



BROWN

Second Report of the Committee on the Events of October 29, 2013

May 20, 2014

Executive Summary

In February 2014, this Committee [reported](#) on the events surrounding the disruption of a lecture by former New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly in October 2013. We now turn to the Committee's second charge: "to make recommendations that will establish Brown as a leader in supporting an inclusive environment for members of our community."¹ Since the release of the first report, the Committee has been engaged in discussions with groups of faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and administrators to learn more about their sense of the campus climate. The observations and recommendations presented here also draw from the conversations and fact-finding that formed the basis of our first report.²

During the course of our work, we learned that while the "Ray Kelly Affair" was framed by some as one of free exchange of ideas and freedom of expression, it was seen by others as an instance of insensitivity to the everyday matters that affect the lives of communities of color. The Committee reviewed all these perspectives with particular reference not only to the events of October 29th, 2013 but also as they relate to the broader fissures that were exposed in their wake. We present here our key findings.

1. That the issue of free expression is inextricably linked to that of community responsibility. Even as we permit and encourage expression of the widest range of ideas, we need to debate and challenge expression with which we profoundly disagree and which may be harmful to members of our community.
2. That the current framework of "diversity" as the perspective from which the matters of inclusion, exclusion and representation are discussed and policies implemented is inadequate. Instead, the University should also consider ways to address questions of privilege, equity, and inclusion.
3. That students and faculty have certain spaces on campus where they are able to explore questions of privilege, equity, and inclusion. Yet these conversations must be expanded, further institutionalized and supported, and moved to the core of the University's work at all levels.
4. That if the University is to systematically address these questions, an action plan must be developed to define strategic goals and benchmarks with a plan for accountability. This plan must demonstrate a clear vision and commitment at the highest levels of the University's leadership, and must be accompanied by the commitment of new resources to carry out the recommended initiatives.

While Brown has long been committed to its mission "to serve the community, the nation, and the world by discovering, communicating, and preserving knowledge and understanding in a spirit of free inquiry,"³ recent events have demonstrated that its efforts to achieve inclusivity and equity for all members of its community have fallen short. We believe that the University now has a tremendous opportunity to be a national leader in higher education if it acts with alacrity, courage, and purpose.

¹ Christina Paxson. "Letter to the Campus Community." November 15, 2013. See Appendix I; <http://brown.edu/about/administration/president/2013-11-15-committee>.

² The Committee met with members of the Faculty Executive Committee, the Undergraduate Council of Students, the Third World Center's Student Advisory Board, and Department of Public Safety leadership. We also talked with graduate students, key administrators who provide support in various diversity initiatives throughout the University, and faculty from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups.

³ Brown University Mission Statement <http://www.brown.edu/about/mission>.

The Report

Introduction and Committee Charge

We began our investigation into questions of campus climate with a focus on questions of the free exchange of ideas and quickly found that we could not separate this issue from other complex matters like race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, class, and religion, identities at the heart of the ways in which students and faculty experience Brown. We were struck by the degree to which framing this discussion as one about “academic freedom/freedom of expression” served to limit our understanding of issues that had far greater salience for students and faculty, particularly those from underrepresented groups. We now present our findings and our views of the current campus climate and recommendations for strengthening our community. We assert that the issues raised here are of critical importance to the learning enterprise and to the mission of the University to “prepare students to discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation.”⁴

This Committee – with its goal of producing recommendations that will help “cultivate[e] an open environment in which community members from all backgrounds and intellectual viewpoints feel welcome”⁵ – is the third of its kind in the past thirty years, following the Visiting Committee on Minority Life and Education (1985) and the Visiting Committee on Diversity (2000).⁶ The University embraced the recommendations produced by both of the prior committees, thus taking a leadership role in championing inclusion and equity in higher education. Yet perhaps due to the complacency and a lack of accountability cited in the report published in 2000, the present Committee found itself reiterating many of the earlier recommendations. Thus, one of this Committee’s fundamental propositions is the need for an action plan to clearly outline the University’s commitment to not only create a community of staff, students, and faculty that is representative of our society, but one that is truly inclusive across various axes of difference; and second, to identify a set of strategic priorities, appropriate benchmarks, and necessary resources and support, and address accountability at multiple levels. These elements are critical for the creation of an inclusive climate on and beyond Brown’s campus.

Our work also unfolded in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision to uphold a state ban on race- and sex-aware admission in public universities and a national conversation about racism on college campuses. These debates reveal that the challenge that W. E. B. Du Bois articulated at the beginning of the 20th century – “the problem of the color line” – is still very much with us. While some have taken the election of an African-American president as evidence of the nation’s ascendance into a “post-racial era,” events on a number of campus – including the [University of Michigan](#), [University of Minnesota](#), [UCLA](#), [Dartmouth College](#), [New York University](#), and [Harvard University](#) – and the existence of Facebook pages like “Brown University Micro/Aggressions” and “Brown Confessions” indicate otherwise. Katherine Milkman’s recent study illustrating faculty bias in nearly every academic discipline in responding to requests for mentoring from women and students of color reinforces the notion that structural racism and other forms of inequities are not only present but reproduced in institutions of higher education.⁷ As one faculty member of color told our

⁴ Brown University Mission, available at <http://www.brown.edu/about/mission>. For a full discussion of diversity and academic excellence, see Patricia Guerin, “The Compelling Need for Diversity in Higher Education.” Expert report prepared for Gratz, et al. v. Bollinger, et al. No. 97-75231 (E.D. Mich.) and Grutter, et al. v. Bollinger, et al. No. 97-75928 (E.D. Mich.). January 1999. <http://www.vpcomm.umich.edu/admissions/research/expert/theor.html>

⁵ Christina Paxson. “Report on Events of Oct-29-2014.” February 19, 2014. Available at <http://brown.edu/about/administration/president/2-19-2014-report-events-oct-29-2013>

⁶ The 1985 Visiting Committee was convened in response to the occupation of the John Carter Brown Library by the “Third World Coalition.” Students of color had previously staged major protests in 1968, 1972, 1975, and 1983 with the goal of creating a more inclusive campus climate. This history is well preserved by the Third World Center and passed down by Minority Peer Counselors and Minority Peer Counselor Friends to incoming students via the “Resistance Tour” held annually during the Third World Transition Program. See the Third World Center website’s timeline of student activism at Brown, available at <http://brown.edu/campus-life/support/third-world-center/history>.

⁷ Katherine Milkman et al., “What Happens Before? A Field Experiment Exploring How Pay and Representation Differentially Shape Bias on the Pathway into Organizations,” *SSRN* (April 23, 2014). Available at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2063742.

