PRESIDENT’S STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, September 10, 2019
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
South Street Landing, Room 499

MINUTES

**Attendance:** Liisa Laine, co-chair; Grace Young, co-chair; Sarah Aneyci; Sarah Brown; Geeta Chougule; Laura Dobler; Kristine Dodd; Tara Greenwood; Annemarie Kennedy; Michael Leitao; Derek Lisi; Abigail Peterson; Jessica Pontarelli; Felicia Raton; Barbara Simoneau; Maria Sokolova; Beth Travers; Ray Windsor; Yi Vizard

Absent: Dawn Cummings; Daisy Ferreira; Catherine Hanni; Joel Hernandez (on leave); Laura Pleasants; Jennifer Quiroz

1. **Acceptance of meeting minutes: August 27, 2019**

There were no objections to the minutes and they were accepted by all present members.

2. **Guest Speaker: Shay Collins, Director of Institutional Equity & Community Engagement**

Shay Collins (pronoun: they/them/theirs) was invited by the Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee to speak with SAC About bias reporting.

Shay reported that, after losing Lynn Hernandez to a position in New York, the Office of Institutional Equity and Community Engagement (OIECE) is working to build their staff up to a total of 12 people, working under Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity, Shontay Delalue.

In addition to Title IX and bias work, the office does equity and diversity work (programming and events) and supports students; this was their third year providing an orientation specific to graduate students of color, and they will also host events throughout the year for students of color.

Brown University’s bias incident system launched last year in response to incidents on campus. The law has a high threshold for discrimination and harassment, and Brown is working to lower that threshold on campus. The system runs through Maxient (a secure system used for student conduct issues). “Radical honesty” in the reporting system runs on three items: truth telling, valuing the personal experience (listening to narratives and taking into account a culmination of other incidents/experiences), and
action. They are holding workshops on identifying bias, changing biased behavior, and how to file a discrimination complaint.

There is an online reporting mechanism at Brown University. Reportbias.brown.edu is for anyone with Brown login credentials, or for those unaffiliated with Brown an online PDF form. Both initiate the same process of review and action. The website includes FAQs and a glossary of terminology. OIECE is also printing up cards with information that can be distributed on campus.

An annual report on the reporting system will come out in October and be available to the whole campus. All data is important; it will help Brown correlate with the climate survey.

SAC Question & Answer session with Shay:

**If someone outside of Brown files a complaint, who reviews and decides the cases?**
A review team is made up of a number of faculty, staff and students, representing the entire campus, and they review all cases filed by those inside and outside of the Brown community. The team meets weekly for 90 minutes to review reports and make recommendations. Anything needing disciplinary action is forwarded to the appropriate office (Student Conduct, Human Resources, or the Dean of the Faculty), with the expectation that they will follow up and act on the recommendations.

**If the filer is not happy with the results, does the committee meet again to follow up?**
No. Shay talks to Shontay about every case and can highlight what has or hasn’t happened, and Shontay will help move through the next stage of accountability.

**How often do bias incidents come up?**
There were 23 since the system launched in January through May (the system is only active during the academic year). There are already two more that were submitted even before fall classes started.
The most common incidents are either students reporting on faculty and faculty reporting on faculty. There were more incidents in April than in other months, but the system is new and they’ll need to continue gathering data.
Race and gender are usually issues, but can LGBTQ incidents be reported as well?

Yes, you can sort the report by targeted identity. There are over 150 types of bias altogether, but people accessing the reporting system can choose from the list of the top 15 most common nationally and have the ability to list any others.

Do you consult with others?
There are two team members who consult with outside entities as needed.

If you witness something, can you report what you witness or do you tell the victim how to report?
There’s no law or policy mandating people to report, but reporting is highly encouraged. There are categories to report as the victim, as a witness with permission of the victim, or as a third-party witness when the victim doesn’t know you are reporting the incident.

Are any groups reporting more problems than others?
Students against faculty are the highest.

