# Report on Diversity and Inclusion

*prepared for*

Bowdoin College

*Submitted 4 May 2016*

**Camile Z. Charles**
Edmund J. and Louise W. Kahn Term Professor in the Social Sciences
Professor of Sociology, Africana Studies, and Education
Director, Center for Africana Studies
The University of Pennsylvania

**Rory Kramer**
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice
Villanova University

## Introduction

Like most colleges and universities, Bowdoin College has made great strides in increasing the racial/ethnic diversity of its student body. In 1988, 7.5 percent of all enrolled students were students of color; by 2014, students of color represented nearly 31 percent of all enrolled students. In 1999-2000, members of the Bowdoin community formed a Task Group on Minority Admissions and developed a plan for increasing racial/ethnic diversity, and the results are impressive: the total student of color population more than doubled, increasing from 13 percent to nearly 31 percent. This includes a four-fold increase in Latinx students and a more than doubling of the black student population.[1] In that same time period, tenure-track faculty diversity also more than doubled, as the percentage of faculty of color increased from less than 8 percent to more than 17 percent. The bulk of that increase is due to the hiring of Asian and Hispanic faculty, as each category alone represents over 6 percent of the faculty.

The perceptions of campus climate and the experiences of white people and people of color—students, staff, and faculty—are influenced by Bowdoin's historical legacy of inclusion, recent events, and the reality of its current demographic composition. Furthermore, these issues that are specific to Bowdoin must be understood within the context of larger, national conversations, be they anger about affirmative action, critiques of "coddled" and "entitled" students, backlashes against "PC culture," the 2016 presidential election, #BlackLivesMatter, or campaigns like "I too am Harvard," all of which influence feelings of belonging, engagement, and comfort on campus, both generally and specifically around issues of race/ethnicity.

The recent resurgence of campus protests (e.g., University of Missouri, UCLA, Yale, Duke), suggests that the emphasis on diversity needs to shift to a greater attentiveness to inclusivity. Specifically, while efforts around compositional diversity—more students, staff, and faculty of color on our campuses—have met with success, there is now work to be done to ensure that our campuses are respectful and embracing of all of their diversity. In fact, increased diversity creates an environment that heightens our awareness of these

[1] Enrollments of Native American and Asian students remained constant, with the latter group experiencing increasing enrollments during the middle of the period, due to the mandatory inclusion of a "two or more race" category.

issues, highlighting the critical importance of ensuring that all members of the campus community feel that they are respected and that they share a sense of belonging.

Becoming a more diverse *and inclusive* community comes with its fair share of growing pains. Though it is worth noting that Bowdoin is often ahead of the curve compared to national trends, the Bowdoin experience for students of color is less satisfying across a number of dimensions than the experience for white students. To Bowdoin's credit, community members from across the College were aware of, honest about, and concerned by those racial and ethnic disparities.

In many ways, Bowdoin has been largely proactive in embarking on the institutional transformation required for both creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive community; one in which Bowdoin's *Offer of the College* is available to every student. This report, while frank and honest in its critiques, is yet another example of Bowdoin's ongoing commitment to being a community that is attentive to and accepting of all of its members.

**Methods**

Campus climate reports require both breadth and depth: a breadth of knowledge about the entirety of the institution, as well as a deep understanding of the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of individuals "on the ground." We have been consistently grateful for and impressed with the degree to which Bowdoin has assisted us in assembling all of the information that we requested relative to the current campus climate around diversity and inclusion.

As we compiled and examined this information, we planned for two campus visits dedicated to meeting and talking with as many members of the Bowdoin community as possible. Over the course of two weeks—one week in February 2016 and one week in March 2016—we met with people and listened to what they had to say. In total, we had over fifty meetings that included hundreds of Bowdoin community members. We met with people individually and in groups. Some groups were relatively small, with two to five people in attendance; others were larger, bringing together ten to twelve people. The largest groups were open forums held separately for students, staff, and faculty, with group size reaching between sixty and seventy people. We were consistently impressed with the

enthusiasm, curiosity, and openness of nearly everyone we met, irrespective of their status on campus.

