



B R O W N U N I V E R S I T Y

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Dear Members of the Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Board,

Thank you for your service on the Board and for your important contributions during the first year of implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). As you know, the Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Board (DIOB) plays a significant role in ensuring accountability for the implementation of the DIAP. Your careful review of the Departmental DIAPs, of qualitative and quantitative metrics, and of the preparation of and content in the annual report were essential for helping our community make progress toward the many goals that we outlined in the *Pathways* document last year. We realize that the DIAP and DDIAPs are living documents, and we expect to improve future iterations of these plans based on lessons learned from the previous year. The recommendations you provided in the memo that accompanies the 2017 Annual Report helps us advance our work.

Overall, we agree with the points you raise in the memo. Responses are provided below, after your comments (in italics).

Let us start by addressing your comments on the composition of the DIOB and process. As outlined in the DIAP, the DIOB was intended to represent the entire university community by including faculty, students, staff, and administrators on the Board. Given that the Board cannot represent the full diversity of the University in any one year, we plan to reappoint Board members annually with the hope of drawing in new representatives from different parts of Brown. The President will take your recommendations into serious consideration during her selection process this spring.

Additionally, we will revise the timeline for producing the annual report, so that the DIOB has more time to prepare its response. We will ask the OIDI to prepare a draft of the annual report no later than the middle of the fall semester. This change in timing will also help the Corporation Committee on Diversity and Inclusion do its work, and will permit a more fruitful discussion between the DIOB and the Corporation Committee at the October Corporation meeting.

Responses to your specific comments and suggestions follow:

1. *The sections on “process” in the academic, center, and non-academic unit plans reveal a great deal of inconsistency. Concerned that such variation will impact results, we recommend that at every step—from conception to completion—all relevant constituencies (faculty, students, and staff) should be intimately, meaningfully, and equitably involved in all subsequent revisions. This would allow for each unit to come to its own conclusions about a best path forward, but would also ensure that all constituents were involved in the decision-making process. Likewise, some of the better (more generative) ambitions of the departmental/ center DDIAPs on subjects like teaching, research, and community engagement could be highlighted for the campus community, and identified as a “best practices.” Definitions of HUGs could be clearer and more consistent. Best practices for the internal review process could be outlined by the administration and all units could be strongly encouraged to adopt them.*

As you know, one of the main goals of the departmental DIAPs is to ensure that individual units are as inclusive as possible in planning and implementing their diversity and inclusion action plans. The “inclusivity of process” was one of the metrics we used to evaluate DDIAPs. It was clear that some departments/units were more successful in this dimension than others. To help strengthen some of the weaker plans, we shared best practices for inclusivity both in our response letters to draft DDIAPs and during division wide meetings with department chairs and units. In addition, OIDI has been working with individual departments to improve their processes toward this end. Going forward, we will continue to meet with Chairs and Directors to ensure that future iterations of these plans are based on an inclusive process that engages full participation of each community. Finally, we will work with departments/units to reinforce the use of our definition of “HUGs” as stated in the *Pathways* document.

2. *Going forward, the review process would benefit from more qualitative data (either through surveys or interviews with a random sampling). Perhaps especially on efforts to mentor, retain, and promote HUGs untenured faculty, on the mentorship and inclusion of graduate student HUGs, on the expansion of CAPS and on department climate concerns. Quantitatively, there is room for improvement as well. We might also, for instance, document the number of HUG prospective faculty (and graduate students) brought to campus every year; or survey recently tenured faculty for a candid snapshot of the process; or sample graduate students before and after graduation to see how HUG students are trained for their careers and prepared for life after Brown. In this, the OIDI can benefit more from the expertise of Brown faculty and graduate students in producing rigorous and analytically significant results.*

Please see the response to this and comment #4 below.

3. *Disability is a major blind spot. We recommend, as a basic start, a campus-wide survey of the built environment of Brown, with a focus on accessibility for the wide range of disabled persons in our community, along with the full range of qualitative assessments described above.*

We agree. While we do not yet have the benefit of seeing the DDIAP of SEAS, which we believe will make important progress towards identifying our goals for diversity and inclusion as it relates to ability status, this issue is one that we can see more universally addressed in individual plans, professional development sessions, and elsewhere. The recent session on “Dis/ability: Access and Inclusion at Brown” during the 2017 Professional Day is one such example. We will pay close attention to ensuring that we identify measurable goals, and make progress towards these goals in future iterations of the DDIAPS, and the DIAP more broadly.

