**Case Study Two**

**Making Meaningful Change at the Departmental Level to Advance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Goals**

The murder of George Floyd sent shockwaves throughout American society that have been acutely felt in our nation’s colleges and universities. In the past year, many colleges and universities have collectively argued for the need of institutions of higher learning to take decisive and systemic action to improve campus cultures, revise exclusionary policies and practices, and diversify their workforces. While many of these conversations are happening at the highest levels of university leadership -- such as in presidential task forces and through cabinet-level Chief Diversity Officers -- it can be challenging for a new department chair to identify how to align their actions with these larger strategic and worthy goals.

For this case study, we invite you to begin by considering the current conditions and DEI initiatives on your campus. Working in small groups, we invite you to “compare notes” with colleagues who chair departments at other Associated Colleges of the South institutions.

Recognizing that there might be differences across campuses, we’re asking your small group to identify what is in your “sphere of influence” as a department chair, such as processes you oversee, decisions you are empowered to make by virtue of your position, the data you regularly collect and review, and the “soft power” and relationships you possess as a departmental chair.

**Questions to Focus Your Conversation**

1. Identify 2-3 things that are in a department chair’s “sphere of influence” as a mid-level leader in a private liberal arts college. What *can* you do to make meaningful change in your department to have a positive impact on students?
2. Who can help you both get up to speed on your college’s DEI initiatives? Who can help you make meaningful progress within your “sphere of influence?” Where can you build on the momentum of efforts at your college to engage this work within your department?
3. On a personal level, how will your own identities and life experiences impact the approach you take to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (or conversations about DEI) in your department?
4. What role might students play in advancing DEI goals in your department?
5. What, if anything, have you heard from colleagues that you’d like to adapt or replicate in your department?