBCUs. Chapter 8 will answer the research questions and offer implications for further study. Recommendations for further study will be followed by the conclusion.
that will summarize the researcher’s views on the Ayers desegregation case and settlement.

Discussion

The tenets of experiential knowledge, multidisciplinary analysis and social justice were three guiding components of the Critical Race Theory. First, Critical Race Theory utilizes storytelling to analyze myths, presuppositions and popular wisdom or popular culture metanarratives that subjugates African Americans and minorities (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Positionality becomes very important because perspective informs the way people interpret and analyze data and legitimizes the histories and experiences of minority people with oppression (Taylor, 2009). Most college administrator interviewed for this research study attended a PWI for graduate study. Some administrators have worked at PWIs and most attended an HBCU as an undergraduate. Because these individuals have experiences attending and/or working at HBCUs and PWIs, the college administrators who work at HBCUs in Mississippi are uniquely positioned to analyze and critique the differences between HBCUs and PWIs in Mississippi as well as the Ayers case and the Ayers settlement. A few of the administrators were either personally experienced and lived through the court hearings and implemented the policies that came forth from the settlement. Speaking from their educational background and experience, participants gave narrative accounts using stories, parables and metaphors to explain how classism and racism influenced the majority population’s view of their respective university, the Ayers settlement and higher education. The participants used counternarratives to highlight discrimination, offer a different interpretation of a policy, perspective and stereotypes of people of color, redirect the dominant gaze to another
point of view, refute claims of colorblindness and challenge and expose the social
constructions of race (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Harper et al., 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2009;
Misawa, 2010; Parker & Villalpando, 2007; Taylor, 2009). Second, Critical race theorists
use multiple positions or points of view to analyze the types of oppression people of color
experience. This research study examined the history of higher education in Mississippi,
relationship between higher education and the law, tenets of Critical Race Theory,
research in sociology to explain human behavior, relationships and institutions, and
higher education finance to examine higher education funding. Third, the social justice
component of Critical Race Theory seeks to systematic change and social justice of
issues rooted in oppression, power and privilege (Lechuga et al., 2009). Not only do
critical race theorists defend principles of social justice, but they teach others to recognize
inequality on individual, institutional, and systemic levels (Mayhew & Fernández, 2007).
Social justice for HBCU administrators would equate to a funding formula that allows
HBCUs to get the funds and support it needs for infrastructure improvement, academic
programs and modern facilities to make them equal PWIs in the state of Mississippi. The
equality the plaintiffs sought when the lawsuit was filed is the same equity HBCUs
administrators seek. Three research questions guided this study. The first question dealt
with the effect of higher education history on the way HBCUs currently operate. The
second question sought to determine the effect of the Ayers case on HBCUs in
Mississippi. The third question looked for reasons why certain institutions were able to
achieve other race enrollment of 10% for three consecutive years and why other
institutions were not able to achieve the same diversity metric set forth by the Ayers
settlement. The final three components of Critical Race Theory—permanent racism
challenge to mainstream ideologies and conventional norms, and contextual and
historical analysis of law—will be used to analyze the three research questions.

**Research question 1.** How has the history of higher education affected the way
HBCUs operate today? The first tenet of Critical Race theory states that racism is so
embedded in the economic, social, political, legal, and education structures of society that
it is difficult to eliminate because it is so hard to recognize. The Whites who benefit from
the embedded system of racism do not comprehend their privilege and the disadvantage
of non-Whites (Delgado, 1995; Hiraldo, 2010). It is not surprising that racism is a
prominent part of Mississippi’s history. Former African slaves worked on cotton
plantations owned by Whites. Slavery was the economic engine of the South that greatly
benefitted Whites. Slaves did not participate in the political process because they the
property of Whites. White men enjoyed social and political privilege because they were
in charge of government and were the only citizens allowed to participate in the
democratic process. In 1860, the state system of elementary and secondary education
were segregated by race. In 1871, the higher education system became segregated with
Alcorn University was founded for Negro youth. Blacks were able to participate in the
political process briefly during a period known as Reconstruction, but after this period,
the U.S. Supreme Court rolled back provisions of Civils Rights acts passed by Congress
and Jim Crow legally ended Black participation in the legal process. For a period of
nearly 100 years, Whites were in charge of the economic, social, political, legal, and
education system of the entire state of Mississippi. Known as the “belly of the beast”
during segregation, White Mississippians violently and vehemently opposed the Civil
Rights movement and began their own countermovement to protect their southern way of
life. During this period, Blacks were intimidated with the burning of building and crosses, the lynching of Black males, and the murder of Blacks and Whites who advocated for the Civil Rights of African Americans. The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission and the Citizens Council were started by Whites in the state to monitor the activities of African Americans with a series of Black informants.

Racism as a part of Mississippi history continues to exist toward the institutions. After Reconstruction, the Mississippi Legislature stripped Alcorn University of its university status, part of its land grant funding and all its scholarships and gave it land, the mission to teach practical working skills, agriculture and vocational education and the name Alcorn A & M College. Newly established Mississippi A & M College, now Mississippi State University, became the preferred land grant institution even though Alcorn was established first. Mississippi received funds from the Morrill Act because it founded a separate higher education institution for Blacks, but the distribution of the funding was not equal. This practice of minimally funding or underfunding HBCUs continued through the state’s acquisition of Jackson State in 1940 to the founding of Mississippi Valley State University in 1950 and probably until the filing of the Ayers lawsuit in 1975. The same attitudes that subjugated Blacks throughout Mississippi history were transferred to African American institutions, like schools and churches.

The history of higher education in Mississippi is related to the attitude White Mississippians through history. The segregated society of Mississippi resulted in segregated institutions according to race from birth to death. It is not a stretch to the imagination that the State of Mississippi founded institutions for the purpose of education specific races of people. Alcorn University and Mississippi Vocational College were
founded for Black youth. Jackson College that began as Natchez Seminary to train Black preachers was designated for Black youth when the state assumed control in 1940. Only the Industrial Institute and College, now Mississippi University for Women, was designated for a specific gender and race, White women. All the other schools The University of Mississippi, Mississippi A & M College, Mississippi Normal College now The University of Southern Mississippi, and Delta State Teachers College were established for White youth. State officials disregarded higher education reports that suggested that Mississippi limit the number of higher education institutions in the state. Other studies also suggested that the Board of Trustees exercise vigilance in the expansion of graduate programs. That also did not occur.

Racism is based on a social construct as the result of social modes of interaction and racial formation through prejudices that are reified in law resulting in the prevailing metanarrative regarding truth and reality that is suppressed and marginalizes other forms of knowledge (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, Ladson-Billings, 2003; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Morris, 2007). Revisionist history is where critical race theorists challenge the historical record and replace it with interpretation that more accurately reflects the cultural interpretation and experiences of minorities. HBCU administrators challenged the majority interpretation that Mississippi public HBCUs were established by Blacks people. With the exception of Jackson State University which started as a private institution, Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University were both started by the an entirely White legislature for the purpose of educating Negro youth. Not only that, but the Mississippi Legislature by statue told citizens that certain higher education institutions were only to be attended by citizens of a particular race. Another
argument that surfaced was that Mississippi Valley State University was established to prevent the integration of Delta State University. This is also not true because segregation was still in full effect when the state statute founded Mississippi Vocational College in 1946. Whites were not concerned about Blacks integrating Delta State University. Mississippi Valley State University was founded because state officials were concerned about the future of Blacks in an economy that would soon no longer need their manual labor and because there was no higher education institution in the part of the state where 50% of the Black population resided according to Sansing (1990).