We would also like to note progress that the University has made in improving access for those with physical disabilities. Although there is much more to do, Brown has increased the accessibility of the campus from 54% to 78% over the past fifteen years. Through renovations and added space during this time, we have made over 1.7 million square feet of the campus accessible, including 70% of residence hall space, and 80% of academic space. The renovation of Wilson Hall, which will make this major classroom building fully accessible, will begin this summer. We will make sure that next year’s Annual Report includes a section on accessibility to detail our continued progress in this critically important area.

- 4. The comprehensive review of campus efforts would be easier if we had the same sorts of demographic data—and with the same degree of granularity—from all of the units on campus. Right now, though, we have a lot of asymmetry in the data—we have different details from the Dean of the Faculty, the School of Public Health, and Human Resources on hiring, recruitment, etc. Ideally, the most granular form of data should be the gold standard moving forward, and all data should be disaggregated, up-to-date, and transparent. We believe this would be useful for the DIOB - and useful for you, too.*

In response to comments 2 & 4: We agree that having consistent data across units is a priority, and this will be an area of focus in the coming year. However, we want to note that the collection and presentation of data is complex because these data are guided both by our commitment to ensuring individual privacy, and federal reporting standards. At the departmental level, our ability to present the data we collect is constrained by the population size of HUGs in an individual unit. Similarly, University Human Resources is guided by strict federal reporting guidelines on employment status, grade level, etc.

More broadly, we agree that it would be helpful to engage a committee of data fluent faculty, students and staff to help guide our quantitative and qualitative data collection and presentation processes going forward. We will explore how to do this for the coming year, and would recommend that this group work closely with the data committee that has been formed by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) and OIDI.

We already have plans to supplement the staff survey that was conducted in the spring of 2016 with a large number of focus groups that are run by an external expert in the

field. These focus groups will begin in April 2017. This qualitative data will help us understand areas of concern in the staff survey.

5. *The DIAP rightfully emphasizes accountability, but our conversations revealed some confusion about how this plays out on the ground. We should work to clarify the mechanisms for this when it comes to issues of climate, inclusion, harassment, and discrimination. Are there, members of the board wondered, Title VI protocols to match what we've recently set up in Title VI? Is there an OIDI confidential dropbox? How do we handle complaints? Both the timeline and the process, we suggest, should be perfectly clear to all constituents. Likewise, we also wondered whether there should not also be clarity on the timeline and the process for departments and units where, after qualitative survey results are revealed, structures and cultures continue to be marked as problematic.*

This fall, Vice President Liza Cariaga-Lo chaired an administrative committee that examined and made suggestions on the clarity of protocols for reports of climate, inclusion, harassment and discrimination. The committee's report echoes your view that there is a need for clearer communication to the campus, and it identifies specific actions to make information and processes more clear and accessible. We expect the work of implementing the recommendations will be complete by the start of the fall 2017 semester.

6. *The scope of the DIAP is broad. We had some thoughts about what might still be on the drawing board. Within our commitment to enabling staff development, might we make it easier for staff to take classes at Brown? We should continue to pay attention to advancement at every level for staff, and make sure that there are meaningful opportunities. We might also make it possible for Brown to provide funding for promising HUG undergraduates to continue on for graduate training, perhaps in 5th year MA programs or PhD programs. These possibilities came up several times in our meetings.*

New ideas are always appreciated and welcome. However, we have to balance the imperative to make progress on the goals set out in the DIAP against the inclination to add new goals or programs. If we do not prioritize, we risk diffusing our resources and slowing progress in other areas. Some of the proposed additions—such as attention to disability—seem very important. Others proposed additions may take lower priority.

To your specific suggestions, the OIDI has been discussing benefits and staff development opportunities with University Human Resources. Additionally, OIDI launched the Administrative Fellows Program, in part based on these conversations, and we could certainly use this program as a vehicle to address some of the ideas you raise. It will be interesting to see what ideas emerge from the staff focus groups, referenced above. We continue to explore funding opportunities for masters programs. Brown's doctoral programs provide full funding for all students.