Committee, the language of colorblindness or “post-raciality” has only masked the realities in our classrooms and residence halls and across our campus.

The recent events that led to the formation of this committee – difficult and painful as they were – allowed for perhaps an unprecedented degree of dialogue about racism, privilege, and forms of structural violence like racial profiling, conversations that normally take place only in certain pockets on campus. The question that faces us now is, to paraphrase a graduate student, “Are there conversations *across* campus that teach people how to humanize others?” We present this report in the midst of the University’s 250th anniversary celebration as a possible path forward that will ensure our continued leadership in promoting equity, access, and inclusive excellence in higher education. Our recommendations are organized into the three primary themes that emerged during our discussions – questions about free speech and academic freedom⁸; the question of campus climate, as related to us by groups of faculty, students, and administrators; and finally, the University’s relationship to its neighboring communities.

Freedom of Expression

President Christina Paxson’s recent letter to the *Brown Daily Herald* (BDH) outlines and affirms the University’s policy on freedom of expression as it pertains to invited lecturers – whether they are scholars, policy-makers, or private citizens. She writes:

Nearly 50 years ago, in 1966, the ... faculty voted to establish the right of any faculty member or student group to invite any speaker of their choosing to campus. ... I will continue to support and enforce this policy as long as I am Brown’s president. To backslide on this issue would be to condone censorship. It would have a chilling effect on the intellectual environment on campus and erode an important right that faculty members and students currently enjoy. I certainly do not want to revert to the old days, in which the approval of the Brown president was needed to invite a controversial speaker to campus. I would also oppose giving this power of approval to any other person or group on campus. Such a move would hurt the entire community.⁹

The Committee considered both the policy and its implications at length, particularly in light of the tensions revealed by invitations to Commissioner Kelly and to Sergeant Benjamin Anthony, a reservist in the Israeli Defense Forces, invited by Brown/RISD Hillel in early April. Our conversations with faculty and students yielded a number of suggestions for maintaining a climate of free expression while remaining sensitive to concerns regarding potential speakers. These suggestions ranged from increasing student involvement in the decision-making processes in academic departments to creating a standing interdepartmental committee charged with considering the format and management of so-called controversial lecturers.

After much discussion, the Committee arrived at its own conclusion, one that was grounded in the notion of collective responsibility. The issue of responsibility is critical to the matter of free speech, as we are reminded by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes’ oft-cited early 20th century opinion in the celebrated *Schenck v. United States* case on the “clear and present danger” of certain kinds of speech. Rather than asking, “Who should be responsible for overseeing who gets to speak and under what circumstances?” we asked questions such as: “What is our responsibility to one another as members of a community?” “What tools do members of our community need in order to effectively engage one another across differing viewpoints *as well as* positions of relative privilege and marginality?” “How can we structure a learning community in which an understanding of the structural violence faced by some members of our community informs the ways discussions about these very policies

⁸ Throughout this report, phrases such as “academic freedom,” “free speech,” “free expression,” and “free exchange of ideas” may be used interchangeably. The term “academic freedom” refers to freedom of inquiry among students and faculty members, a notion intended to protect scholars from censure or punishment when expressing their ideas. “Freedom of expression” is used most frequently because this was the concept referenced in the Committee Charge.

⁹ Christina Paxson. “Letter to the Editor of the *Brown Daily Herald*.” April 2, 2014. See Appendix II and <http://www.browndailyherald.com/2014/04/02/letter-faculty-student-groups-free-invite-speakers/>.

and practices are framed?” We suggest that this framing is not an elision of the issue of freedom of expression, but rather an attempt to find a way forward in which speech is protected *and* where all voices are invited to participate. Even as we permit expression of the widest range of ideas, we must debate and challenge expression with which we profoundly disagree and which may be harmful to elements of our community. This does not represent a capitulation to “political correctness,” as some would argue, but rather recognition that words and acts of speech have meaning and consequences far beyond their immediate enunciation. For many, the rows of Brown, local, and state police with reserved seating at the front of Commissioner Kelly’s lecture was a reminder of the impact of his policies on communities of color.

President Paxson’s letter to the *BDH* also reminds us that “protest has a long and proud history at Brown” and that “peaceful protest... is protected by the Brown Code of Student Conduct.” Protests that push boundaries have shed light on urgent issues and prompted social change. In the case of Commissioner Kelly’s lecture, protest revealed deep fissures within and beyond the campus. Faculty and students reported that the open forum held on October 30 and the in-class discussions that followed were some of the most difficult they had encountered at Brown, but also some of the most open and honest ones they had experienced regarding issues of difference, power, and privilege. Thus the recommendations presented in this report focus not on containing or avoiding conflict or student protest, but rather on identifying tools, resources, and opportunities for ongoing dialogue that will expand our ability to engage effectively across various axes of difference. While these conversations happen quite effectively in certain places on our campus – in some academic departments and in the programming of various Centers – they must move to the *center* of the University as an institution, and must be facilitated and supported at the highest levels of leadership. We turn now to a discussion of our findings about Brown’s campus climate and to recommendations to further this pluralistic ideal.

Pluralism and Privilege

Brown University is a progressive, elite educational institution noted for its attempts to develop innovative curriculum. Throughout the 20th century, the character of the institution has been shaped by the debates that have affected our larger society, including the issues of equal rights and access for women and groups that are underrepresented in higher education. For some time now, the language of “diversity” has been used to pursue these efforts on an institutional level through the constructions of new courses, various departments and programs, and other institutional mechanisms. Brown’s shift from commissioning a Visiting Committee on “Minority Life and Education” and creating the “American Minority Perspectives” course indicator in the Course Announcement Bulletin in the 1980s to its commissioning of a Visiting Committee on “Diversity” and implementation of a “Diversity Perspectives” course indicator in the early 2000s is an indication of the embrace of such a framework.

This rubric, while signaling an attempt to create opportunities for all, has become ill-defined. It no longer represents a strong effort to address the complex legacies of various historical wrongs and ongoing disparities.¹⁰ The interviews we conducted as a committee typically centered on questions of race, gender, social class, and sexual identities. These issues seem to haunt human relations within the Brown community. It became very clear in our interviews that unless the University takes the lead in reframing these issues, they will gnaw at the fabric of the institution, exploding now and again even within a climate that is superficially placid.

