

Diversity Advisory Board Annual Report 2009-2010

1) Charge

The Diversity Advisory Board (DAB) is a broadly representative, deliberative group that meets to consider matters that concern the campus community especially with regards to diversity. Its mission concerns the well-being of the community – its capacity for collegiality and the pursuit of the commonweal while preserving an excellent education for all students.

The goals of the Board include:

- Working with and advising the Associate Provost and Director of Institutional Diversity and other senior officers as appropriate concerning the promotion of diversity and the development of a welcoming and inclusive campus climate;
- Identifying ways to educate the community about diversity and providing guidance for dealing with community issues; and
- Developing an effective means of communication about diversity issues to all segments of the community.

2) Organization and Membership

The DAB is chaired by Valerie Wilson, Associate Provost and Director of Institutional Diversity. A faculty Vice-Chair, Elmo Terry Morgan (Africana Studies), was elected at the October 8, 2009 meeting. The appointed members of the DAB included: Margaret Klawuum (VP Campus Life), Christine Janis (EEB), Anita Zimmerman (MPPB), Marion Orr (Political Science), Michael Satlow (Religious Studies), Brittany Check (undergraduate), Madeline Avedano (undergraduate), Ravi D’Cruz (Medical Student), Yasir Ahmed (Medical Student), Ashan Hussain (Graduate Student) Nicholas Everage (Graduate Student), Elizabeth Love (Staff) Michou Cabbabe (Staff) Sheila Coleman (Staff). Marcel DeDios (Psychiatry and Human Behavior) joined, as a guest, May 2010.

Administrative staff who participated in the Diversity Advisory Board meetings were: Catherine Axe (Disability Services), Jabbar Bennett (Asst Dean, Grad School), Maitrayee Bhattacharyya (Asst Dean for Diversity, DOC), Gail Cohee (Dir Women’s Center), Janet Cooper Nelson (University Chaplin), Kelly Garrett(LGBTQ Cord.), Ricky Gresh (Sr. Director, Campus Life) Staff), Wendy McRae-Owoeye (Dir Staff Diversity), Michelle Nuey (Special Services, DPS), Emma Simmons (Asst Dean Diversity, Medicine), Kisa Takesue (Assoc Dean Student Life).

There were four meetings over the course of the academic year. Meetings were held on: October 8, 2009, February 10, 2010, April 10, 2010, May 12, 2010

3) Topics Discussed

Board Member Orientation

At its fall meeting, an orientation to the work of the Diversity Advisory Board was conducted; four of the five faculty members were new to the group, as were two undergraduate participants. A review of the Office of Institutional Diversity, its recent update report, and other University diversity initiatives was discussed.

Institutional Diversity Website

Several discussions focused on the need to renovate the Institutional Diversity website. The DAB suggested that the website provide linkages to the various units of the university to showcase diversity activities and programs. It was also suggested that relevant data and useful resources be included in the revised website. The website can be accessed at: <http://www.brown.edu/Administration/diversity/>.

Google Grant for Institutional Diversity

At the winter meeting, DAB members were informed that the Office of Institutional Diversity received an unsolicited grant of \$20,000 from Google to further the work of the office. The Diversity Advisory Board responded favorably to the idea of using these funds to create a series of diversity awards to deserving faculty and staff across the university who make significant advances toward diversity efforts. The Diversity Advisory Board decided to create a subcommittee to develop the criteria and processes for this award and for the first set of prizes to be distributed in spring 2011 at an event to honor the recipients.

Organization Review process

At the winter meeting, Elizabeth Huidekoper, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration and Karen Davis, Vice President for Human Resources, presented the draft summary recommendations from the Organizational Review Committee (ORC) processes. The rationales for the major recommendations and the human resources considerations were discussed. A particular focus of the DAB discussion was on the voluntary staff retirement incentive (VSRI) plan and the need to continue holding open the vacant positions across the university. Of particular consideration for the DAB was the recommendation to coordinate and restructure the diversity staff in the Dean of the College Office and the Office of Campus Life and Student Services. The preliminary plans for the personnel and their relocation was presented with the understanding that more changes may be made by summer 2010, the project date for the changes to begin. Complete information about the ORC recommendations can be found at <http://www.brown.edu/Administration/economy/orc/index.html> the 'Brown and the Economy' website.

Admissions Decisions

James Miller, Director of Admissions, lead a detailed discussion at the spring meeting to review the strategies and preliminary outcomes of the undergraduate recruiting season that will result in the class entering Brown in fall 2010 (class of 2014). In addition to the undergraduate results, preliminary reports from the graduate and medical schools were also presented, noting the differing decision time lines for these two advanced training programs.

Disciplinary Code Changes

Margaret Klawuum, VP for Student Life and Campus Services, summarized the changes recommended by the committee reviewing the non-academic disciplinary system currently in place for undergraduates. The recommendations serve to align the practice with the policies elaborated in the academic code to provide for an appropriate representation of students and

staff in the hearings process to encourage a community standard, rather than relying on the judgment of a single hearing officer. Comparisons of the current and proposed new processes were reviewed in detail. The committee recommended that the name 'non-academic disciplinary code' be replaced by the name 'code of student conduct'. In terms of the hearings process, it was recommended that administrative hearings be retained and that the University Disciplinary Council be replaced by a Student Conduct Board. Recommendations to elaborate two levels of offense in the sexual misconduct policy and to strengthen language for weapons violations were also discussed extensively by the DAB. The revised disciplinary code is found at: http://www.brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/judicial_affairs/randr/index.html.