Blacks are finally getting to enjoy rights that Whites have enjoyed for centuries (Ladson-Billings, 2009). The 1963 gubernatorial election was the last election where the Mississippi electorate was entirely White. All elected officials were White in all parts of the executive, legislative and judicial branches, including law enforcement. Since 1789, White men possessed an advantage by participating in the Mississippi political process when Mississippi became a territory. Blacks were only able to participate in the political process and benefit from the rights guaranteed by the constitution when the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed.

Since 1944, Mississippi public universities were governed by a constitutional Board of Trustees. Prior to this, all boards were consolidated under a single board except Delta State Teachers College and Mississippi Normal College in 1912. Prior to that, every college has its own trustee board. The single board ended Black trusteeship at Alcorn A & M College. The board makes all decisions regarding higher education policy as well as hires college presidents. The board does not fund higher education. The eight college presidents submit a budget to the Board of Trustees. The commissioner compiles
each request and submits it to the state legislature. The state legislature in turn decides how much it will fund higher education in Mississippi. While no Blacks were allowed to vote and did not exercise their constitutional rights until 1964, White men made all decisions regarding the funding of higher education. Very little regard was given to the state of the education of Negro citizens until the Gibson study in 1946.

Higher education history affects the way HBCUs in Mississippi operate today because the institutions are still segregated. Even today, the administration at HBCUs is segregated and lead by mostly African American men. In addition, the student body at Mississippi HBCUs is segregated. While HBCUs are making gains toward inclusion and diversifying the student population, Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University hover around 9% and 8% respectively and Alcorn achieved 5% other-race enrollment as of Fall 2014. The reason this has occurred is not so much because of Mississippi higher education history, but the history of Mississippi. The racism engrained in the political process, social institutions, education systems, legal statues and economic systems is the result. Until James Meredith integrated The University of Mississippi in 1962, White students attended PWIs and Black students attended HBCUs. This created a stigma that HBCUS were inferior to PWIs which was true because the White legislators during the time fully supported their alma maters and institutions in their region of the state and minimally funded HBCUs. Each institution has a set of stigmas attached to it by the majority population that were discussed in their individual university chapters and the cross-case analysis. Even now, there are buildings on HBCUs campuses namely all of the student unions that are out-of-date and have outlived their usefulness because of the inadequate funding they received decades ago. In the history of higher education in
Mississippi, HBCUs have operated on “not enough” in terms of funding and support from the state. Now with state budgets tightening even more, state appropriations are 7% lower in 2013 than what there were in 2000 (Hamilton, 2014). Mississippi HBCUs must find revenue to support their institutional mission and vision as they continue to offer access to higher education to underprepared and underprivileged African American students.

Normally, any standard account includes the experiences of the majority population that are usually accepted at face value should be scrutinized and reinterpreted to challenge the elimination of racism the colorblindness to race and attribute racism to systems and fight other forms of injustice and oppression according to critical race theorists. Racism and classism are the two types of oppression in the Mississippi higher education system that negatively affects HBCUs. Higher education institutions founded by the State of Mississippi beginning with The University of Mississippi were established with a racial designation in mind. The segregated way of life prevented Whites and Blacks from attending the same schools and reinforced classism. In Mississippi society, influential and wealthy Whites congregate and attend premier White institutions while less wealthy and less influential people are barred from attending because of their race and lack of wealth and influence. In a closed society where Blacks were not allowed to participate, Whites who congregated at premier White institutions advocated for these institutions from their positions as governor, speaker of the house, executive director of higher learning, and state legislators. In this way, wealthy and influential people systematically oppressed less wealthy and influential people because they used the higher education system to limit the mission, funding, and curriculum at HBCUs.
Additionally, the funding formula that appears to be colorblind and neutral includes funds for a base level of operational support. After that, 90% of the remaining funds are determined by weights for credit hour completion with more weights for graduate courses, technical courses, and STEM courses. The final 10% will be based on Board priorities which includes attainment outcomes for moving low achieving students to college-level course work, intermediate outcomes for students who meet 30 and 60 credit-hour thresholds, research activity for research and urban universities, the success of public and K-12 education, and productivity outcomes of graduating graduate and undergraduate students. HBCU administrators at Mississippi Valley State University and Alcorn State University are concerned about the new funding formula because it will not allow the institutions to get the funds they need. First, the weights for credit hour completion are weighted heavier toward technical and STEM programs and more toward graduate programs. Mississippi Valley State University founded as a teacher education and vocational college, do not offer many courses in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Second, Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University as regional universities would receive no incentive for increasing research activity like the regional universities and Jackson State, the state’s urban university. Besides, Mississippi Valley State University does not have the facilities to support research activity. Third, tying university funding to the success or lack of success of the public school system where the institution is seated is inherently unfair. Both Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University are located in counties where poverty and employment is an issue and the local school districts are not doing well. While the funding formula seems to be colorblind and neutral, the formula benefits research
universities who have graduate programs in technical and STEM fields. Regional institutions will have a difficult time receiving funding outside of the allocation for operational support.

**Research question 2.** How does the *Ayers* case affect HBCUs today? Interest convergence based on Marxist history states that the interest of Blacks regarding equality will not occur unless it converges with the interest of powerful Whites (Crotty, 1998; Taylor, 2009). The principle of interest convergence is evident in the *Ayers* settlement. The settlement that is supposed to benefit Mississippi HBCUs only benefitted them to a degree. More than 46% of the settlement or $248 million of the funds from the settlement were to be used for other-race scholarships to attract White students to HBCUs (Muhammad, 2009). Funds that were to bring HBCUs on an equal playing field with PWIs were used to provide scholarships to other-race students. When HBCUs attempted to administer scholarships to students from the Caribbean and African countries, the court further specified that the funds could not be given to “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies.” Whites were the primary beneficiaries of the other-race scholarship funds that could not be accessed by any person of African descent. The state also benefitted from the settlement. By assuming that new and enhanced academic programs would attract other-race students, state officials reduced the amounts of money HBCUs would receive over time absolving them of the responsibility to support the newer and enhanced programs when older academic programs at PWIs receive continual support from the state. The funding for academic programs, operational budgets and faculty salaries provided by the settlement are only temporary and will be reduced over time until the funds are depleted. The interest of the HBCUs to receive the funds and the
interest of Whites to receive some benefit from the settlement resulted in the converging
of interests. No African American student or descendant of Africa could receive the
scholarship funds when they are most in need of financial assistance. The education of
White students was subsidized with a scholarship and a stipend to attend an HBCU.

Another issue was the endowment HBCUs were to receive because of the
settlement. The state would retain control of the endowment until HBCUs achieved a
certain level of diversity for three consecutive years. If each HBCU enrolled and retained
10% other-race students for three consecutive years, then each university would be able
to control the endowment, but the funds for the private endowment have not been raised.
HBCUS officials believe they should not have to prove they deserve to control the
endowment by achieving a diversity measure because they were discriminated against.
The measure penalizes HBCUs for something over which they have no control. It is the
attitude and stigma of the majority population against African Americans and African
American institutions and the political system from the 1789 that caused and continues to
perpetuate the myths about HBCUs. Whites were told they could not attend HBCUs for
centuries and Blacks were told they could not attend PWIs for a century. Now it is the
fault of HBCUs that they do not have enough White students when the system prevented
students from the opposite race them from attending higher education institutions for over
100 years. The family legacies of White students are at PWIs in the state. HBCUs have
turned to athletics and international studies programs and memorandums of
understanding with PWIs and international universities to boost their other-race student
enrollment numbers. Delayed by the settlement was turning over the Ayers endowment to
HBCUs to manage themselves until they proved they deserved the funds by achieving an other-race enrollment quota of 10% for three consecutive years.