¹⁰ This observation was made as early as 2001 in a report submitted to the Visiting Committee on Diversity by a group of Minority Peer Counselors calling themselves “Third World Action.” They wrote, “In a decade largely influenced by conservative theorists in education... it is important to question every time the term ‘minority’ is exchanged with ‘diversity.’ In 1986 the emphasis was on analyzing minority life at Brown and finding out better ways that the university could curricularly [sic], institutionally, and socially affirm and embrace Third World identities. ... Our University has clearly re-framed the Visiting Committee’s agenda to promoting “diversity” and “pluralism,” which have been used to de-emphasize the category of race in institutional dynamics. ... There is a need to interrogate this conceptual ‘shift’ as well as the administration’s definition of ‘diversity’ and ‘pluralism’ (5). Third World Action. “Student Perspective on Diversity and Policy: A Report by Third World Action,” January 2000, 5. More recently, a group of students and faculty at the University of Minnesota have challenged the senior administration in similar ways in a campaign entitled “Whose Diversity?” See <http://www.mndaily.com/news/campus/2014/05/15/whose-diversity-pushes-administration-hear-demands>

The Committee suggests that the University reframes the conversation on campus. We should no longer operate solely under the framework of “diversity.” Instead, we should consider ways to address the question of *privilege*. This approach tackles the question of “difference” from another direction. If diversity focuses on institutional representation – which must certainly continue – a conversation about privilege forces the University to question *legacies*, deposits which shape the everyday in ways that may be invisible to many. Privilege begins from the recognition that authority and power are shaped in certain ways, that knowledge itself may be shaped by that authority and power, and that in the end to “diversify” would mean to address power and marginality as well as structural forms of inequity. This question seeps into the very marrow of the University. It influences how we relate to one another, and it shapes our relations to the community beyond Brown. We suggest that the current attempts to engage in transformative conversations move beyond discussions of difference to the more challenging questions of privilege.

Brown has the potential to lead the nation in tackling one of the most difficult questions of our time. We live in a world in which inequities are structured not just within the economic domain but also within the quotidian social domain. These inequities have a force in the structure of any university, even when it enacts necessary policies like need-blind admissions. What this report calls for is a campus-wide conversation about privilege and its effects upon the campus community. Much of this work has already begun, due, in large part, to the efforts of courageous students, faculty, and staff who have challenged the University to adopt new practices and structures of support. We now turn to a discussion of existing and recommended institutional structures at the levels of the administration, the faculty, and the student body.

Administration

In 2003, President Ruth Simmons created the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) to provide leadership in the formulation and oversight of policies related to pluralism and equity. The Associate Provost for Academic Development and Diversity leads the work in the OID and reports to the Provost.

In its decade-long existence, the OID has served an important role in addressing issues of inclusion on campus. In 2006, the head of this office – then known as the Associate Provost and Director of Institutional Diversity – released a Diversity Action Plan that considered diversity “in relation to other core priorities, such as faculty expansion and enhancing the undergraduate experience.”¹¹ The plan identified nine objectives and offered strategies for meeting these goals assigned to specific leaders in the senior administration. This demonstrated a clear vision and commitment at the highest levels of the University’s leadership. Status reports in 2007 and 2009 show areas of growth, namely in the increase of faculty and students of color, in the creation of the positions of Associate Deans responsible for diversity programs at the undergraduate level and for graduate student diversity, respectively, and in the revising of diversity training for student leaders and selected staff units. In the last five years, no new reports have been released. Only the 2007 report lists the progress made in relation to the original benchmarks and identifies actions still needed. As such, the status of the Action Plan is unclear. For example, key changes such as the appointment of an Associate Dean for Orientation and Diversity Initiatives in the Office of Student Life, the development of mechanisms to monitor climate, the expansion of strategic recruitment efforts to more departments, and the development of a new graduate support model have either not been made or not maintained. According to the current director of the OID¹², a new diversity strategic plan, aligned with the University’s strategic plan, *Building on Distinction*, will be released in the coming months. This Committee hopes that this new action plan – like the 2006 plan and the 2007 update – will identify

¹¹ See the Office of Institutional Diversity website for a copy of the Diversity Action Plan, available at <http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/archive> (4).

¹² In 2011, the director of OID’s title was changed from Associate Provost for Institutional Diversity to Associate Provost and Academic Development and Diversity, at the request of the incoming leader.

concrete metrics and a plan for accountability that can be sustained even in the midst of personnel turnover or other institutional changes.

In order to address the issues identified in this report and to carry out the OID's impending action plan, the Committee recommends that the University commit considerable new resources to the OID. Since the creation of this office, its responsibilities have expanded while its resources have diminished. Comparable offices at other institutions have entire departments dedicated to various aspects of "diversity," including leading the campus' policies around inclusion and equity; data collection, benchmarking, and the implementation of strategic initiatives; Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Title IX compliance; and faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, and development. If a truly inclusive campus climate is to be a priority, it is critical that Brown allocate additional resources to the OID. President Paxson recently announced the creation of a new Title IX coordinator position. This is an important first step, but more personnel and other resources must be allocated as well.

This Committee envisions an OID that has the capacity to serve as a resource for faculty, staff, and students. Given the significance of the OID's role in supporting departments' diversity efforts and in holding them accountable for their failure to meet University and department benchmarks, the Committee recommends that one or more tenured faculty members be recruited to a more central role in the work of the OID. The Committee envisioned several possible arrangements for this collaboration: 1) the existing Committee on Faculty Equity and Diversity, whose charge is to "represent the Faculty in personnel issues such as compensation, benefits, leaves, equity, diversity and advancement,"¹³ could be re-envisioned and reorganized, perhaps with the creation of sub-committees charged with providing departments with support in recruiting, hiring, and retaining faculty from diverse backgrounds and with lending more effective advocacy to underrepresented faculty, tasks currently managed by the director of OID; 2) a second possibility would be the creation of a role to report to the President, to be held by a tenured faculty member with significant course release. As at institutions such as Harvard, and in the previous incarnation of the OID, a tenured faculty member would have the ability to make challenging or unpopular decisions; 3) a final suggestion that was brought up in our interviews was a formalizing of the relationship between OID and the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity (CSREA), which no longer houses an undergraduate concentration and can now focus on serving as an "interdisciplinary campus-wide hub for generative ideas, public conversation, creative expression and engaged scholarship on race and ethnicity in America."¹⁴

The Committee envisions that the OID will become a center for excellence on campus with regard to issues of diversity. Not only will the OID proactively educate and support faculty, staff, and students on issues surrounding diversity, the OID will be a center on campus that members of the Brown community seek out for advice and guidance on a wide range of topics surrounding diversity at Brown. It should also serve as a space where students, faculty, and staff feel comfortable discussing incidents in class, in residence halls, or in advising conversations, among other matters.