7. *What comes next is unclear. If Phase One (or Year One) of the DIAP was about capacity building, next year's incoming board is responsible for assessing Phase Two and should have a clear sense of its aims and ambitions. Likewise, under the larger umbrella of the university's DIAP, it might be good to plot out what "next generation" diversity and inclusion actions plans (DDIAPS) might look like for the humanities, the social sciences, or the physical sciences. Is it possible, for instance, to conceptualize what a unit plan might look like for all of the social sciences? Or all of the humanities?*

We see our work in the coming year focusing on five priorities: (1) Continue to make progress on the university-wide diversity goals of the DIAP around faculty hiring, graduate student enrolment, undergraduate admission and staff hiring; (2) Track and assess progress on initiatives aimed at increasing achievement and inclusion among historically-underrepresented groups (faculty, staff and students); (3) Advance qualitative data collection, so that we can better measure inclusion on campus; (4) Add new goals around disability and access; and (5) Continue to work with departments to refine and make progress on the goals laid out in their DDIAPS. Your suggestion of bringing together ideas from across departments in the same division (social sciences, etc.) is a good one. This fall, department chairs in the same divisions were brought together to discuss areas of overlap and mutual interest, and we hope to cultivate more collaboration in the future.

8. *Recognizing that not everyone can know everything, it would still be useful for the DIOB to know more about the budget process, so that we can assess whether we have enough funding to cover all of the aspects of the university-wide DIAP. We very much appreciated the budgetary briefing from the Provost, but it remains unclear (to the DIOB) whether the budget is big enough or robust enough to match the ambitious spirit of the larger plan. Is the DIAP, we wondered, budgeted in a way that will allow for it to succeed on time? This might not be an issue for the DIOB, we admit, but there should still be a mechanism to review the long-term budget.*

We agree that a budget presentation earlier in the semester would be beneficial to the new DIOB. It will offer an opportunity to highlight the streams of budgetary funding, and how we work with the URC to regularize funding streams in the university budget to ensure that the DIAP is financially sustainable for years to come. The budget allocations to the DIAP are also important to the ad hoc Corporation Committee on Diversity and Inclusion. The presentation by the Provost to the DIOB did try to show how we are budgeting for specific items, over time, and by drawing on different sources of funding, so that we can succeed in implementing the DIAP. That said, an annual budget update by the Provost to the DIOB would help illustrate whether or not we remain on track to fully support all of our diversity and inclusion goals. This would also enhance transparency. We are happy to commit to this.

9. *We learned much, once more, from our meeting with the DOF and the Provost, and we are grateful for their time. The larger Brown community needs also to see and understand the process—perhaps especially the process of the DIOB—and not just*

receive a summary, such as the one the annual report offers, to have more faith in the significance of these accomplishments. Every effort, we suggest, should be made to establish greater transparency into the process of implementation (as far as the DIAP is concerned) and review (as far as the DIOB is concerned).

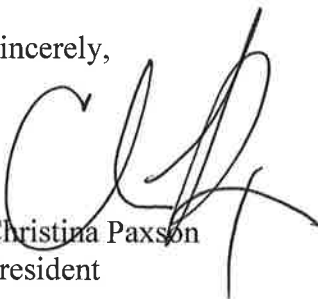
This is a very good point. This spring we have made, or will be making similar presentations to the UCS, GSC, Faculty, Chairs and Directors, the February OIDI Professional Development day, and elsewhere.

10. Finally, anecdotal evidence suggests that there are lingering concerns about staffing and capacity at CAPS. Members of the board, reaching out to students (undergraduate and graduate) over the fall and through the winter break, continued to hear that some had difficulty making timely appointments or finding a culturally competent counselor, a challenge exacerbated by our dramatic socio-political context. Beyond the need for serious qualitative data about the long-term impact of changes we've already made, we recommend that the university investigate this in short order and amplify its mental health resources as required to meet to existing and immediate student demand.

We agree that there are still lingering concerns about CAPS despite substantial progress (for example, 45% of therapists are now from historically-underrepresented groups, and the seven-session limit has been lifted.) In addition, CAPS is tracking data on wait times and service delivery so it can identify opportunities for continued service delivery improvement. With the hire of the new director of CAPS, we are confident that many of the challenges you note will be addressed.

Once again, thank you for your service on the Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Board. The University's commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion at Brown is critical to our academic excellence and our ability to realize the strategic goals that we outline in *Building on Distinction*. The Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Board played a very important role in ensuring that our entire community was held accountable to the lofty goals that we outlined in *Pathways*, and we are grateful for your time.

Sincerely,



Christina Paxson
President



Richard Locke
Provost