HBCU officials at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University are worried about the implication of what will happen once funding dissipates. Ayers funds provided support for academic programs, faculty salaries and operating budget. The intent was for the programs to be up and running and filled with students so that the programs can sustain themselves by the time the funding schedule ended. The funding schedule was problematic because the funding was inconsistent with the step downs. Academic programs did not have enough time to generate momentum because periodically the funding decreased and more and more of the budget was subsumed into each university budget. Administrators could not understand how a settlement would place recurring expenses like funds that support programs, salaries and operating budgets on funds that were temporary and would diminished over time.

In summary, the only permanent thing the Ayers settlement provided for HBCUs were infrastructure and capital projects that renovated or built new facilities. Everything else, the funds to support academic programs and other-race scholarships are temporary. The endowment is delayed because private funds have not been raised and HBCUs meet a diversity metric for three years in order to control the endowment.

**Research question 3.** What strategies have HBCUs employed to achieve the student diversity measure set forth by the Ayers settlement as a condition for controlling the endowment? Of the three Mississippi HBCUs, only Alcorn State University has achieved the diversity mandate to control its portion of the endowment. According to
Alcorn State University officials, a number of factors enabled Alcorn State University to achieve 10% other-race enrollment for three consecutive years. First, academic programs of global demand attract students from all races. The nursing program on the ASU-Natchez campus, located in an area where Caucasians work and live, enrolled large numbers of other-race students. Second, athletics programs attracted other-race students to play nonrevenue sports, like baseball, tennis, and soccer. Third, the Ayers case pushed Alcorn State University further into the international student market. International students were recruited to play nonrevenue sports at Alcorn State University, but college administrators also had a number of memoranda of understanding with international universities to enroll other-race students. Fourth, other-race scholarships and stipends helped to attract other-race students to the academic programs Alcorn State University offered on its Natchez campus.

Jackson State University has not achieved the other-race diversity metric. Administrators at Jackson State University cannot answer with certainty why the diversity measure has not been reached because they were not employed at the university under the previous administration. Jackson State University is making progress in that area and as a result, the percentages of other-race students keep growing with the student population. Two administrators speculated that during the previous administration, Jackson State University did not have an aggressive recruiting strategy. Under this administration, the enrollment management team is targeting other-race students in its recruitment strategy. It is believed that the institution will break the 10% diversity metric by Fall 2015.
Mississippi Valley State University administrators did not offer a reason why they did not reach the enrollment goal, but the university has recruited other-race students and international students to play nonrevenue sports such as tennis and soccer like Alcorn State University. While the other-race enrollment numbers have increased, Mississippi Valley State University did achieve 10% minority enrollment Fall 2013 but it fell below 10% in Fall 2014. A new administrator believes the college will achieve the threshold. Another administrator said that the university probably will not reach that threshold. A third administrator agreed with the second. The institution has been trying to achieve that threshold since 2000. Unless something changes, it probably will not occur.

**Critical Race Theory Analysis**

First, Critical Race Theory is interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary in its approach. When examining the issues surrounding the Ayers case and settlement, I examined the history of Mississippi higher education to examine the circumstances surrounding the founding of all eight public higher education institutions, particularly HBCUs. The field of sociology helped me to understand the origins of racism and oppression. By looking to politics, one is able to ascertain that all governmental systems and law enforcement agencies were exclusively White and governed by White males from the origin of the Mississippi Territory. Blacks did not enjoy the right to vote and serve on juries until the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I looked to the law and examined the how the U.S. Constitution counted African slaves, constitutional amendments abolished slavery and defined citizenship, federal court cases and congressional acts reinforced racism and separation of the races, then abolished the statute, then rolled back affirmative action protections. Court cases that challenged higher education system in states that practiced *de jure* segregation.
and settlements were also examined. Business and finance were examined to examine state appropriations, funding formulas and the percentage of Pell grant recipient at HBCUs. By looking at the field of education, I looked at enrollment numbers, academic preparation of students, retention numbers. The fields of history, politics, law, business, finance and education were all examined in this study—quite a multidisciplinary approach.

Second, racism is a normal fact of life in the U.S. society. It is engrained, entrenched and enmeshed in the fabric of society that is appears normal and is difficult to address. According to Delgado (1995), it refers to the assumptions of White superiority engrained in political, legal, and educational structures. Crawford (2015) described the mentality of Mississippians as schizophrenic with a lingering love to hate, neighborliness and hate side by side, sandbox mentality where people dig in to guard and protect what is theirs. This is the mentality that has allowed Whites to own slaves that powered the economic engine of the South, subjugated them with Jim Crow laws, intimidated them with vigilante groups that terrorized Black citizens, established two systems of education both K-12 and higher education. It is the hate and sandbox mentality Crawford mentioned that resulted in White men creating a dual society where being White was a privilege and being Black was an anathema. It is the historic attitude of schizophrenic Mississippians that also affects the way people in the majority culture of Mississippi view HBCUs.

Third, the historical account of the majority population must be scrutinized and reinterpreted and not accepted as standard. A reading of the historical account shows that the value of African slaves and Black citizens were of lesser value than White citizens. African slaves were sold at auction blocks for a price and considered slavery and counted
as three-fifths a White person in Southern states for the purpose of taxation and representation. The legal precedent “separate but equal” never resulted in equal facilities and opportunities for African Americans. Hence, African Americans assumed second-class citizenship and African American institutions were equally marginalized. The funding, curricula, buildings, schools and universities for African Americans were always separate, but they were never equal. The value of the buildings on HBCU campuses were inferior, did not have the ambiance and had a lower replacement value than buildings on the campuses of PWIs. And the Ayers case was filed in part because of the inferior physical plants on the campuses of HBCUs. With the Ayers settlement, the removal of funds at the end of the decree, periodic step downs, lack of control of a fully funded endowment and other-race scholarships for Caucasian Americans, HBIs in Mississippi are still not equal, even with the academic programs and capital improvements.

Fourth, the experiential knowledge of university administrators at Mississippi HBIs allowed them to explain their reality in the context of the economic, political, and social system of higher education in Mississippi in regards to the Ayers case and settlement. Their counternarratives offered different interpretations of policy, highlighted discrimination, and challenged assumptions and stereotypes about the Ayers settlement, HBCUs in general, and their institutions in particular. Crawford (2015) talked about the Ayers settlement as a “win-win,” but Mississippi HBCU administrators say, “No so fast.” Administrators at HBCUs did not negotiate the settlement. It was negotiated for them by the new plaintiff and lawyer designated by the court. The judge told them that if it were not resolved there would not be any recovery for HBCUs in the settlement (McBride, 2003c). HBIs in Mississippi were historically underfunded for decades because of a
social, political, and economic system that prevented the mingling of the races. The IHL Board also limited the growth of HBCUs and allowed the growth of PWIs during the 1950s. While the institutions agree that the funds have helped in starting new academic programs and building and renovating buildings, the amount of funds provided by the settlement are miniscule compared to what the institutions should have received over time had they been fully funded. The HBCUs deserved the endowment outright because they were discriminated against. It is unfair that they must now prove that they deserve funds that rightfully should have been theirs by attaining a certain other-race student population and using settlement funds to supplement their education in the form of scholarships and stipends which not be used for any “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa or the West Indies.” By removing the funds for faculty salaries, operating budgets and academic programs, HBCUs have been put in the precarious position of finding funds to replace what has been removed from the state. This is unfair because no other state entity or higher education institution has had a reduction of funds in this matter. It is clear that the principle of interest convergence occurred here. The settlement had to benefit Whites in order for there to be a settlement.

