

## CHS African American Male Student Advocacy and Mentoring Initiative Mission Statement

The overall goal of this committee is to increase the retention of and graduation rates among African American men in the College of Humanities and Sciences. We have become aware that this population (along with Latino men) lags behind other groups within the college.

This initiative from the CHS Dean's office is designed to enhance the educational and learning experiences of African American male students and to foster a supportive environment. The term "African American" is used to refer to students of African ancestry.

Our specific objectives are to:

1. Review VCU's current data on African American male students to identify specific factors that might account for disparities and equities in educational outcomes for this population. This might include data on demographics, admissions, grades, retention, graduation rates, among other types of data.
2. Identify both assets and barriers to academic achievement among African American male students. Assets and barriers will be identified through examination of data and also by conducting interviews and/or focus groups with African American male students. Assets and barriers will also be identified by input and discussions with faculty who teach and mentor African American male students.
3. Identify (and compile a directory) of existing programs and resources at VCU which can assist African American male students in their academic success (e.g. the Men of Color Initiative, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, among others). Identify model programs and/or activities that are currently serving African American male students.
4. Identify best practices for academic success utilized by other institutions.

These objectives will be targeted for the spring 2018 semester. In carrying out these objectives we would focus on STEM-related majors and Humanities-related majors in CHS.

Long-term objectives (2018-2019) would be identified and follow the completion of these short-term objectives. However, they may include:

1. Developing a program to support peer to peer relationships with students who would benefit from these relationships.
2. Identify a process to engage and incentivize faculty participation to improve academic outcomes for African American male students.