Report of the LGBTQ Subcommittee

Kelly Garrett, Coordinator of the LGBTQ Resource Center, provided a review of the current initiatives of the center. The update included development of a plan to assist employees who are in gender transition while on the job at Brown; work with the Gender Action subgroup of the Queer Alliance on a two-tier name system to allow Brown students to list a preferred name in addition to their legal name; the progress of the 'Safe Zone' training for faculty and staff and residential peer leaders; an inventory of all forms and procedures to assure that they are trans –friendly ; a report on the gender neutral housing policy put into place in the 2008-2009 academic year for upper class housing; and improvements to the health insurance coverage for members of the LGBTQ community. Comprehensive information about the LGBTQ activities can be found at http://www.brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/lgbtq/.

Report from the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS)

Cathy Axe, Director of Disability Support Services, provided a comprehensive review of the accomplishments of the DSS office over the past year. The update included: a new process for early participation in the planning and review of new construction and renovation, an upgrade to the elevette in Sayles Hall, requests for additional accessible parking spaces on the street, placement of accessibility signage in the Bookstore, and improvements in coordination with scheduling offices to ensure that open events are in accessible spaces. In light of the construction and reorganization processes that are ongoing throughout the campus, this enhanced level of coordination and participation by the Office of Disability Services should result in improved accessibility throughout the campus. Priorities for next year include more curb cuts, additional automatic door openers, requests for elevator replacements in Alumnae Hall and Manning Chapel, and improvements in accessibility signage throughout the campus. In addition, the Office has requested that key accessibility information be added to campus maps and there be staff input into the anticipated revision of the University website to make it more accessible. Further information about disability support services can be found at the website: http://www.brown.edu/Student_Services/Office_of_Student_Life/dss/index.html.

Diversity Resources Pamphlet

Also at the spring meeting, Kisa Takesue, Associate Dean of Student Life, reviewed the content and purpose of the pamphlet "Exploring Diversity at Brown and Beyond" that was developed and distributed in Fall 2009. The brochure, produced in coordination with the Dean of the

College, is targeted to undergraduate students and was designed to prompt further inquiry and raise awareness about specific Deans on campus whose focus is to coordinate and support diversity at Brown. Suggestions for improving the publication included expanding the content to include services available at the Medical School, within the Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life, through the Office of Institutional Diversity and in Disability Services. The Board recommended that the pamphlet should be viewed as a gateway to services and resources, and not represent the entirety of resources for diversity at Brown.

4) Agenda for FY 2010-2011

At its final meeting, the DAB focused on priority activities for the next year. Several suggestions were made to improve the administrative efficiency of the Board and its meetings. In addition, six activities were identified as priorities for the coming year:

- Better coordination with the Advisory Council on Diversity, especially on projects and issues of mutual interest (e.g. diversity admissions);
- Developing a staff diversity and climate survey, particularly important as a result of the overall changes from the ORC process;
- Monitoring the implementation of the consolidation and relocation of the Dean of the College and Campus Life diversity personnel and services to the Third World Center;
- Exploring incentives for faculty participation on committees to enhance diversity;
- Developing and implementing a process for diversity awards funded by the Google grant;
- Providing advice to the Office of Institutional Diversity on documenting progress or developing new diversity initiatives for the Brown University community.

A longer-term priority area for the DAB is to develop a mechanism for involvement in the 250th anniversary of Brown University that will take place in 2014.

5) Diversity Advisory Board membership 2009-2010

Administrators

Valerie Wilson – Associate Provost and Director of Institutional Diversity, (Chair
Margaret Klauun - Vice President for Campus Life & Student Services

Faculty

Elmo Terry-Morgan – Associate Professor of Africana Studies (Faculty Vice-Chair) - to June 2010
Christine Janis – Professor of Biology (EEB) - to June 2011
Marion Orr - Professor of Political Science - to June 2011
Michael Satlow - Professor of Judaic Studies - to June 2011
Anita Zimmerman – Professor of Medical Science (MPPB) - to June 2011

Students

Nicholas Everage (graduate) to June 2010
Ashan Hussain (graduate) to June 2010
Yasir Ahmed (medical) to June 2011
Ravi D’Cruz (medical) to June 2010
Madeline Avedano (undergraduate) to June 2011
Brittaney Check (undergraduate) to June 2011

Term Staff

Michou Cabbabe – Senior Office Assistant - to June 2010
Sheila Coleman – Head of Library Human Resources - to June 2011
Elizabeth Love – Academic Project Manager - to June 2010

Administrative Staff

Catherine Axe – Director of Disability Support Services
Jabbar Bennett – Assistant Dean of Recruiting and Professional Development
Maitrayee Bhattacharyya – Assistant Dean for Diversity Program
Gail Cohee – Director, Sarah Doyle Women’s Center
Janet Cooper Nelson – Chaplain of the University
Kelly Garrett – Coordinator LGBTQ Resource Center
Ricky Gresh – Senior Director for Student Engagement
Michelle Nuey – Manager of Special Services
Wendy McRae-Owoeye – Director of Staff Diversity
Emma Simmons – Associate Dean of Medicine, Diversity
Kisa Takesue – Associate Dean of Student Life