Fifth, the experiential knowledge and counternarratives of the research participants challenge mainstream ideologies and conventional norms. The administrators at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi Valley State University challenged the ideologies and conventional norms of the majority population regarding HBCUs. Mississippi HBCUs are fiscally sound and have not problems managing their finances. Mississippi HBIs are changing the institutional culture of hiring graduates and relatives who are not qualified for the positions they seek. Mississippi
HBCUs offer programs that allow graduate to compete and are equal to the education received at PWIs. The graduation rates and retention rates at Mississippi HBCUs are improving as these institutions provide access to low-income and underprepared freshmen students. HBCUs are addressing the issue of deferred maintenance and inadequate facilities by using the institution’s bond rating to build new facilities on campus. Other myths are true such as there being institutional differences, but HBCU administrators would not call their institutions “inferior.” They simply want to be on an equal playing field with PWIs in the state.

Sixth, the purpose of Critical Race Theory is to seek social justice. The justice HBCU administrators would like to see is consistent, long-term funding for HBCUs that makes them equal to PWIs in the state. Sadly, this may never happen because of the funding formula that rewards research institutions and institutions with graduate and STEM programs must divide appropriations between eight universities. Eliminating all forms of oppression at the on the individual, institutional and system level of the State of Mississippi and higher education may never happen during this generation. Any gains by Mississippi HBCUs will occur though financial means independent of the state funding.

Implications

After completing the study, three major points needed further discussion. The first point demonstrates that way senior level administrators speak about the vision and mission of the institution and quotes the leader of the organization. This speaks to the effectiveness of the leader. Second, no sitting university president participated in this study and the pilot study. I believe the presidents’ refusal to participate mimics the same pressures Mississippi HBCU presidents endured in the 1950s and 1960s. The third point
speaks the ability of HBCU administrators to harness the power of institutional knowledge.

**Effectiveness of leadership.** From this study, I realized that the effectiveness of the leader. The effectiveness of a leader can be determined by the number of times subordinates reference the leader, embody the vision of the leader and can answer questions about the organization that does not directly relate to their area of expertise. First, the number of times campus administrators’ reference statements of the president indicates that the president’s message and vision have been communicated to college administrators. These administrators internalize the message and create policy and strategies to make the president’s mission and vision come to fruition. Alcorn State University president was referenced three times for recently approving faculty raises, making a capital investment in diversity and for not making a substantial investment in advancement. Jackson State University officials referenced the president eight times: position on place, deep quality in the academic enterprise, an aggressive enrollment strategy, endowment goal of $200 million, partnerships with National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation, a standard of excellence for employees, tuition waivers for out-of-state students in STEM programs, increasing enrollment and an enrollment goal of 15,000 students. Mississippi Valley State University president was quoted four times in reference to his vision statement “One team, one goal, one Valley,” short-term and long-term goals, improving customer service and the need for the institution to thrive and not just survive. Using this metric, the president of Jackson State University is most effective.
Second, the ability of administrators to answer questions that are tangentially related to his or her area of expertise demonstrates that college officials see how each unit of the institution works together to make the president’s vision become a reality. Some administrators were able to answer questions about recruitment and admissions, enrollment and student demographics, budget, academic programs, history of the institution and online education even though some of these questions do not fall within the purview of the job responsibility. These administrators get it. Other administrators did not answer some questions and deferred their response to the academic department responsible. This can be attributed to college officials just doing their job, not being in the position long enough to gain the knowledge to answer questions or the lack of the presidential leadership showing senior level administrators the importance of how each division is dependent upon the other.

**Lack of participation by presidents.** For my research study, I asked presidents of each HBCU to participate. One office assistant told me that the president was too busy, another handed my request to another person in the president’s office, and I did not get a response from another president. Following media reports regarding the three presidents, statements from presidents included speeches they were scheduled to make and statements made through their public relations team regarding condolences, welcoming new faculty and staff on board, the extension of a coach’s contract, the beginning of a new university venture. Videos and pictures of university presidents included public appearances, check presentations and photo opportunities. These presidents do not make controversial statements. It is my inference that current presidents of Mississippi HBCUs are in the same predicament as HBCU college presidents in the 1950s and 1960s. Early
presidents were community members while acting as informants for the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission. During the Ayers case, presidents testified for the defense lawyers who defended the actions of the state and could not advocate fully on behalf of their institutions. In addition, presidents had to work with the same lawyers and IHL officials for day-to-day operations, budget submissions and evaluations. No president participated in my pilot study or this research study. It is not a stretch to deduce that the similar dynamics that were in place since the 1950s and are still in place in 2015.

**Importance of institutional knowledge.** With the exception of Alcorn State’s current president, it has been while since the IHL Board hired an HBCU president who is an alumnus of the institution. As a result, there can sometimes be a disconnection between the institutional knowledge and history when a president is familiar with the role of HBCUS but not the history of the HBCU he or she is charged to lead. HBCU presidents must seek out individuals who hold this institutional knowledge and use this knowledge to move the institution forward. This is also important that senior administrators be familiar with basics of the case that directly affects the institution. It has been said that people who do not know the past are doomed to repeat it. It was tragic to hear a Mississippi Valley State University administrator tell me that the Ayers settlement did not provide funds for capital projects when the buildings exist on the campus. The fact that three new administrators at have little knowledge of the Ayers case is an atrocity.

There are several implications for professional practice. HBCUs administrators are already aware that state funding will not allow any college or university in the Mississippi system of higher education to get all of the funds they need. First, HBCU
administrators must work within the system and at their university to make sure they can receive the maximum amount of funds from the state for capital projects and renovations, operating budgets, academic programs, and salaries. As the funding formula has certain metrics for achievement, HBCUs must increase enrollment and move low performing students to college level courses, get them to the 30- and 60-credit threshold and ultimately graduate them. Second, HBCU officials must generate revenue from other sources. This includes pursuing grants and research opportunities from outside sources like industry, corporations and foundations. In addition, HBCU president must elevate the office of advancement to the level of student affairs, academic affairs, and business and finance by fully funding and staffing the division and empowering it to raise the funds from alumni and other sources to increase the university’s endowment and move donors from one level of giving to another. Third, HBCUs must educate students and alumni on the importance of consistently giving to the university no matter the amount. Fourth, the university must demonstrate excellent customer service based on their goal to be more student centered. Students who have good experiences at the campus will become alumni who give back to the institution. Fifth, HBCU administrators may have to use its own resources and bond rating to get things done for the institution. For example, Alcorn State University used built four beautiful dormitories in the first phase of student housing on the private market using its own bond rating. Recently, Jackson State University asked the College Board for permission to issue bonds to buy land and build a new dormitory. This will go a long way to enhance the campus environment, ensure safety and attract students to the institution. Sixth, HBCUs must continue to tell their story. The public does not know of the accomplishments of HBCUs because the institutions are not on their
radar. Being proactive in the media and in marketing campaigns can go along a way to begin the process of changing negative perceptions of the majority population about the university, its academic programs, its accomplishments and its welcoming atmosphere. Universities may have to go the extra step to invite other-race people on the campus to host a business meeting to inform them of the great things that are happening on campus and that the university is here to help and assist you in reaching your goals for the betterment of the community.

**Recommendations for Additional Research**

Qualitative researcher looks beyond the facts of quantitative research and starts to answer the question *what* and *how*. Were it not for this study, higher education would not be aware of the perception of HBCU administrators in Mississippi regarding the implementation of the *Ayers* settlement and their perception of the *Ayers* case. The most obvious recommendation for future study is to duplicate this study at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State University a year or two after the final funds for the *Ayers* case have been disbursed. Second, unstructured interviews of participants who testified in the *Ayers* case and the lawyers will provide additional background of the case and how it was settled. My final recommendation comes from conversations I with my mother as I learned more and more of the history of higher education in Mississippi. When I learned something fascinating, I would tell her and she would recall her version of the events. My third recommendation for future research is a focus group of African American citizens from Mississippi who attended Mississippi HBCUs and ask them questions about critical events in the higher education history in Mississippi. There are perspectives of individuals who grew up, were educated
and raised families in the segregated south who may or may not have participated in the Civil Rights movement because of concerned family members or the imminent danger to their lives. The perspective of oppressed and marginalized people is important in understanding race relations in the state of Mississippi.