Beyond a reimagining of the organizational structure of the OID, two additional recommendations that could yield this outcome emerged from our conversations with faculty and administrators:

- 1) OID, with additional support from the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), could take the lead in identifying, tracking, and where appropriate, sharing relevant information about key domains. Additional resources will need to be added to OID and/or OIR in order to implement this work. Examples include collecting and disseminating more robust data on the following:
 - The composition of the student body, disaggregating by ethnicity among black students (for example) and within the category of "underrepresented" among faculty;

¹³ Faculty Governance website. http://www.brown.edu/Faculty/Faculty_Governance/committees/boards.html

¹⁴ Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America website. <http://www.brown.edu/academics/race-ethnicity/>

- Rates of persistence in certain disciplines and in pre-professional careers, two priorities identified in *Building on Distinction*;
- Rates of utilization of certain campus resources like dean's open hours, tutoring, and CareerLab workshops, as well as achievement in the form of honors and awarding of competitive fellowships; and
- Rates of tenure and promotion among the faculty.

2) To address insufficient racial and ethnic diversity in the University's senior administration,¹⁵ a policy should be implemented whereby when current positions become vacant or new positions are created, recruitment processes identify and draw from diverse applicant pools.

Faculty

The Committee's discussions with the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and with faculty members of color brought to light a number of pressing issues that require immediate attention. The Committee has organized these comments into three central categories: hiring, support, and departmental accountability.

Hiring

The paucity of minority representation among the faculty accounts for the lack of consistent mentoring possibilities for students who are in need of advice in matters pertaining to race and ethnicity. The result is that faculty of color are disproportionately in demand in ways that adversely affect their academic work and their ability to support students who seek them out. According to the Office of Institutional Research's public data, faculty from underrepresented groups account for approximately 5.5% of full professors, a percentage that has actually declined slightly in the last decade as the number of white full professors has increased.¹⁶ Although the percentage of associate professors from underrepresented groups has doubled in the past decade, this figure is a result of a decrease in the total number of associate professors, and represents only three additional associate professors of color. Perhaps the greatest cause for optimism comes from the increase in the number of assistant professors from underrepresented minority groups, which doubled in number from seven to fifteen – an increase from 6.8% in 2004 to 9.5% of all faculties in 2013. This increase at the junior faculty level will only bear fruit if there is a commensurate commitment to the mentoring and nurturing of these faculty members so that they might become tenured faculty.

Discussions with faculty yielded concerns about the existing mechanisms for recruiting faculty from underrepresented groups, many of which are echoed in a 2012 article in the *BDH*.¹⁷ As the article highlighted, programs that might "encourage hiring of top minority talent" like "Target of Opportunity" are not "exclusively used for minority candidates." Since the use of these slots is discretionary, many are used for other purposes, such as making joint hires of academic couples. Proposing an additional strategy, faculty members suggested expanding the two-year President's Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowship that was recently announced for African Americans and Native Americans in all fields and women in the sciences and economics to promote a pipeline into a tenure-track position. This is the case at some of our peer institutions. In the University of California system, for instance, a hiring incentive – up to five years of salary supplement – is offered to encourage departments to retain their postdocs as assistant professors. Similar programs exist at the University of Michigan and the University of Chicago. The Committee also noted that the postdoctoral fellowships that have been announced on several websites and covered in the *BDH* exclude Latina/os, who constitute only 3% of the Brown faculty. This may be an oversight, but any program that seeks to increase faculty from underrepresented groups should also include Latina/os.

¹⁵ An article in the *BDH* also addresses this disparity. Jennifer Kaplan, "Admin racial diversity ranks among lowest in Ivies," *Brown Daily Herald*, February 28, 2013. Available at <http://www.browndailyherald.com/2013/02/28/admin-racial-diversity-ranks-among-lowest-in-ivies/>

¹⁶ Office of Institutional Research website, Brown University. <http://brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-research/factbook/faculty>

¹⁷ Eli Okun, "U. renews efforts to increase faculty diversity," *Brown Daily Herald*, October 1, 2012. Available at <http://www.browndailyherald.com/2012/10/01/u-renews-efforts-to-increase-faculty-diversity/>

Another strategy to increase diversity among the faculty would be to institute “cluster hires,” thus allowing new faculty to form communities, better assuring that these faculty members will remain at Brown. In the end we recommend to the University that there needs to be multiple strategies for the hiring and retention of scholars from underrepresented groups. Finally, the Committee recommends that academic departments work more closely with OID on developing department-specific diversity plans that incorporate recruitment strategies, metrics, and support and accountability measures that are appropriate to each discipline and are based on national trends. The Division of Biology and Medicine, which is held to stringent diversity requirements by the medical school’s accrediting body, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, might provide one model for the rest of the University.

Support

Frustrated and exhausted best describe the quality of life of faculty of color of all ranks who shared their experiences with us. Many agreed that responsibilities for mentoring our increasingly diverse student body should be shared more equitably, and people of color should not alone shoulder responsibility for improving the campus climate. We were encouraged by conversations that revealed that many faculty members who are not from underrepresented groups have an interest in bringing a broader range of perspectives and histories into their curricula and in supporting students from working-class backgrounds, students of color, and others who might not feel adequately represented at Brown or in their courses. This interest is also evident in the growth of initiatives like the Dean of the College office’s Team Enhanced Advising and Mentoring (TEAM) program, which provides faculty across departments and various axes of difference with an opportunity to share ideas and resources that will strengthen advising for *all* students, with an emphasis on the needs of those whose intersecting identities might mean that they face additional challenges in their transition to Brown.

It bears emphasizing that the objective should be the creation of a climate where there is ongoing attention to and discussion of these matters. To the extent that such responsibility should be spread amongst the faculty, *all* faculty members could be in a much stronger position to support our students. Thus, this report turns to identifying structures that could be created or enhanced in order to provide additional support for faculty – and graduate students, as we discuss later – who may navigate uncomfortable class discussions, who seek to create more inclusive curricula and expand course offerings, or who lack the necessary tools to effectively mentor students coming from very different backgrounds than their own.

The OID’s “Transformative Conversations Project,” designed to “facilitate learning of critical skills and tools for challenging conversations across our diverse perspectives and differences,” is an important step in this direction. However, the Committee’s recommendations focus on cultivating Brown’s own resources and capacities and on ongoing, sustainable workshops and programming. One approach would be to enhance resources in the well-respected Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate teaching assistants. Other ideas include a more robust training during New Faculty Orientation, professional development for Directors of Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies, and visible, ongoing workshops on a variety of topics related to power and privilege and to the experiences and challenges faced by students across various social identities. With the expansion into the world of online instruction and other initiatives, the Sheridan Center’s resources are already stretched thin, and providing this type of support for all instructors – including adjuncts and visiting lecturers – would only be possible if accompanied by an investment of personnel, funds, and additional expertise. One place on campus where some of this expertise is readily available is the Third World Center (TWC). Minority Peer Counselor Friends receive training from the Sheridan Center in preparation for their facilitations during the Third World Transition Program and throughout the academic year. These student staffers have also been invited to lead workshops and discussions among other student groups like Brown Outdoor Leadership Training (BOLT), in effect training other campus leaders. While it is not students’ responsibility to help “sensitize faculty,” as one respondent stated, they could serve as a valuable resource and source of expertise for the Sheridan Center.

