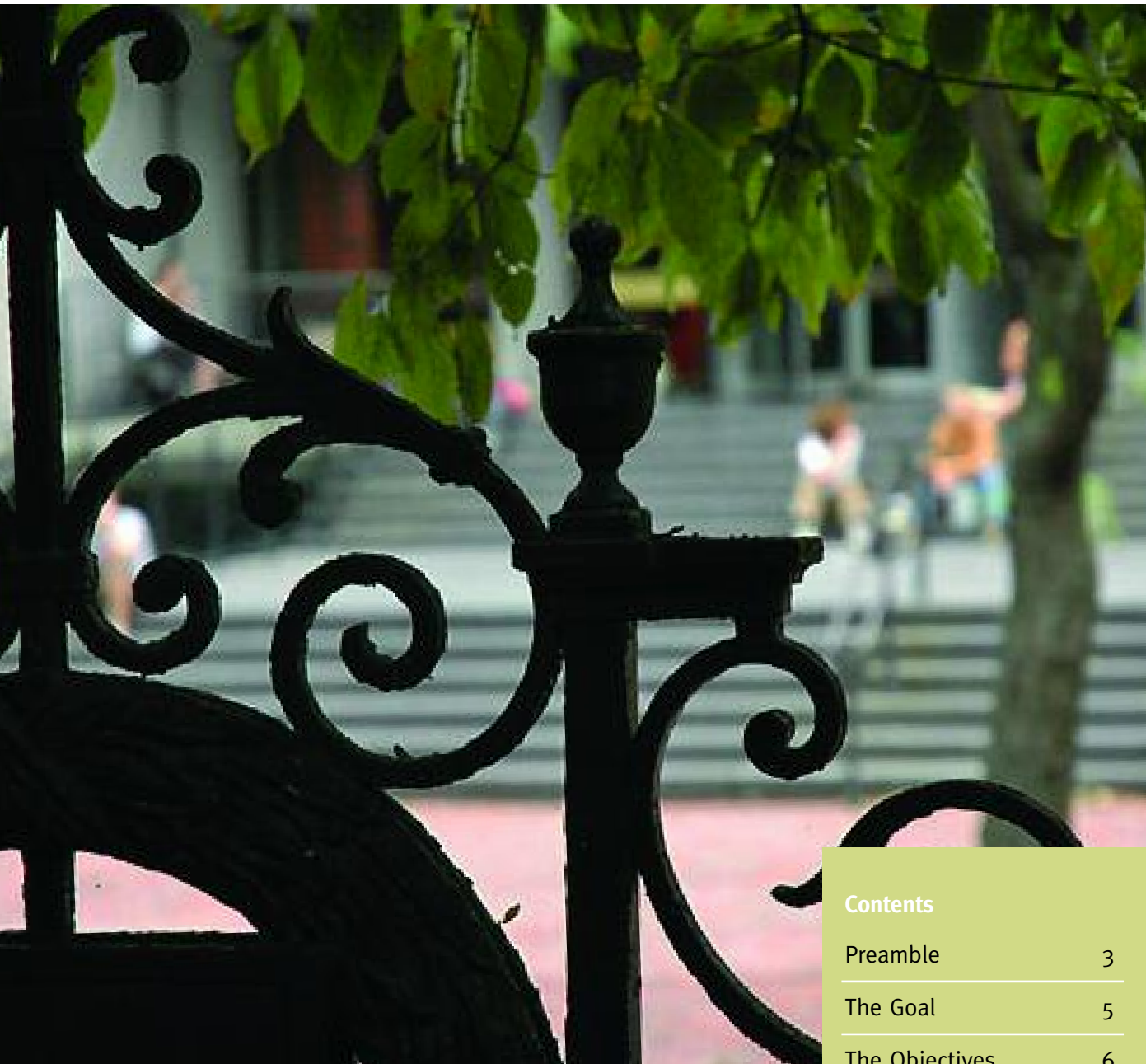


# A Diversity Action Plan for Brown University

OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE PROVOST AND DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY

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<b>Contents</b>	
Preamble	3
The Goal	5
The Objectives	6
The Action Plan	7





# Diversity at Brown: An Action Plan

## Preamble

Achieving academic excellence requires a commitment to diversity. Students educated in diverse environments have been found to learn better, to deal with complexity more readily, and to emerge with a greater understanding of how to participate productively in a pluralistic society. Reaping the benefits of diversity requires that we engage in environments that challenge our comfort level and expand our knowledge base about other people, other values, and other perspectives. While creating and sustaining a diverse environment involves significant challenges, benefits make it worthwhile. (For a full discussion of diversity and academic excellence, please see [www.vpcomm.umich.edu/admissions/research/expert/theor.html](http://www.vpcomm.umich.edu/admissions/research/expert/theor.html).)

