Racial Flashpoint Post-Mortem Analysis Tool

As institutions begin to address legacies of racism on their campuses, many leaders have yet to acknowledge the connections between their history and present-day flashpoints. Often in the form of protests from the community, racial flashpoints are indicators of existing racial tensions and challenges on campus. In order to accurately identify and address the root causes of flashpoints, it is critical to investigate and connect their historical origins with current issues on campus.

After experiencing a campus racial flashpoint, **Vice Presidents for Student Affairs** and/or **Chief Diversity Officers** and their teams should examine whether the flashpoint has a history of reoccurring on campus in order to accurately identify and meaningfully address the underlying root of the issue.

Examples of Recurring Flashpoints with Historical Roots:

- Student demands for greater BIPOC[1] faculty representation
- Increasing Indigenous student activism
- Frayed institutional relationships with local communities of color

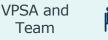### Racial Flashpoint Post-Mortem Analysis Tool

After responding to the incident, use this tool at your next team meeting to evaluate the racial flashpoint within the broader context of your institution's legacy of historical harm. Fill out the sections on the following pages and use the guided reflection questions to determine how to address the broader context of the racial flashpoint.

Intended Use:

Chief Diversity Officer and Team

VPSA and Team

Flashpoint Response Team

By using this tool, your leadership team will:

✓ Analyze the chronology of a recent campus flashpoint specific to racial harm

✓ Assess the state of relations between the institution and targeted communities of color

✓ Connect analysis to existing efforts to explore institutional legacies of harm on campus

1) Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

Sample Analysis

Connecting Racial Flashpoints to Your Institutional History

The table below is a **sample analysis** of a racial campus flashpoint. Use this as a reference tool and fill out the fields for each section on the **next page**. Examine your flashpoint to identify areas of inquiry or action that connect with your institution's broader context of racial harm.

Flashpoint Description:	*SAMPLE:* Black students call for a professor to resign after making disparaging comments about Black women.
Individuals/Groups Involved (*e.g., group size, concentration of special groups*)	*Example*: • Black Student Association (BSA) ~25 students • Faculty senate committee
Current State of Relations with Flashpoint Participants	*Example*: • Dean of Students has strong ties to BSA. Regularly attends student events; strong rapport with staff advisors • New BSA president has been very critical of institution's DEI efforts – doesn't think they go far enough to create true diversity and equity on campus.
Underlying Issues	*Example*: • Potential violation of bias and harassment policies • Faculty freedom of speech • Hostile environment for Black women – students, staff, and faculty • Climate survey results indicate that Black students are less engaged in classes
History of Issue (*i.e., relevant context in the recent past*)	**Describe Previous Flashpoints Related to Issue** *Example:* • Increased reports of hate crimes against Black students in the past 3 years • Higher attrition of Black faculty over the past decade **Previous Institutional Responses to Flashpoints** *Example:* • Conducted climate survey of racial climate 3 years ago • Committed to increased Black faculty recruitment after 2020 protests
Current Institutional Commitments (*i.e., identified action items after flashpoint*)	*Example*: • Provost issued statement to campus community • Dean of Students facilitated focus group with BSA • Faculty member's actions being investigated

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Connecting Racial Flashpoints to Your Institutional History

Use the following table to examine the chronology of a recent racial campus flashpoint and identify areas of inquiry or action that connect with your institution's broader context of racial harm. Refer to the previous page for an example flashpoint analysis.

Flashpoint Description:	
Individuals/Groups Involved (*e.g., group size, concentration of special groups*)	
Current State of Relations with Flashpoint Participants	
Underlying Issues	
History of Issue (*i.e., relevant context in the recent past*)	**Describe Previous Flashpoints Related to Issue**
	Previous Institutional Responses to Flashpoints
Current Institutional Commitments (*i.e., identified action items after flashpoint*)	

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Guided Reflection Questions

As a leadership team, discuss the following questions to identify how the broader context of the racial flashpoint should be addressed:

1 Reflecting on the history of the issue, how is this flashpoint connected to a deeper legacy of racial harm?

2 What questions remain to better understand the underlying issues of this racial flashpoint? How will we answer these questions?

3 Given our analysis of this flashpoint, how could we have responded to the incident differently? How should we respond differently to a related flashpoint in the future?

4 What information would be helpful to bring to the attention of cabinet members to inform them about and deepen their understanding of this flashpoint?

Final Recommendations

What are the immediate next steps resulting from our analysis? What findings from the analysis can be used to address the broader context and history of the racial flashpoint?