**Conclusion**

The United States of America continues to have a difficult time dealing with the issue of race. Gains for minorities in education, employment, law, politics, and society are substantive, but there are still obstacles to overcome. In education, students of color are confined to racially isolated, underfunded and inferior schools. Interest convergence is the Critical Race Theory principal that states that no benefit comes about unless the majority culture receives some benefit. No benefit of the *Ayers* case would come about if it did not benefit Caucasian Americans. Forty-eight percent or $248 million of the settlement benefit Caucasian Americans (Muhammad, 2009). Language placed in the settlement absolutely denied “non-Black or descendants of sub-Saharan Africa and the West Indies” from accessing the funds. In addition, funds that freely should have been given to HBCUs were withheld until the institutions proved they deserved the funds by attaining the arbitrary threshold of 10% other-race enrollment.

When one understands the history of Mississippi, its higher education system and the *Ayers* settlement, it becomes apparent that the more things change, the more things stay the same. The same southern attitudes that defied Northerners attempts to abolish slavery and give Civil Rights to Blacks were masked by a southern conservative judge and lawyers to deny institutions created by their forefathers for Blacks citizens parity with predominantly White institutions by requiring the majority of the settlement to
benefit White students who attend HBCUs. The *Ayers* settlement benefits Whites as it benefitted Mississippi HBCUs. The *Ayers* case may hurt the institutions more than it helped, but it is too early to determine. The incremental decrease in funding and the eventual lack of funding for salaries and programs funded by *Ayers* will deliver a blow to HBCUs. The money will be missed. In some cases, universities will have to decide whether to keep programs, diminish programs, or eliminate them all together. The institutions now have the additional burden of finding funding for salaries, budgets and programs that the state says should be able to sustain themselves over time. Will the *Ayers* academic programs be expanded, reduced, merged or discontinued? Will the state allocate more funds to sustain *Ayers* academic programs at HBCUs? Only time will tell.
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U.S. Const., amend. XIII.

U.S. Const., amend. XIV.


Appendices

APPENDIX A

The University of Memphis IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board

To: Lemondra Hamilton
From: Pamela M. Valentine, Institutional Review Board
For the Protection of Human Subjects
irb@memphis.edu
Subject: Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: A Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi [3328]
Date of Review: July 18, 2014 (Expedited)

The University of Memphis Institutional Review Board, FWA00006915, has reviewed your submission in accordance with all applicable statutes and regulations as well as ethical principles.

Approval of this project is given with the following obligations:

1. If this IRB approval has an expiration date, an approved renewal must be in effect to continue the project prior to that date. If approval is not obtained, the human consent form(s) and recruiting material(s) are no longer valid and any research activities involving human subjects must stop.

2. When the project is finished or terminated, a completion form must be completed and sent to the board.

3. No change may be made in the approved protocol without prior board approval. Whether the approved protocol was reviewed at the Exempt, Expedited or Full Board level.

4. Exempt approvals are considered to have no expiration date and no further review is necessary unless the protocol needs modification.

With best regards,

Pamela M. Valentine
Interim Chair, Institutional Review Board
The University of Memphis

A Tennessee Board of Regents Institution
Equal Opportunity - Affirmative Action University
APPENDIX B

Jackson State University IRB Approval Letter

DATE: August 20, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lemondra Hamilton
7883 Freehold Dr.
Memphis, TN 38125

FROM: Dr. Fredrick White
Certified IRB Manager (CIM)


Department: Adult and Higher Education, University of Memphis

The Jackson State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application and has come to the conclusion your responses are satisfactory and meet the requirements for protection of human participants as stipulated by the Federal government. Your application received an Expedited approval. This approval is good for one year from the date of this letter.

Any adverse reactions or problems resulting from this investigation must be reported immediately to the university Institutional Review Board. If you decide to modify or change your procedures in any way, please notify the IRB office in writing. We will review your request in the context of your complete application. If the changes are approved, you will receive written notification for the approval.

Any research that continues beyond one year should be resubmitted for approval before the end of each year so there is no lapse. Contact the IRB office for the extension form and the submission requirements before the end of July 2015.

1400 John R. Lynch St. | P.O. Box 17057 | Jackson, MS 39217 | 601-979-2931 | 601-979-3664 fax | jsu.edu
APPENDIX C

Alcorn State University IRB Approval Letter

September 2, 2014

Ms. Lemondra Hamilton
lhamtrs@memphis.edu
University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38112

Dr. Mitsunori Misawa
mmisawa@memphis.edu
University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Ms. Hamilton and Dr. Misawa:

IRB#: 090214-002

Title of Proposal: "Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: A Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi."

This letter is to officially notify you of the approval of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board’s opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study. Your proposal seems to be in compliance with this institution’s Federal Wide Assurance and the DHHS Regulations for the protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46). This approval is good from September 2, 2014 to September 2, 2015. If you wish to continue your research after this date, you must complete and submit a Continuation Application.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project, or of any previously unforeseen risks to the research participants. You must also advise the IRB when this study is completed or discontinued. Regulations require that records pertaining to this study be retained for at least 3 years after completion of the research. For projects which continue beyond one year from the starting date, the IRB will request continuing review and update of the research project. Your study will be due for continuing review as indicated above.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Sandra Barnes IRB Chair at (601)877-6436 or sbarnes@alcorn.edu.

Sincerely,

Alcorn C. Galaway, Director
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs | 1000 ASU Drive 2/20 | Alcorn State, MS 39096-7900
Phone: 601.877.6117 | www.alcorn.edu
APPENDIX D

Mississippi Valley State University IRB Approval

HUMAN SUBJECTS APPLICATION

Title of Proposal: Implementing the Avers Case Settlement: A Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi

Principal Investigator: Lemonda V. Hamilton

MVSU Employee/Status: Neither Doctoral Student at University of Memphis

Department Address: Department of Leadership, Main Office: Ball 123, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152   Chair: Larry McNeal   Phone: (901) 678-2369   Fax: (901) 678-0505

MVSU Phone #: Mobile: 901-218-7479   Home Phone #: 901-754-7790

Will this study receive any direct or indirect federal support? (Including use of federal facilities):
Yes       No       XXX       Agency

Type of review requested: Exempt       XXX       Expedited       Full

Proposed start/completion date: upon IRB approval / January 20, 2015

Composition of study group (age, sex, race, disadvantaged, etc.):

Five participants will be approached for their participation in this study, or approximately five individuals at each institution from each of the following offices: President, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement and Business and Finance. In qualitative research, a small sample size is suitable for collecting extensive details about each participant (Creswell, 2008).

1. MVSU
2. MVSU
3. MVSU
4. MVSU
5. MVSU

The participants will include 1 man and 4 women, unless they refuse to participate and suggest another person to take their place in the study. Their ages range from approximately 30 to 65 years of age. Presumably, all participants are free from physical, mental, cognitive, or emotional limitations that might impact their involvement in the study. Participants can be excluded from this study if you are not currently an administrator at Mississippi Valley State University or work in an administrative capacity in the offices listed above.

REFERENCES

Name, MVSU Address, Phone of Co-Investigators and Students: Lemonda V. Hamilton, 7883 Freehold Dr., Memphis, TN 39125, Mobile: 901-218-7479 Home: 901-218-7479. There are no co-investigators or students involved in this study.