Do faculty know there are so many reports about them?
They will when the report is released.
Deputy Dean of the Faculty Janet Blume is involved and will call people into meetings for egregious offenses.

Staff members might already be hesitant to report against faculty, who are perceived as being revered on campus—but there would be an additional obstacle in a small department where it’s easy to figure out who filed the report (especially if there are even fewer staff of the gender, race, religion, or sexual identity that had been targeted). How is a division or an individual protected from escalation or retaliation?
You don’t have to put your name on a form, but it’s true that circumstances of an incident can make the report filer easy to identify. Brown has an anti-retaliation policy, which has consequences for those who retaliate against others. If a faculty member is accused of something particularly egregious, but a student or staff member is scared and almost done with their class/degree and worried their grade or reputation will be hurt for speaking up, that fear will be recognized and supported. They will never put someone in a situation where they’re easily identifiable, and a useful procedure has been for OIECE to claim to be providing trainings to all departments, or is approaching a department that has not reached its DIAP goal. For example, Shay’s office addressed the entire faculty of the Medical School on bias, providing somewhat vague examples of
what an incident could look like but not naming the student or faculty who had actually been involved in an incident at Brown. This type of presentation gets the message across but protects individuals and departments from being singled out.

Also, Shay’s office can pull up prior records on a person. If they show similar conduct more than once there are stricter consequences.

**Is retaliation a bias reporting category as well?**
Yes.

**You’re collecting a lot of data. Do you ever suggest things to Human Resources about changes to handbooks or putting things into place?**
Not yet, because it’s only a small amount of data right now, but they will be looking for patterns as they gather more. Shontay Delalue takes the annual report to the Cabinet, and recommendations for an institutional change are then placed on record. This has already brought about some change. For example, an academic symposium for all faculty (now sponsored by the Provost’s Office) was a result of bias reporting.

**Diversity and Inclusion events, particularly the Professional Development Lunchtime Series, were well received; will those be continued now that Lynn Hernandez has left?**
Yes, Shay Collins and Sue Vieira are taking over for Lynn for the fall and will be posting events soon. If you’re interested in the critical consciousness reading group, they’re looking for about 60 participants across campus. Shay will share the info with SAC to disseminate.

**3. Upcoming Events Updates: Holiday Party**

The holiday party is Dec. 5 from 4-6 p.m. Marguerite was looking into the South Street Landing lobby as a location (Sayles is the default if we cannot hold it there). SAC needs volunteers for tasks and planning teams for decorating and community service. Last year they did Toys for Tots, which was well-received; people got raffle tickets for bringing in toys. Grace Young will reach out to United Way to explore other opportunities.

Liisa Laine needs solicitors for raffle donations and a silent auction that we could advertise online in advance of the party with nice photos of the items to generate interest. Last year, Wynette Zuppardi in Financial Services talked about a SAC TouchNet store, but it’s not worth doing due to the high fees. Sarah Brown will ask Emily Nolan in CareerLAB, who lent her TouchNet to SAC for last year’s party. SAC would need to add a TouchNet percentage (usually 3-5%) to all transactions. The auction can’t be run on TouchNet; it’s only for the final purpose. Venmo can’t be used because
transactions must be run internally. Laura Dobler noted that she had used Venmo for United Way, and Liisa will talk to John Luipold who ran one last year.

We would need some really nice silent auction items. Tara already has the Dean Hotel, Hotel Providence and Snookers. SAC members were encouraged to sign up on the sheet to help Tara collect items (Ray added that we still have tickets waiting from Avon Cinema from Staff Development Day, which ended up having too many prizes to collect). A lot of organizations can only donate once per year, so if we used them for SDD we can’t ask again for the holiday party.

Grace and Liisa will share the sign-up sheet this week after confirming whether the party will include Toys for Tots or something else.

The co-chairs and Tara will also get on the schedule of George Barboza, Director of Dining Programs to provide a budget and find out what can be provided in it.