Brown has long been a place where students, faculty, staff, and others of varied backgrounds could interact effectively in an environment of mutual respect. That is a special part of the education we provide, and it both facilitates and benefits from the intellectual openness that is embodied in our undergraduate curriculum and in our culture of collaboration among faculty and students. Our goal, as part of the Plan for Academic Enrichment, is to realize the potential of this diversity more fully and to make it an even more integral part of our educational environment. We also hope to make Brown a stronger leader in the national effort to manage and learn from the rich diversity of the nation and the world.

In 1985, President Howard Swearer and the Board of Fellows of Brown University established a Visiting Committee on Minority Life and Education to evaluate programs and to make recommendations for new strategies for improving the climate of racial relations at the University. The committee submitted a report entitled “The American University and the Pluralist Ideal,” which urged the

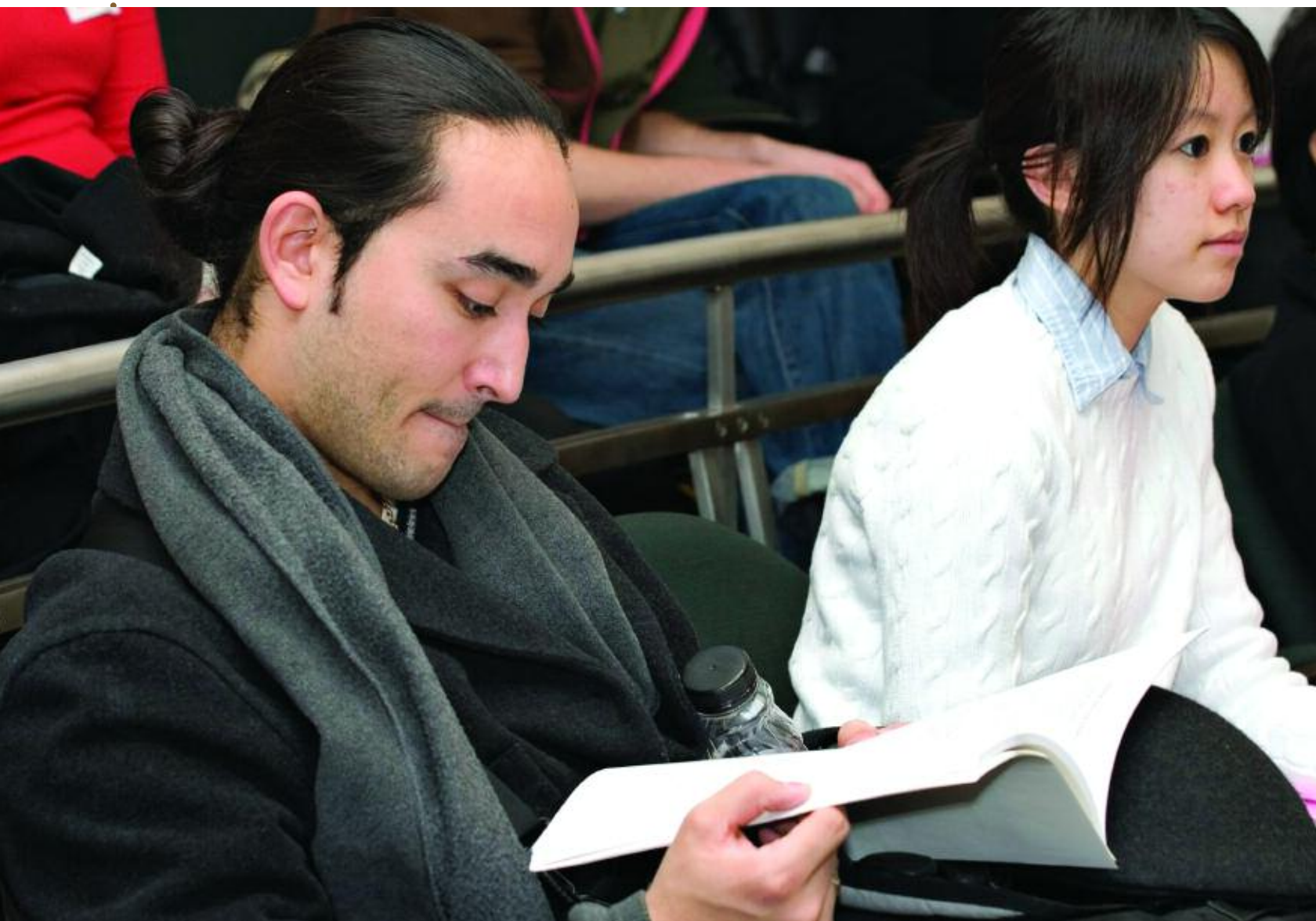
University to institutionalize its commitment to fostering greater interaction among individuals from diverse backgrounds and to improve race relations on campus. The committee issued several recommendations for achieving these goals, mostly focused on broadening the range of perspectives found in the curriculum and improving efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty. Brown University embraced the recommendations of the visiting committee, placing itself among the leading champions of diversity in higher education.