We had the pleasure of meeting with people from virtually every corner of the College (see Appendix). Meetings were purposefully unstructured. We had no prepared script or predetermined interview questions; rather, our goal was to listen to what members of the Bowdoin community had to say about the campus climate specifically as it relates to race and ethnicity. We tended to begin with a set of general prompts, after explaining the purpose of our visit and our process. We asked questions primarily for clarification of previous statements, or to better understand the structure and organization of the College; policies and procedures relevant to our conversations about diversity and inclusion; the origins, aims, and perceived effectiveness of specific programs and/or policies; and in an effort to glean what changes, if any, individuals and/or groups across campus believed were important for creating and maintaining an inclusive community.

To encourage open and honest conversation, reduce the likelihood of socially desirable responses, and maintain confidentiality, we took copious notes but did not record our meetings. Sensitive to the possibility that some might feel uncomfortable sharing their views in a group setting—or that they might have additional thoughts—we always encouraged follow-up contact via e-mail. We were impressed by the number of people who took us up on our offer: we heard from students, staff, and faculty, both by phone and via e-mail.

The summary and recommendations that follow are the result of leveraging the data provided by the Office of the President, including data from the vice president for institutional research, and the rich and powerful conversations with the Bowdoin community during the two weeks we spent on campus. We would like to formally thank all the students, staff, and faculty who met with us for their engagement with this process, their honesty, their insights, their cooperation and commitment, and their embrace of Bowdoin's core values. It goes without saying that we could not have done this without all of you, and we are deeply appreciative.

This endeavor required the coordination of many moving parts, attention to many details, and outstanding organizational skill. We are eternally grateful to Eli Orlic, vice president and special assistant to the president & secretary of the College, for serving as

our point person. Eli handled all of our requests for information and clarification with skill and grace, and with remarkable responsiveness. Eli usually handed our requests for data over to Tina Finneran, vice president for institutional research, whom we would like to formally acknowledge and thank for fulfilling our many requests. We are especially grateful to Sara Eddy, associate director of events and summer programs, for organizing our schedules, chaperoning us during our visits, and ensuring that all of our needs were met. During our second visit to campus, we were fortunate to stay at Cleaveland House and to experience the warm hospitality and engaging conversation of its manager, Henry D'Alessandris. We would be remiss if we did not thank him for making Cleaveland House our home away from home during that week.

**Inclusive Excellence**

A large body of empirical research demonstrates the benefits of diversity in educational settings for students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. The challenge, therefore, is no longer to prove that diversity is beneficial or to create diverse student bodies (though that basic challenge does persist with regard to faculty and staff), but rather to normalize the experience of diversity and equalize the experiences of individuals at college across racial/ethnic backgrounds, while also maximizing the benefits of diversity in college. The Association of American Colleges & Universities (2005) defines this equalization and maximization as "Inclusive Excellence," or "an academy that systematically leverages diversity for student learning and institutional excellence" (Clayton-Pedersen and Musil, 2005, v). The Inclusive Excellence model does not identify diversity as an added benefit over and above the standard benefits of a liberal arts education; instead, diversity and inclusion are *fundamental* to fulfilling the promise of a liberal arts education.

Operationally, Inclusive Excellence has four constituent elements:

1. a focus on student intellectual and social development;
2. a purposeful development and utilization of organizational resources to enhance student learning;
3. attention to the cultural differences learners bring to the educational experience and that enhance the enterprise; and

4. a welcoming community that engages all of its diversity in the service of student and organizational learning.

This understanding of Inclusive Excellence is purposefully flexible in order to facilitate appropriate, localized interpretations for individual campuses, while at the same time containing core principles and addressing key dilemmas prevalent throughout higher education. Many campuses—including Bowdoin's—have "islands of innovation" that can and should be linked to a coherent set of innovations. What Bowdoin does well should be identified, replicated, and expanded upon. Better coordination of institutional efforts facilitates collaboration, coherence, and cohesion, thereby uniting the campus around a shared goal. Moreover, this purposeful coordination of the multiple and varied efforts on campuses should increase the impact of diversity and inclusion efforts for students, faculty, and staff.