The sheet also needs facilities requests for tables, sound for the entertainment, etc. The photo booth was a big hit last year, and Jess Pontarelli still has info for it. Events usually works on payments to the vendor, but it was noted that Marguerite had said to hold off on going through Events right now.

There are decorations in Catherine Hanni’s office. She’s traveling a lot, so SAC has to schedule a meeting with her to go through what’s on hand. A few SAC members were interested in decorations, and they plan to sign up when the volunteer spreadsheet is circulated.

4. Staff Concerns & Updates

Bear Market: There have been questions about Bear Market - why is it collecting for Brown students and not the Food Bank?

People think the University already has resources to help students. This was an unexpected sentiment but similar to the coat drive done last year. First- and second-year Brown students are essentially forced onto meal plans, so food is a sensitive subject. There are graduate students who are struggling; Grace Young wants to meet with Janet Cooper Nelson in the Chaplain’s Office to express concerns. Yi Vizard asked if Janet could attend a SAC meeting to respond to questions, as more education can help support the idea to the public; we need to share a message about helping the Brown community, not just students, as anyone can access and benefit from the Bear Market. SAC just needs to be careful how to frame wording, so no announcements have gone out in Today@Brown yet. Sarah Aneyci, Yi Vizard and the co-chairs will speak separately. Sarah has not only a collection box but also some materials about the market.
Abby Peterson noted that many international and graduate students don’t have a stipend or family support during their studies at Brown; Mike Leitao added that a personal story will go a long way. SAC should advertise the market to staff as well as students; it’s for the whole community.

Parking garage safety issue: Ray Windsor noted that a grad student parked at Richmond Garage had all four tires stolen. Mike Leitao added that this has happened in both the Richmond and South Street Landing garages. Brown’s Department of Public Safety (DPS) sent out a letter on July 1st and is discussing how to send the pamphlet out with info on tire safety every time someone is awarded a garage spot from the Department of Transportation. DPS promised to up their patrols following the first incident but didn’t, so Transportation has pushed back on DPS, who is now starting to patrol the garages (in addition to the people Brown leases them from). The landlords of both garages are being pushed to install cameras. The student was moved to a lit employee-only lot because she felt unsafe and depends on her commute from Boston each day, and she is grateful that Brown helped her and was happy with the results. Ray also reported that Brown waived the student’s parking for a year.

The Transportation Department is working on getting better cameras for the lots Brown owns (one person noted that a robbery had occurred but the footage was too poor to identify the thief), but the Richmond and South Street Landing garages are out of our control. No one should be able to steal four tires during daylight and not be seen by anyone; it’s unacceptable for paying pass holders to have to worry about that.

Upcoming Events and Reminders:

Professor of Political Science Wendy Schiller will be the Faculty in Focus speaker on either Nov. 14 or Dec. 2 (Beth Travers confirming the date with the Faculty Club). SAC members wishing to attend need to register; spots aren’t being held for them.

All upcoming SAC events:

- Staff Welcome Back Taco Tuesday event | Sept. 17 | 5-7 p.m. | The Underground
- Veteran’s Networking event | Sept. 25 | 12-1 p.m. | Watson Institute Room 353
- Parent Networking event | Oct. 11 | 12-1 p.m. | Petteruti Lounge
- SAC Recruitment Lunch | Oct. 15 | 12-2 p.m. | Chancellor’s Dining Room - bring one colleague with you
- Staff trivia w/ SAO | Oct. 30 (date TBC) | 12-2 p.m. | Kasper Multipurpose Room
- Faculty in Focus event | Date TBD | Faculty Club
- Cultural Potluck | Nov. 4 | 12:30-1:30 p.m. | SSL Rooms 497-498
- SAC Lunch with President Paxson | Nov. 5 | 12:00pm | 55 Power St.
- Holiday party | Dec. 5 | 4-6 p.m. | TBD
SAC will meet next on Tuesday, September 24 at 12 p.m. in the Kasper Multipurpose Room