In 2000, a second visiting committee was established to forge Brown’s diversity agenda for the 21st century. The committee was asked to review Brown’s climate as it related to recruiting and retaining faculty and students of color. While the report commended Brown on its long history of valuing diversity, it also noted a level of complacency and a lack of accountability. The committee recommended that Brown articulate a comprehensive vision of its diversity goals and that the University establish the leadership, policies, and procedures necessary to realize those goals.

Five years later, a status report prepared for the Diversity Advisory Board and Diversity Advisory Council in the fall of 2005 found that significant progress had been made. Most notable was the creation of processes and structures designed to consider and foster diversity in various offices and departments (e.g., need-blind admission, hiring procedures, advisory boards and councils, training programs). Additionally, the position of associate provost and director of institutional diversity was created to lead diversity efforts at Brown. Among many things, the new director has been charged with developing a diversity action plan. This document is her response to that charge.

Brown's diversity action plan, developed in consultation with senior officers at the University, considers diversity in relation to other core priorities, such as faculty expansion and enhancing the undergraduate experience. The plan identifies nine major objectives, offers a variety of strategies for meeting them, and acknowledges our concern for redressing historical patterns of exclusion. It states that every effort will be made to address underrepresentation of U.S. minorities in our student, faculty, and staff populations. Our desire to increase the presence of underrepresented groups, including women, is conso-

nant with our goal of achieving great diversity of ideas, opinions, and perspectives within Brown's educational environments. The plan also encompasses diversity in the broadest sense to include race, color, religion, age, national and ethnic origin, disability, status as a veteran, language, socioeconomic background, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political ideology, and theoretical approach, to name a few. We believe that interaction among individuals from a diverse set of experiences, histories, attitudes, and backgrounds sharpens debate and promotes intellectual excellence.



## The Goal

The goal of the diversity action plan is to position Brown as a national leader in fully integrating diversity into the core operations of an institution. In order to achieve this goal, Brown will have to take bold steps. The University must be prepared to focus the resources needed to recruit and retain faculty, student, and staff populations that reflect the broadest range of ideas, opinions, perspectives, and styles, and we have to be committed to creating an environment where that diversity can thrive. This will require that the University have in place sufficient support structures and policies geared toward managing its diversity and that there are mechanisms that allow for ongoing assessment and review of progress toward this goal.

This is an ambitious plan that will require strong leadership and accountability at multiple levels. It identifies the senior officers responsible for meeting each of the objectives, as well as their specific charges. Among the steps needed to reach our goal are a near-term focus on aggressive recruitment to enhance applicant pools and a more long-term focus on retention and support.

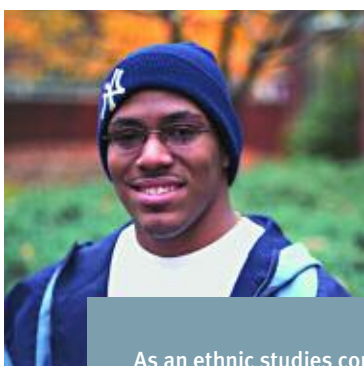


Brown allowed me to express myself in ways that I didn't know I could. At the center of my work at Brown is the question of how you communicate the great ideas inside you to other people. How do you make people understand the perspective that you have, and then allow them to work within that perspective to have their own?