Principal Investigator Assurance:

On behalf of my co-investigators, associated students, staff and myself, I agree: To perform the research according to the ethical principles of the Belmont Report, requirements of 45CFR46 to strictly adhere to the research protocol as it relates to human subjects, and to promptly report to the IRB any proposed change in the research activity, and to ensure that no changes be made in the activity without obtaining prior IRB approval (except that a change may be made to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject); to comply with any contingencies upon which approval may be granted, to promptly notify any member of the IRB verbally (with written confirmation) of
unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others and of any other adverse circumstance actions affecting the subjects that arise from the research.

Principal Investigator: [Signature] 10/04/2014

IRB USE: Exempt Expedition Full

Contingencies for Approval: [Signature] 10/04/2014

Re-review Frequency: [Signature] 10/04/15

Approved/Disapproved: [Signature] (Chair) IRB, Date
MVSU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD CONSENT FORM CHECKLIST

Proposer:  Lemondra V. Hamilton

Signature: ___________________ Date: July 24, 2014

Proposal Title:  Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: A Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi

The primary investigator (PI) or Faculty Advisor (FA), if the investigator is a student, must answer following questions YES, NO, or NA and provide satisfactory explanation if answer is "NO"; Otherwise the Consent Form must be revised to eliminate "NO" answers.

Yes 1. Is the consent form written in "lay language" and presented in a way comprehended by the participant? (Explain on the reverse special arrangements for those unable to read the consent form).

Yes 2. Is it free of any exculpatory language through which the participant is made to waive any legal rights, including any release of the investigator, sponsor, institution or its agents from liability for negligence?

Yes 3. Will the participant be provided a copy of the consent document?

N/A 4. If the blood is to be withdrawn, is the standard blood withdrawal information included?
   a. Number of times; amount, period of time covered; minimal risk of "bruising, inflammation of vein, and infection?"
   b. Have all personnel handling blood been immunized against Hepatitis B?
   c. Does your laboratory have approved exposure control plans for blood-borne or other pathogens?
   d. Has your laboratory conformed to all applicable OSHA regulations concerning blood-borne or other pathogens?

N/A 5. If children (individuals who have not reached the legal age of consent, 18 in Alaska) are participants, is provision made for securing the assent of the child and the consent of the parent or guardian?

N/A 6. If investigational drugs or devices are to be used, or of approved drugs or devices are to be used in a manner for which they have not been approved, are such drugs or devices identified as "experimental?"

Yes 7. Does the consent form include each of the following basic elements of informed consent?
   a. A statement that the study involves research, an explanation of the purposes of the research and the expected duration of participation?
b. A description of the procedures to which the participants will be subjected, and identification of those that are experimental?

c. A description of any benefits to the participants or to others?

d. A full disclosure of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts, or a statement that minimal risk is considered to be associated with participation in the study?

e. For research involving more than minimal risk, a description of medical, care or other compensation is available, and who to contact to access such resources?

f. A statement describing the extent to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained.

g. Information on who to contact for answers to questions about the research, participant’s rights?

h. A statement that participation is voluntary at all times, and the choice not to participate, or to discontinue participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the individuals is entitled.

i. In case of evaluation of a medical procedure or therapy, a disclosure of alternative procedures that might be advantageous to the participant.

Yes 8. Is provision of any of the following information appropriate, and if so, is it provided in a consent form?

a. A statement that the procedure may involve risks to the subject or fetus (if the subject is or may become pregnant) which are currently unforeseeable?

b. Anticipated circumstances under which the subject’s participation may be terminated by the investigator without regard to the subject’s consent? (A concern if the subject benefits by participation.)

c. Any additional costs to the subject from participation?

d. Any consequences of a participant’s decision to withdraw from the research, and procedures for orderly termination of participation by the subject?

e. A statement that significant new findings developed during the course of the research that might affect the subject’s willingness to continue participation will be provided to the subject?

IRB Consent Form Approved By: ___________________________ Date: 1/1/2023

IRB APPROVAL CANNOT BE GRANTED UNTIL A COPY OF THE APPROVED CONSENT FORM IS ON FILE.
APPENDIX E

Jackson State University Research Cover Letter

7883 Freehold Dr.
Memphis, TN 38125
September 24, 2014

Jackson State University
1400 Lynch Street
Jackson, MS 39217

I am currently a doctoral candidate under the supervision of Dr. Misunori Misawa at the University of Memphis in the Higher and Adult Education and expect to complete all requirements for the degree by May 2015.

I am conducting a qualitative research study which will examine how the three historically Black colleges and universities in Mississippi have implemented policies to secure the endowment of the Ayers settlement. This dissertation is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education. You were chosen to participate in this study because you are a member of the presidential administration at Jackson State University. Your participation in this study will utilize an hour of your time for a recorded semi-structured interview. This will end your participation in the study unless there is an aspect of your job that you would not mind me observing, like a meeting or interacting with staff or an assembly. The nonparticipant observation is optional.

If you have any questions, you may contact my adviser Dr. Misunori Misawa at mmisawa@memphis.edu or (901) 678-4060 or the University of Memphis Institutional Review Board at 315 Administration Bldg., Memphis TN, 38152-3379 at irb@memphis.edu or (901) 678-2705. Additionally, you may contact the Jackson State University Division of Research and Federal Relations at irb@jsums.edu or (601) 979-2991 if you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject. With your assistance, I hope to give voice to administrators at historically Black colleges and institutions charged with implementing integration policies.

I sincerely hope you agree to participate in this research study. Your participation is voluntary and anonymity will be assured. If you choose not to participate, please refer me to someone with a similar level of knowledge and expertise who can assist me with this study.

Respectfully yours,

[Redacted]

Lemondra V. Hamilton
(901) 218-7479
lvhamilton@memphis.edu or lemondrahamilton@gmail.com

University of Memphis IRB Approval # 3328, Expiration Date: 6/23/2015
Jackson State University IRB Approval, Expiration Date 08/19/2015
APPENDIX F

Alcorn State University Research Cover Letter

7883 Freethood Dr.
Memphis, TN 38125
October 15, 2014

Alcorn State University
1000 ASU Drive
Lorman, MS 39096-7500

Dear [Name]:

I am currently a doctoral candidate under the supervision of Dr. Mitsunori Misawa at the University of Memphis in the Higher and Adult Education and expect to complete all requirements for the degree by May 2015.

I am conducting a qualitative research study which will examine how the three historically Black colleges and universities in Mississippi have implemented policies to secure the endowment of the Ayers settlement. This dissertation is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education. You were chosen to participate in this study because you are a member of the presidential administration at Alcorn State University. Your participation in this study will utilize an hour of your time for a recorded semi-structured interview. This will end your participation in the study unless there is an aspect of your job that you would not mind me observing, like a meeting, interacting with staff or an assembly. The nonparticipant observation is optional.

If you have any questions, you may contact my adviser Dr. Mitsunori Misawa at mmisawa@memphis.edu or (901) 678-4060 or the University of Memphis Institutional Review Board at 315 Administration Bldg., Memphis TN, 38152-3370 at irb@memphis.edu or (901) 678-2705 if you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject. With your assistance, I hope to give voice to administrators at historically Black colleges and institutions charged with implementing integration policies.

I sincerely hope you agree to participate in this research study. Your participation is voluntary and anonymity will be assured. If you choose not to participate, please refer me to someone with a similar level of knowledge and expertise who can assist me with this study.

