

THE BLACK STUDENT UNION: HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS

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It is important for students, faculty, staff, and administrators to recognize and understand the BSU movement as an educational, political, economic, and cultural phenomenon if they wish to enhance the recruitment, retention, and graduation of African American students. This study's review of the research literature and analysis of survey results suggests that the African American college student experience has always been dynamic and multi-dimensional. The study also found that the arrival of African American students served to transform many aspects of PWIs as well as make it possible for the subsequent arrival of individuals from other marginalized groups. Therefore, we note (with a sense of irony) that: the African American college experience has helped to redefine the American college experience; the BSU has helped to usher in many of the transformative changes of the American college environment since the 1960s. It is anticipated that this review of the role and dynamics of BSUs will assist students, faculty, staff, and administrators in their work to enhance campus climate and produce good educational outcomes for African American students.