– *Sasha-Mae Eccleston '06, Rhodes Scholar*

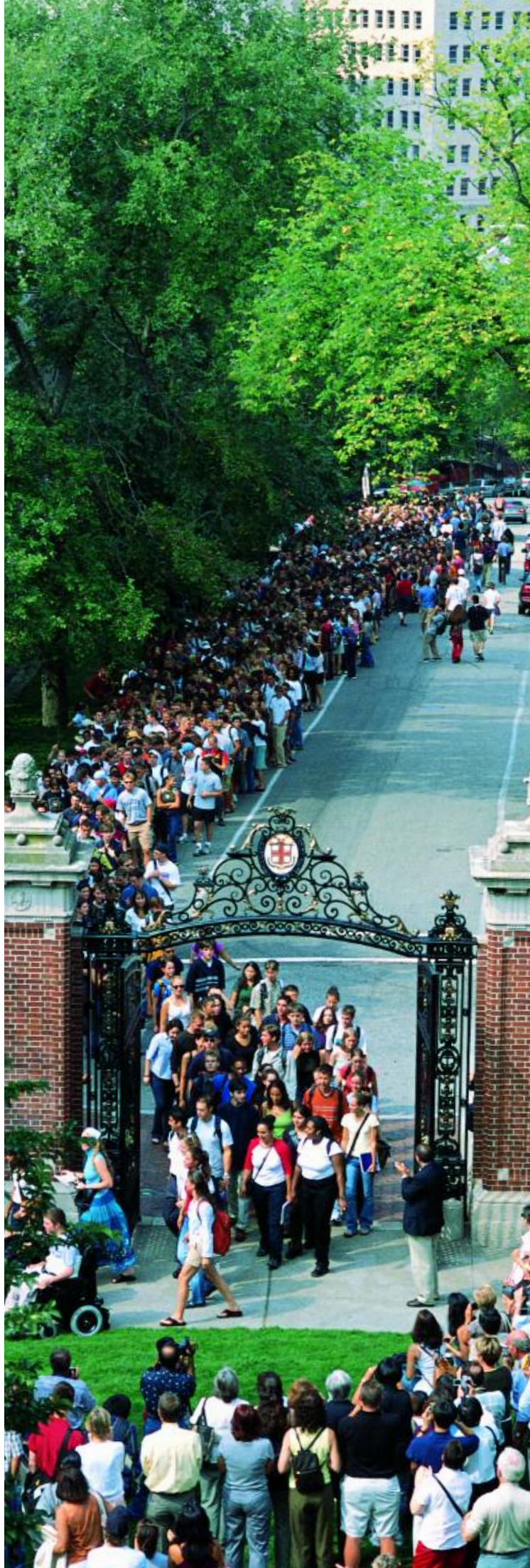
## The Objectives

- Establish leadership and responsibility for fostering diversity goals at Brown.
- Increase the diversity of the faculty through targeted and aggressive recruitment strategies and innovative retention programs.
- Address diversity among undergraduate students.
- Review rates of dismissal, academic probation, and graduation rates across groups toward addressing disparities.
- Increase financial aid for transfer and international students.
- Improve recruitment and retention of graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Improve recruitment and retention of medical students from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Increase the diversity of Brown's staff in areas of continued underutilization.
- Provide support for managing diversity among students, faculty, and staff.



As an ethnic studies concentrator, I have been exposed to many viewpoints both within and outside the classroom. Discussions dealing with race, class, gender, and sexual orientation can be challenging, but these conversations are essential to the existence of a future that embraces tolerance. As a member of more than ten student clubs, I collaborate with a wide spectrum of people who enlighten me on a daily basis.

— Bali Kumar '06



## The Action Plan

### Establish leadership and responsibility for fostering diversity goals at Brown.

- The goal is to establish an Office of Institutional Diversity and hire a director to lead and coordinate diversity efforts at Brown.
- Responsibilities rest with: president, provost, and associate provost and director of institutional diversity.
- These goals should be reached within the first three years of establishing the Office of Institutional Diversity.

#### The president and provost will:



*Brenda Allen, associate provost and director of institutional diversity*

Establish the Office of Institutional Diversity and hire a director.

Establish faculty committees, advisory boards, and advisory councils charged with helping the University move toward its diversity goals.

Include a progress report on the implementation of the diversity plan in an annual report to the Corporation and the faculty.

#### The associate provost and director of institutional diversity will:

Develop a diversity action plan through collaboration with senior officers in various areas of the University.

Assist leaders in implementing actions.

Monitor the progress of the diversity action plan.

Develop mechanisms for monitoring campus climate in relation to diversity issues.

Work with the vice president for public affairs and University relations to develop a comprehensive communication and marketing program to advance diversity interest, both internally and externally.



### Increase the diversity of the faculty through targeted and aggressive recruitment strategies and innovative retention programs.