Respectfully yours,

[Name]

Lemondra V. Hamilton
(901) 218-7479
lvhamlin@memphis.edu or lemondrahamilton@gmail.com

University of Memphis IRB Approval # 3328, Expiration Date: 6/23/2015
APPENDIX G

Mississippi Valley State University Research Cover Letter

7883 Freehold Dr.
Memphis, TN 38125
October 15, 2014

Mississippi Valley State University
14000 Highway 82 West
Ita Bena, MS 38941

Dear [Name]:

I am currently a doctoral candidate under the supervision of Dr. Mitsunori Misawa at the University of Memphis in the Higher and Adult Education and expect to complete all requirements for the degree by May 2015.

I am conducting a qualitative research study which will examine how the three historically Black colleges and universities in Mississippi have implemented policies to secure the endowment of the Ayers settlement. This dissertation is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Education. You were chosen to participate in this study because you are a member of the presidential administration at Mississippi Valley State University. Your participation in this study will utilize an hour of your time for a recorded semi-structured interview. This will end your participation in the study unless there is an aspect of your job that you would not mind me observing, like a meeting or interacting with staff or an assembly. The nonparticipant observation is optional.

If you have any questions, you may contact my adviser Dr. Mitsunori Misawa at mmisawa@memphis.edu or (901) 678-4060 or the University of Memphis Institutional Review Board at 315 Administration Bldg., Memphis TN, 38152-3379 at irb@memphis.edu or (901) 678-2705 if you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject. With your assistance, I hope to give voice to administrators at historically Black colleges and institutions charged with implementing integration policies.

I sincerely hope you agree to participate in this research study. Your participation is voluntary and anonymity will be assured. If you choose not to participate, please refer me to someone with a similar level of knowledge and expertise who can assist me with this study.

Respectfully yours,

[Name]

Lemondra V. Hamilton
(901) 218-7479
lhamlin@memphis.edu or lemondrahamilton@gmail.com

University of Memphis IRB Approval #3328, Expiration Date: 6/23/2015
APPENDIX H

The University of Memphis Consent Form

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
315 Administration Bldg.
Memphis, TN 38152-3370
Office: 901.678.2705
Fax: 901.678.2199

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

IMPLEMENTING THE AYERS CASE SETTLEMENT:
A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY OF THREE HISTORICALLY BLACK INSTITUTIONS IN MISSISSIPPI

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are being invited to take part in a research study to understand the impact of the Ayers case on public historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in Mississippi. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you currently serve as an administrator at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, or Mississippi Valley State University. If you volunteer to take part in this study, you will be one of fifteen (15) people to do so at the three public HBCUs in Mississippi.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is Lemonda Hamilton, a doctoral student in higher education at the University of Memphis. He is being guided in this research by Dr. Mitsunori Misawa. There will be no additional people assisting the lead investigator during the study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

By doing this study, the investigator hopes to understand how Mississippi higher education history affects how institutions operate today, how the Ayers case affects HBCUs today and what has or has not worked to reach 10 percent other race enrollment. This study is a dissertation project and is a requirement for doctoral students in Higher and Adult Education program at the University of Memphis.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You could be excluded from this study if you are not currently an administrator at Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, or Mississippi Valley State University.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

The procedures for data collection will be conducted on the campus of institution where you serve as an administrator and I will meet you at a location of your choosing. This visit will take about 1 hour. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 1 hour. If you choose to allow me to shadow you, the period of time for the nonparticipant observation will be determined by you.

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED TO DO?

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to sit for a 60-minute tape-recorded, semi-structured narrative interview. During the semi-structured narrative interview, you will be asked about your experiences as an administrator and the challenges you face implementing the settlement from the Ayers v. Fordice decision. During the interview, you will be asked the point the researcher in the direction of people, documents, speeches, or artifacts that may be helpful to his research. If allowed, the researcher would like to shadow you or sit in on a meeting with your permission. The length of time will be determined by the participant. Approximately 3-4 weeks after the initial interview, the researcher will contact you by email and ask that you give further clarity to interview responses and provide feedback on the comments and interpretations the researcher has developed during analysis.

IRB #: 2586
Expiration Date: 

Page 1 of 3
WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?

To the best of my knowledge, the things you will be doing in this research study have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life.

WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no guarantee that you will get any benefit from taking part in this study. However, your willingness to take part, however, may help higher education institutions facing similar challenges.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY, ARE THERE OTHER CHOICES?

If you do not want to be in the study, please give the researcher the name of an individual in your division who is just as knowledgeable and capable as you who can address the research questions.

WHAT WILL IT COST YOU TO PARTICIPATE?

There are no costs associated with taking part in the study.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY REWARDS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will not receive any rewards or payment for taking part in the study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GIVE?

I will make every effort to prevent anyone other than myself and my advisor from knowing that you gave me information, or what that information is. Materials from the research study will be kept on an external hard drive in a locked file cabinet in my home. These computer files will be given a password known to only the researcher. Participants will not be personally identified in these written materials. Pseudonyms of participants will be kept in a separate file. Interviews, artifacts, and non-participant analysis will be filed in an Excel document according to time, date, and location of data collection and kept in a computer that is password-protected. Files that are publicly available and accessible on websites will not be held with such strict security. These data will be kept until December 2020 when they will be destroyed.

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When I write about the study, I will write about the combined information I have gathered. I may publish the results of this study, however, I will keep your name and other identifying information confidential.

I will keep confidential all research records that identify you to the extent allowed by law. However, there are some circumstances in which I may have to show your information to other people. I may be required to show information which identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly, these would
be people from such organizations as the University of Memphis and a peer-reviewed journal that may accept the article for publication.

**CAN YOUR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?**

If you decide to take part in the study, you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to continue. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individual conducting the study may need to withdraw you from the study. This may occur if you are not able to accommodate the request of the investigator.

**ARE YOU PARTICIPATING OR CAN YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANOTHER RESEARCH STUDY AT THE SAME TIME AS PARTICIPATING IN THIS ONE?**

You may take part in this study if you are currently involved in another research study. It is important to let the investigator know if you are in another research study. However, it is not necessary to discuss with the investigator your agreement to participate in another research study while you are enrolled in this study.

**WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMPLAINTS?**

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. If you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact my advisor Dr. Mitsunori Misawa at mmisawa@memphis.edu or (901) 578-4060. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the Institutional Review Board staff at the University of Memphis at irb@memphis.edu or (901) 678-2705. We will give you a signed copy of this consent form to take with you.

**WHAT HAPPENS TO MY PRIVACY IF I AM INTERVIEWED?**

During the transcription, identifying information will be associated with the responses of the participant. If the participant wishes for his or her identifying information to remain anonymous, the investigator will redact any identifying information and use a pseudonym.

**WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?**

No entity is providing financial support and/or material for this study.

---

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study ___________________________ Date ____________

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study ___________________________

Name of [authorized] person obtaining informed consent ___________________________ Date ____________

IRB #: 2586
Expiration Date: ___________________________
APPENDIX I

Jackson State University Consent Form

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

INVESTIGATOR:
Lenora Hamilton
Higher and Adult Education
7883 Freedom Dr.
Memphis, TN 38125
901-218-7479
lhamilt@memphis.edu

ADVISOR:
Dr. Mitsuori Misawa
Higher and Adult Education
304 Browning Hall
Memphis, TN 38152
901-678-2705
mmisawa@memphis.edu

TITLE OF STUDY: Implementing the Ayers Case Settlement: A Collective Case Study of Three Historically Black Institutions in Mississippi

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to take part in a research study to understand the impact of the Ayers case on state-supported historically black colleges and universities in Mississippi. The goal of the research project is to understand how Mississippi higher education history affects how institutions operate today, how the Ayers case affects HBCUs today and what has or has not worked to reach 10 percent other race enrollment through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation and document analysis.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES: The entire procedure should take one hour for the semi-structured interview. The length of time for the optional non-participant observation will be determined by you. If you agree to take part, you will be asked to sit for a recorded semi-structured interview. You will first be asked several questions about your role as an administrator, a historical perspective of your institution and efforts to achieve diversity on the campus. The interview will be transcribed and analyzed, therefore, results will not be provided to you. However, you may be asked in a follow-up email to provide clarity on some answers.