Other forms of support for faculty include formally recognizing and rewarding mentoring and advising and more rigorous and robust development of the “Diversity Perspectives” Banner course designation, redefined in 2013 as “Diverse Perspectives in Liberal Learning” (DPLL). This designation is intended to highlight innovative curricula that seek to foster critical self-reflection and dialogues across difference through their content, method, or pedagogy. Both of the previous reports discussed earlier have recommended funding and other incentives for new and redesigned courses that might fit this designation. The new Sophomore Seminars discussed in the University’s strategic plan, which “provide students with small, discussion-based classes addressing critical questions of identity, equity, and justice,” present yet another possibility. Special care should be taken so that the definition is not applied so broadly as to be potentially ineffective. The Committee therefore recommends greater guidance and oversight in the application of this designation, which should be carried out in close consultation with the OID and/or the dean for diversity programs in the Dean of the College office.

Departmental Support and Accountability

Academic departments play a central role in achieving the University’s diversity goals, both with regard to the hiring of new faculty and the support for and retention of current faculty from underrepresented groups. Members of the FEC felt that faculty should develop a greater sense of ownership over the diversity goals of their academic departments, grounded not just in a sense of equity, but in a commitment to “sharpen[ing] debate and promot[ing] intellectual excellence,” to use the language of the 2006 Diversity Action Plan cited above. The review of chairs based on a series of metrics created by the Associate Deans of Academic Affairs and Diversity is standard practice in the Division of Biology and Medicine. It is critical that academic departments be held accountable for their recruitment and hiring practices and for the climate in their classrooms and faculty ranks, all of which might be inadvertently reproducing existing disparities or allowing for the flourishing of unchallenged hostilities. Faculty of color expressed to the Committee that manifestations of intolerance based on race are quotidian facts of life for them. Faculty also shared a concern about not being able to count on the presence of a senior faculty member with tenure who could be regarded as having the influence to effectively represent both their interests and that of the University in matters of retention. To better ensure effective retention as well as a vibrant community in which difference and pluralism are explored and embraced, the Committee suggests that external reviews of academic departments and their course offerings, along with the College Curriculum Council’s review of undergraduate concentrations, pay special attention to both the *representation* of faculty and students of color as well as the *climate* within the department.

Students

The Committee held meetings with undergraduates and graduate students organized in cooperation with the Undergraduate Council of Students and Graduate Student Council (UCS and GSC, respectively) and the Third World Center (TWC). At these meetings, students underscored that the “Ray Kelly Affair” served as a flash point for discussions about racism and other forms of inequality. In general, these students conveyed a sense of disappointment with the University’s handling of the protests and their aftermath and the general failure to provide sufficient support for conversations about race, gender, sexuality, and class. Several students pointed out that they came to Brown over other peer institutions precisely because of Brown’s reputation as an institution that does not shy away from important political issues. Students did note the praiseworthy work of specific individuals, faculty, and administrative staff who serve as resources for such problems and lead the way in having difficult conversations. At the same time, it became clear that the incident allowed certain tensions to come to light that had not been addressed by the University as a whole.

Framing Difficult Conversations

Both graduate and undergraduate students noted that there are certain spaces on campus where they felt they could address issues of identity and privilege. These include the TWC, the Sarah Doyle Women’s Center, and the LGBTQ Center. However, two problems become apparent with this

structure. First, students who seek out these spaces are often from underrepresented groups and are looking specifically for the support that these centers can provide. Hence, the burden of having these conversations seems to fall on those students who already deal with their marginality in some way. These spaces are seen as “self-selecting” and do not have as much reach into the broader student population. How do we engage students who may not be aware of their privilege, or are not necessarily seeking out these conversations in the first place? That is, how do we make the questions of diversity, privilege, and structural oppression central to the student experience at Brown? In some ways, they already are, since these dynamics already play out in different ways around campus, whether certain students feel more comfortable speaking up in class, or how research on these issues is marked as a “minoritarian” issue, i.e. not relevant to everyone. There needs to be more explicit engagement among students both within and outside the classroom about these issues. Some student groups have taken on this responsibility themselves, soliciting TWC student staffers to lead workshops on identity and privilege. But more must be done on an institutional level to encourage and structure these kinds of conversations.

The second problem that arises with difficult conversations on campus is that of facilitation. The Committee was repeatedly told that faculty, students, and administrators need training and skills to have difficult conversations outside of the spaces noted above. For example, while the “Ray Kelly Affair” led to productive, dynamic conversations around the campus, these conversations brought with them their own difficulties. Many students were discussing these issues with their peers for the first time. Hence, students who had been thinking about these issues for a while or who were immediately affected in their daily lives felt a burden to educate their peers or felt unease when they expressed their opinions. *More* conversation is not the only solution to the problem; rather we need *better* conversations – ones that are initiated and facilitated to ensure that participants are sharing their stories and opinions under conditions that promote openness and respect.

Sustainability and Continuity

A recurring question was, “How can we ensure that these issues and conversations (the present report included) are carried forward in a sustainable manner?” This concern derives in part from the fact that the present Committee is not the first to address questions of privilege and discrimination on campus. During the “Ray Kelly Affair” and its aftermath, there appeared to be a sense of surprise, particularly by the administration and some faculty, at the level of outrage expressed by students. This sense of surprise indicates that these earlier reports and committees, as thorough and thoughtful as they have been, have not been integrated into the larger narratives at Brown.

For undergraduates, several programs attempt to address these questions. During fall Orientation, the office of Campus Life and Student Services organizes a “Diversity Class Meeting” for incoming students. In recent years, staff and students have modified the structure of this meeting. What was once a large forum for the entire class followed by smaller group discussions held in the residential units has been redefined as a series of somewhat smaller conversations held simultaneously and driven by a panel of three to four students, facilitated by a staff member and a faculty member. These students are asked to speak to an audience of approximately 300 incoming students about how they have engaged across difference, how they may have navigated the experience of feeling out of place at Brown, and any insight they may have on how their experiences at Brown have been influenced by their identities and backgrounds. Incoming students also watch a video called “Engaging Diversity at Brown and Beyond,” in which the President, administrators, students, and faculty encourage viewers to embrace experiences that will challenge their assumptions about the world and their role in it. Beyond Orientation, TWC student staffers lead first year students in discussions in the residence halls on issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality throughout the academic year. The newly revised “Diverse Perspectives in Liberal Learning” (DPLL) and the new Sophomore Seminars are other mechanisms. Nonetheless, a more comprehensive approach is required, which begins from Orientation and leads up to graduation. During Orientation, we recommend conversations among even smaller groups of students. In addition, international students – both at the undergraduate and graduate levels – require additional support since these issues translate differently across linguistic

and cultural barriers. Programming that deals explicitly with U.S. forms of privilege and discrimination ought to be a central concern for the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISSS) and for the new Assistant Dean/Director of International Student/Visitor Experience in the Dean of the College office as they plan International Student Orientations.