- The goal is to make substantial improvement toward a long-term goal of a faculty demographic profile that reflects the diversity of the nation.
- Responsibilities rest with: provost, deans, associate provost and director of institutional diversity.
- Request departments to collaborate to develop division-wide strategic plans for achieving improvement.
- In five years, diversity demographics for faculty in all areas of the University should improve significantly.
- In ten years, diversity demographics for faculty in all areas of the University will better reflect the diversity of the nation.

#### The provost will:

Hold deans, department chairs, and program directors accountable for increasing diversity, especially the proportions of women and minority faculty.

Provide resources to support improved recruitment.

Identify areas of greatest priority.

Ensure that the University conducts aggressive national searches designed to produce richly diverse applicant pools.





Initiate opportunities for chairs, directors, and other faculty to learn more about strategies for recruiting and retaining faculty, especially women and minorities.

Create a database of job openings in the area as a resource for recruitment of new faculty.

Create a database of childcare options.

Use postdoctoral fellows programs as opportunities to bring various types of diversity to targeted areas of concern.

Create the position of faculty ombudsman.

**The dean of the faculty, dean of medicine and biological sciences, and department chairs and program directors will:**

Ensure that faculty search committees actively recruit and examine a wide range of candidates, especially women and minorities, for open positions guided by strategic planning, clear goals, and timelines.

Develop strategic plans for recruitment and retention to specifically increase women and minority candidates in fields where they continue to be disproportionately underrepresented.

Ensure that department climates welcome diversity in its many forms.

Create a faculty development program designed to teach new faculty about processes, procedures, and customs of the University.

Encourage faculty to attend seminars and workshops designed to share information about maintaining climates conducive to faculty diversity.

**The associate provost and director of institutional diversity will:**

Work with search committees to develop strategic hiring plans designed to attract a diverse range of candidates, especially women and minorities, to applicant pools.

Provide an annual report of the hiring season outlining processes used to enhance the pool of qualified applicants, summary statistics of demographics of pools and short-lists, and demographics of those hired.

Work with faculty committees to address diversity concerns.



Brown is enthusiastic about seeking out and supporting faculty as engaged scholars and teachers. The students are intensely engaged, as well. Most faculty dream about having students who are as smart, hard-working, and interested in being challenged as Brown students are.

– Arlene Keizer, associate professor of English and American civilization

## Address diversity among undergraduate students.

- The goal is to broaden the array of opportunities to pursue high-quality students from a diverse range of background experiences.
- Responsibilities rest with the provost.
- In five years, Brown's undergraduate recruitment programs should reflect a diverse array of opportunities to reach excellent students in the national and international pool.

### **The provost will:**

Evaluate all existing recruitment programs to determine their effectiveness in recruiting students of all types.

Encourage greater involvement of the faculty in recruitment.

Provide new funding for innovative recruitment programs.



## Review rates of dismissal, academic probation, and graduation across various group categories such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status.

- Compare various groups on all indicators of academic success.
- Responsibilities rest with the dean of the College.
- In five years, data will be reviewed and a plan for addressing disparities, if any are uncovered, will be in place.
- In 10 years, disparities, if any are found to exist, will be significantly reduced.

### **The dean of the College will:**

Appoint a committee to study academic outcomes for various groups of students and to make recommendations based upon its findings.

Provide funding needed to support new programs designed to provide greater academic support for students at risk for academic problems.

Encourage faculty members to assist with efforts to provide better advising and monitoring of students' academic progress.

Enhance academic support services for students who have signs of being at-risk for academic problems.

Implement a new approach to academic advising in the first and second year.

Examine the effectiveness of the current guidelines and procedures of the Committee on Academic Standing.



What makes Brown special is what it does for its students. I am proud to work at Brown because there are tangible benefits to being a student here.

– Associate Professor Matthew Garcia

## Increase financial aid funding for transfer and international students.

- Eliminate financial need as a barrier to attending Brown.
- Responsibilities rest with: provost and senior vice president for advancement.
- Offer additional financial assistance to transfer and international students.
- In 10 years, substantially increase financial aid support.

### **The provost will:**

Implement need-blind admission beginning with the class of 2007.

Allocate additional funds for FY06 and beyond for aid to transfer students.

Develop a plan to increase financial aid for international students.

Consider ways to enhance the aid program and improve access for financial aid students to the full range of academic opportunities.

Assess effectiveness of the aid program.

### **The senior vice president for advancement will:**

Identify a range of donors to support all financial aid initiatives.