You may ask questions at any time during the study and you are free to contact me or my advisor should you have any questions about the research project.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS: We expect no risks or discomfort for people in this study. To the best of my knowledge, the things you will be doing in this research study have no more risk of harm than you would experience in everyday life. However, it is possible that you may feel somewhat uneasy answering the questions involved.

BENEFITS: The information obtained in this study may not directly benefit you. However, the results may help higher education institutions facing similar challenges.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS: All information obtained during this study is private. That is, we protect the privacy of people by withholding their names and other personal information from all persons not connected to this study. Each person will be identified using a code number rather than your name. Raw data will be kept in a secure location until the information has been saved as data file for analysis. Information will be stored in the most secure manner as possible for 2 years as required by federal law. Although the information in this study

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is private, security of the data can only be promised within the boundaries of the university and
researcher or faculty advisor. Confidentiality will be broken if the information obtained reveals
that you intend to harm yourself or another person.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You
may refuse to answer any specific question. Participants may withdraw at any time without
penalty or prejudice.

PARTICIPATION CONSENT: I have had the purposes and procedures of this study explained
to me and have had the opportunity to ask questions. My signature shows my willingness to take
part in the study under the conditions stated.

This study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board of Jackson State University,
which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any
questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to Dr. Loretta
Moore, Vice President for Research and Federal Relations, Jackson State University, P.O. Box
17057, Jackson, Mississippi, 32217, or (601) 979-2911.

Participant Signature ___________ Date ___________

Investigator Signature ___________ Date ___________

APPROVED

INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD
Expires 08/19/2015
APPENDIX J

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

IMPLEMENTING THE AYERS CASE SETTLEMENT:
A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY OF THREE HISTORICALLY BLACK
INSTITUTIONS IN MISSISSIPPI

Research Question 1: How has the history of higher education in Mississippi affect how HBCUs operate today?

Lead Question 1: Tell me what you know about the founding of _____.
Follow-up Question 1: How does _____ differ from the other HBIs in the state?
Follow-up Question 2: How does _____ differ from HWIs in the state?
Follow-up Question 3: How is _____ and this region different from any other place where you have worked?

Lead Question 2: Tell me about things relevant constituents (alumni, students, parents, IHL [Institution of Higher Learning], state legislature, governor) think they know about _____.
Follow-up Question 1: Tell me about things these constituents (alumni, students, parents, IHL [Institution of Higher Learning], state legislature, governor, citizens) do not understand about _____.
Follow-up Question 2: Tell me about the public’s perception of _____.
Follow-up Question 3: Tell me about the public’s misconceptions of _____.
Follow-up Question 4: Tell me about a confrontation or discussion you had with a constituent where the two of you had a difference of opinion about _____.

Lead Question 3: Tell me about some positive things have you experienced at the _____?
Follow-up Question 1: Tell me a story about a reality you had to face as an administrator at _____.
Follow-up Question 2: Tell me about some of the challenges you overcame in the first years of working at _____.
Follow-up Question 3: In spite of the challenges, what has ____ accomplished under your administrative role as the [insert title here]?
Follow-up Question 4: Tell me about the University’s short-term and long-term goals.
Follow-up Question 5: Tell me about your division’s short-term and long-term goals.
Follow-up Question 6: Tell me about the steps the Institution or your division took to analyze pressing matters that affected the Institution’s operations.
Lead Question 4: Tell me about the diversity of faculty, staff, and administration at _____.

Follow-up Question 1: Tell me about plans to diversify the faculty, staff and administration.
Follow-up Question 2: Tell me how the current economic situation affects _____’s ability to recruit and hire qualified faculty and staff.

Research Question 2: How does the Ayers case affect HBCUs today?

Lead Question 1: Tell me about your initial impression of the Ayers v. Fordice case.

Follow-up Question 1: Tell me about the moment when you realized the impact of this desegregation lawsuit on your ability to lead the Institution.
Follow-up Question 2: Tell me about the things _____ would be able to accomplish if the case were settled differently.
Follow-up Question 3: What process did the University undertake to revisit or revise its mission and vision statements as a result of the Ayers mandate to recruit more other race students?

Lead Question 2: Tell me about Ayers programs and Ayers program enhancements.

Follow-up Question 1: Tell me how this administration plans to strengthen and diversify academic programs and course offerings.
Follow-up Question 2: What new degree programs are being discussed?
Follow-up Question 3: How will these degree programs and courses affect future enrollment?
Follow-up Question 4: What factors affect the courses and programs _____ can offer.

Lead Question 3: Tell me about capital projects on your campus or campuses from Ayers case.

Follow-up Question 1: How have capital improvements improved the academic programs? Campus environment?
Follow-up Question 2: Did the Ayers funding for capital investments go far enough to address issues on campus or campuses?
Follow-up Question 3: What other issues can be address by additional capital improvement funds?

Lead Question 4: Tell me about revenue streams now that Ayers funding is running out.

Follow-up Question 1: What is the economic forecast for _____?
Follow-up Question 2: What has happened to your revenue streams?
Follow-up Question 3: What additional revenue streams are you pursuing?
Follow-up Question 4: What can constituents do to help _____ shore up its finances?
Follow-up Question 5: If money were no object, what would _____ look like now? In 5 to 10 years?
Research Question 3: What has worked or has not worked to achieve ten percent other-race student enrollment?

**Lead Question 1:** Tell me about tuition.
- **Follow-up Question 1:** Did _____ apply for a waiver of out of state tuition? For what group(s) of students?
- **Follow-up Question 2:** What percentage of students is Pell Eligible?
- **Follow-up Question 3:** What other means of assistance enable students to pay tuition?

**Lead Question 2:** Tell me about recruitment.
- **Follow-up Question 1:** What recruiting areas does _____ target?
- **Follow-up Question 2:** What is the _____’s recruitment strategy for attracting white students?
- **Follow-up Question 3:** To what degree do academic or athletics departments recruit white students?
- **Follow-up Question 4:** What steps have been taken to raise Hispanic or Native American enrollment?
- **Follow-up Question 5:** To what degree has _____ taken to enroll international students?
- **Follow-up Question 6:** Tell me about the plans to attract non-traditional, adult students to _____.

**Lead Question 3:** Tell me about student enrollment Recruitment efforts from Ayers case.
- **Follow-up Question 1:** Tell me about the recruitment goals for _____.
- **Follow-up Question 2:** Tell me about the plans to diversify the student body.
- **Follow-up Question 3:** Tell me how the state-wide admission policy enacted in 1995 affects enrollment at _____.
- **Follow-up Question 4:** Explain the how a diverse student body enhances the mission and vision of the University?
- **Follow-up Question 5A:** JSU and MVSU: Why has ____ not been able to achieve ten percent other race enrollment for three consecutive years?
- **Follow-up Question 5B:** ASU: what enabled ASU to achieve ten percent other race enrollment for three consecutive years? Has ASU been able to do so since receiving its share of the Ayers endowment?
- **Follow-up Question 6:** It is believed that the new academic programs will entice whites and other race students attend HBCUs. What is the reality or fallacy of the argument?
- **Follow-up Question 7A:** JSU and MVSU: Do you believe ____ will be able to achieve ten percent other race enrollment for 3 years to receive control of the Ayers endowment? Why or why not?
- **Follow-up Question 7B:** ASU: Do you believe ____ will be able to achieve ten percent other race enrollment in the future? Why or why not?
## Nonparticipant Observation Form

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