All of our conversations revealed the limitations of Orientation, however, as incoming students may be overwhelmed and unsure of themselves and their place in this new environment. The work already done by TWC staffers across the campus is particularly valuable and should continue to be supported. DPLL courses provide another great space for students to continue these conversations, and efforts should be taken to increase their visibility and to more effectively communicate the benefits of such courses for students from all backgrounds. Particular attention must be paid to developing DPLL courses in fields in math, engineering, and the sciences. Students entering *all* disciplines must grapple with unconscious bias. This requires a certain amount of engagement from the faculty to ensure that they have the skills and language to facilitate such conversations. Faculty would also benefit from expanding their teaching in these ways; one potential outcome might be an increase in interdisciplinary work.

Finally, mentorship for underrepresented students requires sustained progress. While specific programs such as the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship and the African American, Latino, Asian/Asian American, and Native American (ALANA) Mentoring Program provide effective support, there is the sense among students that they need more explicit avenues for mentorship within their departments and from the administration in general. It is worth underscoring again here that mentorship for underrepresented students is mostly conducted on the margins of departments, or with the few sympathetic faculty or administrators that provide this support. Building a sense of community among graduate and undergraduate students from underrepresented groups would greatly facilitate addressing such issues in a sustained manner.

Graduate Student Concerns

Graduate students occupy a particularly fraught position in relation to these issues. As students, they require the same kinds of support that undergraduates require, including programming during Orientation that addresses these questions, additional support for international students, and increasing mentorship opportunities. At the same time, hundreds of graduate students also work as instructors and teaching assistants, where they provide support to undergraduates and try to create appropriate spaces for discussion. In order to do so, graduate students need the skills to facilitate such conversations, and become better educators. Hence, they also need support through the Sheridan Center during their teaching orientations and through professionalization workshops that explicitly address these issues.

Programming that addresses graduate students from underrepresented groups would also benefit from additional attention. “Super Monday” serves as an excellent first step but this program does not include international or master’s students. Events for graduate students of color also do not include international students. This approach does not allow for a truly diverse community of scholars to flourish at Brown. The University should look to peer institutions for examples of such support. As a point of note, the Fontaine Society at the University of Pennsylvania was instituted specifically to address historically underrepresented students in graduate education. Yale University’s Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity provides modest stipends to graduate student fellows, who play a role in fostering a sense of community by organizing programs for their peers.

The attrition rate among graduate students of color is of particular concern since students from underrepresented backgrounds (including low-income students) face the most difficulty in finding both intellectual and financial support for their work. Student organizations such as Nabrit Black Graduate Students Association deserve institutional recognition and financial support so that they

might better advocate for graduate students of color. In addition, the Graduate School should take steps to establish greater institutional representation for underrepresented groups across campus.¹⁸

Brown in the Community

Brown's mission centers its commitment to "the community, the nation, and the world" in a way that distinguishes it from many of its peers. Indeed, the University's responsibility to the neighboring communities and to providing its students with opportunities for hands-on learning are key features of the newly endorsed strategic plan.¹⁹ However, the fall protests on campus revealed unmet potential in the communication between some community members and the University. In fact, the nature of student collaboration with community members, some of whom are themselves Brown alumni, is an important difference separating these recent protests from the student actions of the previous forty years. Our conversations with members of Direct Action for Rights Equality (DARE) and Providence Youth Student Movement (PrYSM) reveal close connections with and affection for Brown students, some of who arrive at their offices via the University-Community Academic Advising Program (UCAAP) and other programs housed in the Swearer Center for Public Service. Students have been able to forge meaningful ties that have benefitted both the organizations and communities they have served and the students' professional and intellectual development and aspirations.

The anger expressed by many community members – themselves engaged in struggles against gentrification and racial profiling – went beyond the outrage they felt over Commissioner Kelly's invitation. This Committee's first report documented the fact that the first appeals to the University regarding Commissioner Kelly's invitation and the framing of his lecture came from alumni in the community. Community members expressed a feeling of being disrespected and of being treated like "outsiders in our own community." There was a sense in these meetings that the University did not consider how the surrounding community would be affected by the Commissioner's lecture, entitled "Proactive Policing." To community members, the decision to move forward with the Commissioner's lecture even after students and alumni raised concerns illustrated a disregard for *their* rights and ignorance about the context in which his lecture took place – namely within the backdrop of a decade-long legislative battle for a Racial Profiling Prevention Act. Several community members (and many students) interviewed indicated that communications from the University which focused on "the free exchange of ideas" without offering a critique or condemnation of policies whose constitutionality had been challenged further reinforced the gulf between the University on the one hand, and students and community members on the other. Our conversations also revealed other concerns about the ways in which the actions of the University impact the community. One specific concern was the proposed expansion of the University into more and more areas of the city. However, it is important to note while expressing concerns there was the sentiment that if treated with respect and listened to when issues warranted it that the community has the potential to be one of the University's most important allies. In this spirit, the four recommendations suggested below are intended to strengthen Brown's relationships with its neighbors while aligning with both the new strategic plan and with our mission to serve "the community, the nation, and the world" by "preparing students to discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation."²⁰

This Committee's first recommendation is that the University develop a clear mechanism for soliciting and responding to concerns about public events that occur on campus. Second, we recommend that the University consider increasing opportunities for off-campus federal work-study in order to provide further vehicles for students on financial aid to forge relationships with community organizations. Third, the Committee supports the expansion of the University-Community Academic Advising Program (UCAAP), which helps students integrate community service and social change work into their Brown education via a pre-Orientation program, academic

¹⁸ Two graduate students presented our committee with a statement describing their experiences at Brown along with several recommendations to the University. The statement is available at http://brown.edu/go/1029/grad_statement.

¹⁹ "Building on Distinction: A New Plan for Brown," October 26, 2013. Available at <http://www.brown.edu/web/documents/BuildingOnDistinctionOct262013.pdf>.

