

UM's Desegregation Timeline for the 1960s – 1970s

1961

- University of Miami's Board of Trustees voted on January 31 to admit qualified students without regard to race or color starting in the summer.
- The Miami News reported on June 19, 1961 that the first African-American student enrolled was Melvin R. Ladson Jr., 24, who was one of about 40 African-Americans attending the summer session.
- The Miami News reported on November 11, 1961 that Kenneth D. Walker was the first African-American student to be accepted as a candidate for the doctor of education degree.

1962

- Benny O'Berry was the first African-American student to graduate. He completed a Bachelor of Science in the School of Education and received his degree in 1962 at the age of 46.
- The Miami Hurricane interviewed nine African-American students and published the story "Negros Call Integration Liberal but Painful" on October 26, 1962.

1964

- University of Miami's student magazine Tempo published a compelling essay "The Sun-tanned Negro" in November 1964. The essay, written by Bill Genrette, talks about his experience in the early years of integration at the University.

1966

- President Stanford reaffirmed non-discrimination policy of the University to the University faculty, administrators, and staff on February 28, 1966.
- Dr. Martin Luther King visited the University on May 19, 1966. Dr. King's lecture "The Church's Involvement in the Civil Rights Program" drew an audience of 1,500 attendees.
- Ray Bellamy signed a scholarship with the University of Miami to become the first African-American football player for the University on December 16, 1966. The University became the first major college in the Deep South with an African-American football player on scholarship.

- University of Miami extended formal recognition to United Black Students (UBS), which was organized and led by Harold Long and Willard Butler.
- Miami Herald reported on February 16, 2016 that Dr. James Bridges was the first African-American resident at Jackson Memorial Hospital.

1968

- UBS organized a memorial service for Dr. Martin Luther King on campus on April 9, 1968. University canceled classes for the ceremony.
- Fourteen students occupied the outer office of the president's suite in the Ashe Building on May 14, 1968 in protest that progress was too slow regarding USB's list of proposals to President Stanford for more African-American students, professors, and the inclusion of Afro-American studies in the curriculum.
- The School Desegregation Consulting Center at the University of Miami, under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, served as consultants for school districts, such as Duval County, which were not yet in full compliance with the Supreme Court's ruling in Brown vs. Board of Education.
- The Miami Hurricane reported on September 27, 1968 that the University banned the Confederate Flag and Dixie at public ceremonies.
- Chester A. Byrd, UM's first African-American administrator, became associate director of student activities and counselor to African-American students.
- The University launched Upward Bound, the federally funded project, to motivate able high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend colleges. The program increased African-American enrollment.

1969

- UBS organized the first "Black Culture Week" held on campus from May 4 to 10, 1969. The Miami Hurricane reported on May 13, 1969 that "Whites, Blacks Respond: Enthusiasm Marks Afro Week."
- A selection of newly established courses on African Economics Development, Problems in Sub-Saharan Africa, Blacks in American Politics and the History of Blacks in the United States were offered for the first time. The courses were open to all University students and taught by African-American guest lecturers.
- George Saunders, M.D. (class of 1969) was the first African-American graduate of the School of Medicine.

- University of Miami filed an affirmative action program with the Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) office in Atlanta, GA, setting forth the steps it would take to achieve equal rights for minorities.

1970

- First African-American Professor Whittington Johnson was hired as a history professor.
- First African-American fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha was formed with fifteen members.

1971

- Harold Long became the first African-American to graduate with a law degree.
- The College of Arts and Sciences offers a minor in Black Studies in fall 1971
- First issue of “Malaika, a Resource Guide for Black Students, Faculty, and Staff” was published by the United Black Students.
- Carroll Williams became the first African-American football coach.
- Dr. James E. Cheek, former President of Howard University, was elected as the first African-American member of the Board of Trustees in February.

1972

- Shirley Chisholm, first African-American congresswoman of the United States, visited the University of Miami on January 4, 1972 and spoke to the students at the Rock.
- Ray Bellamy became the first African-American to serve as the President of the Undergraduate Student Government.
- First woman chairperson of the UBS, Vaughncill Modern, sponsored the first orientation week for African-American students. She also hosted “Black Views” on WVUM and wrote columns for The Miami Hurricane.
- Miami Herald reported on October 14, 2002 that Robert H. Waters, who joined the UM Law School in 1972 and taught over 30 years, was the first African-American faculty member of the school.

1973

- A small group of African-American administrators and faculty concerned with issues faced by African-American students and employees at the University started the Woodson-Williams-Marshall Association (WWMA).
- Division of Afro-American Studies was established at the University. Dr. Robert J. Cummings was the first director of the program.

1976

- First African-American female graduate of the Medical School was Jacqueline Simmons, M.D. (class of 1976).

1979

Sun Sentinel reported on January 28, 2005 that Henry Latimer was the first African-American Circuit Court Judge of Broward County in 1979, first African-American attorney to head a large South Florida firm in 1994, and was in line to become the first African-American president of the Florida Bar Association when he was killed in a car accident in 2005.

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*additional findings for future use

1990

Miami Herald reported on April 3, 1990 that the University of Miami hired Oklahoma State Coach Leonard Hamilton as its basketball coach Monday -- making Hamilton the first African-American head coach at UM in any sport."

Miami Herald reported on September 19, 1990 that Kim Sands, the first African-American woman to receive an athletic scholarship at the University of Miami, Tuesday was hired as the school's first African-American coach of the women's tennis team.

1998

Miami Herald reported on May 4, 1998 that the University of Miami professor Anna Price was elected as South Miami's first African-American mayor, many residents pointed to the election as proof of the community's ethnic and racial harmony.

2001

Miami Herald reported on February 18, 2001 that the University of Miami celebrated the first annual Black Homecoming Weekend hosted by the United Black Students and the University of Miami Alumni Association.

2002

University of Miami hired James Wyche to run the school's largest college, College of Arts & Sciences, making him the first African-American dean of an undergraduate school in UM's 75-year history.