## Improve recruitment and retention of graduate students from under-represented backgrounds.

- The goal is to increase the number of persons from underrepresented groups in the graduate student applicant pool.
- Responsibilities rest with: provost and dean of the Graduate School.
- In five years, diversity among Brown's graduate student population will significantly improve.

### **The provost will:**

Encourage faculty members to become more involved in graduate student recruitment.

Examine the effectiveness of current recruitment programs, and redirect funding where needed.

### **The dean of the Graduate School will:**

Implement new recruitment and retention programs aimed toward increasing applications from underrepresented groups.

Create new avenues for professional development.

Engage the faculty more in the recruitment of graduate students.

Provide periodic assessments of adjustment and climate issues for graduate students from different groups.

## Improve recruitment and retention of medical students from under-represented backgrounds

- The goal is to increase the number of persons from under-represented groups in the medical student applicant pool.
- Responsibilities rest with the dean of medicine and biological sciences.
- In five years, diversity among Brown's medical student population will better reflect the diversity of the nation.

### **The dean of medicine and biological sciences will:**

Implement new recruitment and retention programs aimed toward increasing PLME applications from under-represented groups.

Review admission policies to promote both excellence and diversity.

Implement new recruitment initiatives aimed toward recruiting outstanding underrepresented minority applicants through the standard admissions route.

Increase applicant prospects through the Early Identification Program (EIP) by broadening outreach to several historically black colleges and universities and Hispanic-serving institutions.

## Increase the diversity of staff in areas of continued underutilization.

- The goal is to substantially improve diversity among staff members in upper management, and specific areas of the University where various groups continue to be underutilized.
- Responsibilities rest with: executive vice president for finance and administration, associate provost and director of institutional diversity, and department heads.
- In five years, diversity in areas of current underutilization will better reflect the available workforce.

### **The executive vice president for finance and administration will:**

Ensure department heads in units that continue to underutilize women, minorities, and veterans develop strategic plans for increasing diversity along these dimensions.

Identify resources for innovative efforts to recruit diverse applicants.

### **The associate provost and director of institutional diversity will:**

Work with units to prepare and implement strategic plans to increase diversity in the applicant pools.

Collaborate with community organizations to recruit more effectively from local communities.

Work with vice president for administration to ensure that policies, practices, and HR development promote and support diversity goals.

Because the medical community at Brown is so close-knit and the faculty is so accessible to students, I was able to make connections with professors working in my area of interest – international health and infectious disease – early on in my time at Brown. With the encouragement and support of my mentors at Brown, I have been able to obtain several overseas fellowships, conduct HIV-related research in resource-constrained settings, and even coauthor an article published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

– Snigdha Vallabhaneni '01, '06 M.D.



## Provide support for managing diversity among students, faculty, and staff

- The goal is to create an environment where all perspectives can thrive.
- Responsibilities rest with: the provost, deans, vice president for campus life and student services, and associate provost and director of institutional diversity.
- The range of diversity support structures at Brown should be inventoried and reviewed within five years of the creation of the Office of Institutional Diversity.
- Within five years, complete improvements, adjustments, and additions to support structures at Brown.

### The provost and deans will:

Identify resources to create a range of services and opportunities designed to assist faculty in creating classroom climates in which all students have the opportunity to succeed (includes curriculum initiatives).

Encourage efforts by department chairs and program directors to maintain local climates that are inclusive.

Provide opportunities for chairs and other faculty members to gain more skills for managing conflict.

### The vice president for campus life and student services will:

Develop a diversity training program for student leaders of all registered organizations.

Create incentives for student organizations to provide interorganizational, culturally diverse student programs.

Develop policies and practices that enhance opportunities to engage diversity in the residential system.

Evaluate all diversity-related programs and centers to ensure that they are adding value.

### The associate provost and director of institutional diversity will:

Assist the deans in implementing faculty development opportunities designed to help with managing diversity in the classroom and other climate issues.

Support the development of diversity-related programs in the area of student life.

Work with the vice president for administration to design and implement a diversity development plan for staff.

Engage the Diversity Advisory Board and the Diversity Advisory Council in ongoing advice about matters of diversity on campus.

Review and revise as appropriate discrimination and harassment policy and grievance procedures.

Provide periodic assessments of progress of different groups.

Provide periodic assessments of diversity-related climate issues.

Publish an inventory of diversity-related events, services, offices, programs, and groups at the University.

Sponsor a bi-semester forum aimed at an ongoing community discussion about diversity.

Develop a Web site that provides a range of information about diversity at Brown.