²⁰ Brown University Mission, available at <http://www.brown.edu/about/mission>.

advising, and a monthly seminar. UCAAP provides incoming students with an important introduction to the city of Providence and its residents and a productive way of confronting their own relative privilege regardless of their backgrounds.

Fourth, the University should discuss ways to increase the visibility of opportunities to earn academic credit for research conducted alongside community organizations. The Curricular Resource Center hosts a “Community Research Needs Database,” but this resource could and should be developed further and made more visible to students and faculty through the provision of additional support. The new integrative scholarship initiative proposed in the strategic plan presents another important step in this regard, as its goal is to allow students to more effectively integrate their work on- and off-campus while developing important hands-on experience. Another form of support could be additional resources for faculty to develop courses that draw upon resources and expertise found in the larger community, like the new junior seminar in American studies or courses connected to the Swearer Center’s Engaged Scholars program.²¹ As these initiatives move forward, this Committee urges administrators, faculty, staff, and students to consider not only the pedagogical objectives of such partnerships, but the needs and goals of the community organizations that are serving as field sites or partners. In addition to opportunities for students to work beyond College Hill, the University should consider new ways to bring community organizations to campus as well. One possibility would be an endowed lecture series designed to bring in community organizers as selected speakers; another is to host a bi-annual fair where community organizers themselves can connect with potential volunteers and student-activists for either summer or academic year projects; yet another recommendation is to establish ongoing conversations between community organizers and senior leadership in the form of regular breakfasts or teas, as might be the case with other community stakeholders or valued constituencies.

Conclusion

Just as this report was being finalized, a reenactment of rituals known as a “black mass” that had been organized by the Cultural Studies Club at Harvard Extension School was canceled in response to condemnation from the Archdiocese of Boston, the Harvard Chaplains and other spiritual leaders, and several student groups. The evening of the cancelled lecture, Harvard President Drew Faust issued a statement that spoke to many of the issues raised throughout this report. She wrote,

But even as we permit expression of the widest range of ideas, we must also take responsibility for debating and challenging expression with which we profoundly disagree. . . . The decision by a student club to sponsor an enactment of this ritual is abhorrent; it represents a fundamental affront to the values of inclusion, belonging and mutual respect that must define our community. It is deeply regrettable that the organizers of this event, well aware of the offense they are causing so many others, have chosen to proceed with a form of expression that is so flagrantly disrespectful and inflammatory. Nevertheless, consistent with the University’s commitment to free expression, including expression that may deeply offend us, the decision to proceed is and will remain theirs. At the same time, we will vigorously protect the right of others to respond—and to address offensive expression with expression of their own.²²

Harvard’s President closed by sharing her plans to attend a service at a Catholic Church on campus “to join others in reaffirming our respect for the Catholic faith at Harvard and to demonstrate that the most powerful response to offensive speech is not censorship, but reasoned discourse and robust

²¹ Elizabeth Hoover’s new course was created with support from an Undergraduate Teaching and Research Award (UTRA) from the Dean of the College office. AMST 1700I Community Engagement with Health and the Environment. The description is worth reproducing here. “This junior seminar explores how local community organizations are taking up issues of health and the environment in culturally relevant contexts. We will examine issues of environmental justice, health disparities and the basic tenets of community based participatory research. We will then partner with a local community organization and, depending on need, assist in the design, implementation, and/or evaluation of a program designed to improve the local environment and/or health status of the community.” Available at <http://courses.brown.edu/courses/spring-2014/amst-1700i-s01>.

²² Drew Faust. “Statement on Black Mass.” May 12, 2014. Available at <http://www.harvard.edu/president/news/2014/statement-on-black-mass>.

dissent.” This response affirmed the right of students to invite such a group to campus, even as it criticized them for deciding to proceed with programming that would be so harmful to others. She did this while simultaneously “vigorously protect[ing]” the right of students to protest and showing solidarity with the aggrieved community. This response illustrates the practice of collective responsibility advocated earlier in this report.

The matter of freedom of expression on campus is both straightforward and complex. It is straightforward because it is a right to be both defended and protected. It is complex because all rights are practiced within communities which are in turn shaped by histories that are often ignored. Universities and colleges must now face the challenge of tackling the legacies of these histories. Brown’s deepest aspiration is a commitment to equity, forms of social justice, and practices of democracy. The “Ray Kelly Affair” has created an opportunity for the University to seize the moment and begin to deepen its commitment to its aspirations in practical ways. This means providing the necessary resources to programs and projects that will push us farther along the path we desire to travel. Of equal importance is the senior administration’s delineation of the vision and concrete steps that should be taken with regular reviews that reflect upon our desired goals. Too often, reports such as these are highlighted for a moment, embraced in certain key ways, and then quietly abandoned as the spotlight is moved away from the issues that were once exposed. Brown has an opportunity to be a national leader by grappling and working through the challenging questions raised here. We trust that this report will be used as a catalyst for action, a platform for conversation, and when agreed upon, for reform. Our aspirations demand no less.

Summary Recommendations

We have provided several proposals. The University’s commitment to address the issues raised in recent incidents and in this report will be best assessed in light of the resources that are committed to these and other initiatives. We urge the University to solicit a one-year report to examine the steps that have been taken to accomplish the goal of a more inclusive campus.

1. Set concrete goals and strategies for increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of faculty, senior administration, and the graduate student body. Recommendations include:
 - a. Creating a pathway to tenure-track positions following the new President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship;
 - b. Adding Latina/os to the President’s postdocs;
 - c. Making cluster hires;
 - d. Establishing diversity action plans at the departmental level; and
 - e. Expanding the Graduate School’s diversity recruiting events to include international and master’s students.
2. Provide OID with additional resources, specific charges, and a clear accountability plan. Charges should include:
 - a. Periodically assessing the campus climate;
 - b. Tracking and publishing more robust statistics on the composition of the undergraduate and graduate student bodies, faculty, staff, and administration; and
 - c. Identifying diversity benchmarks for undergraduate and graduate student support; rates of retention and persistence in science and math fields and along pre-professional paths; and probation and graduation across various categories such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status.
3. Increase support for faculty and graduate students in the Sheridan Center and the OID, both of which require additional resources and personnel.
4. Increase communication with faculty (including advisors) and students about the new “Diverse Perspectives in Liberal Learning” Banner course designation. This should include:

- a. Providing incentives for new and modified courses that would merit this designation, including courses that allow students to engage in the broader Providence community, such as the junior seminar in American studies;
 - b. Identifying ways to make this feature more meaningful, useful, and visible for students; and
 - c. Increasing collaboration between the offices of the Dean of the College and Institutional Diversity in the review of courses and the application of this designation.
5. Pay special attention to racial and ethnic diversity in external departmental reviews and concentration reviews conducted by the College Curriculum Council. Attention should also be paid to the climate in particular courses, which could be reviewed in course evaluations.
 6. Identify new ways to formally recognize faculty for their mentoring and advising of students.
 7. Provide additional institutional recognition and support for graduate students from underrepresented groups.
 8. Enhance opportunities for student engagement in the Providence community by:
 - a. Increasing opportunities for off-campus work-study to enhance student exposure to the work of community organizations;
 - b. Increasing visibility of opportunities to earn academic credit for research done alongside community organizations; and
 - c. Increasing support for the University-Community Academic Advising Program so that it may serve a greater number of students.
 9. Expand partnerships and relationships with a broader range of community organizations by:
 - a. Considering the needs of community organizations in identifying direct service and research opportunities managed by the Swearer Center for Public Service, and as part of the new integrative scholarship initiative;
 - b. Clarifying processes for students and community members to voice their concerns about on-campus programming; and
 - c. Developing opportunities for community organizations to engage in conversations with senior leadership on an ongoing basis.
 10. Given that this report and its proposals represent only the most recent in a history of such reports aimed at addressing issues of race, equity, and inclusivity at Brown, we urge the University to establish an ad hoc group to assess the commitment to and effectiveness of the institution's response to this report. We further recommend that the members of this group be designated within the next month, and that the group be charged with making a report to members of the Brown community in one year.

Submitted by:

Carlos Aizenman, Associate Professor of Neuroscience

Amanda Anderson, Professor of English

Anthony Bagues, Professor of Africana Studies (committee chair)

Lina Fruzzetti, Professor of Anthropology

Michael Grabo, Associate Counsel

Philip Gruppuso, Professor of Pediatrics

Terra Laughton, Undergraduate student, Class of 2014

Lakshmi Padmanabhan, Graduate student, Modern Culture and Media

Dakotah Rice, Undergraduate student, Class of 2016

Besenia Rodriguez, Associate Dean of the College

Appendix I: Charge of Committee on the Events of October 29, 2013

This Committee will examine the events surrounding the disruption of a lecture that was to be given by NYC Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly at Brown University on October 29, 2013. The Committee's broad charge is to help us understand what happened, why it happened, and to make recommendations that will establish Brown as a leader in supporting an inclusive environment for members of our community while upholding our deep commitment to the free exchange of ideas.

The Committee's work will take place in two phases. In the first phase, the Committee will review the activities and circumstances related to the October 29 lecture, including the manner in which student concerns were addressed prior to the event; the role of groups from outside of Brown in the disruption; and the way the lecture itself was managed. The Committee report from this first phase will inform the University's review of policies and procedures surrounding lectures and events on controversial topics and its handling of alleged student conduct code violations. The Committee will not be charged with making recommendations on possible disciplinary actions. This phase 1 report will be completed no later than the end of winter break.

In the second phase, the Committee will address the broader issues of campus climate, free expression, and dialogue across difference that were brought to the fore by the events of October 29 and subsequent campus discussions. The Committee will consult widely with members of the campus community and make recommendations regarding how Brown can maintain an inclusive and supportive environment for all of our members while upholding our commitment to the free exchange of ideas. This could include (but is not limited to) recommendations for how to:

- Strengthen and clarify our norms for Brown community member behavior on issues of free expression;
- Cultivate an environment in which community members from all backgrounds and intellectual viewpoints feel comfortable on the Brown campus, possibly through improvements to student orientation or programming that takes place throughout the year;
- Create academic opportunities (classes or seminars) for students and faculty to explore issues of freedom of expression within a diverse society.

The Committee will be asked to produce a phase 2 report no later than the end of the spring semester.

Appendix II: Christina Paxson's letter to the Editor of [The Brown Daily Herald, April 2, 2014](#)

To the Editor:

Nearly 50 years ago, in 1966, the Brown University faculty voted to establish the right of any faculty member or student group to invite any speaker of their choosing to campus. This new policy was affirmed by the Brown University Corporation, and it remains in effect today.

This policy change took place during a turbulent time in America. Memories of the McCarthy Era blacklists were still fresh, the Civil Rights movement was in full swing and opposition to the Vietnam War was mounting across the country, especially on university campuses.

The new policy represented a huge win for Brown students. Previously, students had to gain the approval of the Brown administration to bring controversial speakers to campus. Malcolm X's visit to Brown in 1961 nearly didn't happen: President Barnaby Keeney refused several student requests to invite him. He finally relented only on the grounds that no University funds be used to support the event. The new policy removed the administrative filter on who could be invited, paving the way for a much wider range of ideas to be presented and debated at Brown.

This year, some students have questioned whether there should be limits to this policy. They have argued that there are some people whose ideas are so hurtful to members of the community that they should not be invited to speak at Brown. This includes then-New York City Police Department Commissioner Raymond Kelly and, more immediately, Sergeant Benjamin Anthony, a reservist in the Israeli Defense Forces, who is to speak at the Brown/RISD Hillel this evening.

The Hillel invitation to Sergeant Anthony differs from the invitation by the Taubman Center for Public Policy and American Institutions to Commissioner Kelly in one important respect: Hillel is an independent organization and its events are governed by Hillel policies, not University policies. However, the Hillel event has resurrected the important debate over "who can speak" at Brown. I hope members of our community pay attention to this debate.

As most members of the Brown community know, I strongly support the current policy that allows faculty members and student groups to invite anyone of their choosing to campus. I will continue to support and enforce this policy as long as I am Brown's president. To backslide on this issue would be to condone censorship. It would have a chilling effect on the intellectual environment on campus and erode an important right that faculty members and students currently enjoy. I certainly do not want to revert to the old days, in which the approval of the Brown president was needed to invite a controversial speaker to campus. I would also oppose giving this power of approval to any other person or group on campus. Such a move would hurt the entire community. It could even come back to harm the very individuals who have objected to inviting Commissioner Kelly and Sergeant Anthony – by limiting their ability to bring speakers with opposing points of view to campus in the future.

What should members of our community do if someone whose views and actions are thought to be abhorrent is invited to speak on campus? Students have many options. One is to attend the talk (if it is open to the general population), listen and ask hard questions. Another is to boycott the talk. Yet another option is to protest. Protest has a long and proud history at Brown. Time and time again students have used it to express deeply felt beliefs about important social and political issues. Peaceful protest – which respects University policies and Rhode Island laws – is protected by the Brown Code of Student Conduct. I am proud of our students who exercise their right to peaceful protest and, as president of Brown, I will support this right with as much energy and zeal as I support the right of faculty members and students to invite anyone they want to speak at Brown.

Christina Paxson
President