Additionally, the conversation about diversity in the broader American context has been increasingly focused on compliance, in an effort to avoid negative publicity and/or legal challenges. This is particularly true since *Grutter v. Bollinger*, and especially in light of the contemporary political moment. In general, efforts to diversify colleges are often embarked upon separately from efforts to promote educational excellence. This is a false distinction—diversification and inclusion are, at their core, efforts to promote educational excellence, and they should be treated and strategized about as such. Consequently, it is essential that elite institutions reframe diversity as fundamental to a high quality, twenty-first century liberal arts education as a core value and as a part of their missions. As such, Inclusive Excellence emphasizes what the institution could do to facilitate and enhance diversity and inclusion.

We employ the Inclusive Excellence model to assess Bowdoin's campus climate, and we believe it is a useful framework for the College to continue its journey of institutional transformation, with the shared goal of an inclusive community, in which all feel valued, understood, respected, and welcome. In the next section, we provide a sense of the campus climate around race/ethnicity based on our conversations with Bowdoin faculty, staff, and students. This is followed by a set of recommendations for moving forward and some concluding remarks.

**Current Climate**

Our visits to campus afforded us the opportunity to speak with members of the Bowdoin community and to get a better sense of how these perceptions of the campus climate found in the data we examined —and the racial/ethnic differences in these perceptions—play out in day-to-day life on campus. Specifically, three themes emerged:

**A sense of fatigue**

There is a shared sense among students, faculty, and staff of color that they (are expected to) shoulder the bulk of the responsibility for conceptualizing, organizing, executing, and attending events about race/ethnicity, and that these events include both those that share cultural practices and rituals (e.g., multicultural dinners) and those that educate the community around issues of racial prejudice, discrimination, and inequality. This is, in and of itself, a tiresome burden; however, students added to this a sense of fatigue from seeing only "the usual suspects" in attendance at these events. A funding process described by many as "passing the hat" compounds this sense that many of their efforts at inclusion are for naught.

In addition to the sources of fatigue detailed above, faculty and staff of color provide significant support to students of color, above and beyond what is in their formal job descriptions, and this work often goes unrecognized and unrewarded. The "invisible labor" associated with mentoring and supporting students of color as they adjust to and struggle with their Bowdoin experiences represents an additional source of fatigue. Faculty and staff of color also spoke of fatigue associated with welcoming new faculty and staff of color and bidding others farewell each year.

Fatigue is fundamentally different—and much less common—among white members of the Bowdoin community. Many shared feeling overwhelmed by conversations about race. A few shared feeling "forced" or "required" to engage in these conversations, or that conversations were inorganic. Many more shared the sense that there is "a lot of talking about talking about race," but less opportunity to discuss or learn about racial inequality in more structured settings (a critique also made by people of color). Occasionally, we sensed that some white community members were just "over it"—not so much fatigued as bored or even resentful about the amount of time spent on racial/ethnic

issues. Most often, though, fatigue among white people presented as what might best be described as "image maintenance." Specifically, most of the white students, staff, and faculty that we spoke with were overwhelmingly concerned about being perceived as or labeled "racist," and invested substantial energy in "proving" themselves otherwise.

**A sense of trepidation**

People of color on campus shared a variety of concerns, the most immediate and urgent having to do with racially offensive and insensitive comments posted anonymously on Yik Yak. The anonymity afforded by Yik Yak means that students are constantly worried that the authors of racially offensive or otherwise intolerant comments could be "sitting next" to them in class or in student organization meetings, and in other shared campus spaces. These concerns, moreover, intensified fears of being asked to speak for their race/ethnicity in class or in random encounters, or that openly criticizing or protesting racial/ethnic inequalities or offenses might result in being labeled and treated as "rabble-rousers," or ostracized and penalized for those actions. At least equally troubling, many people of color at Bowdoin expressed concern for their physical safety, given instances of racial harassment in the neighborhoods surrounding Bowdoin.

Here, too, the concerns of people of color at Bowdoin are qualitatively different from those expressed by white students, staff, and faculty. As noted above, for these community members, the main source of fear is that their good-faith efforts to engage with people of color will be perceived as racist—not only in instances where race is explicitly the topic at hand, but also possibly during grading, individual advising, or performance evaluations, for example. Indeed, white members of the Bowdoin community expressed concerns about feeling uncomfortable in a variety of ways that are necessary for creating and maintaining an inclusive environment. White students generally seemed worried about attending events perceived as "not for them," such as parties at Russwurm or other events sponsored by affinity groups. Across a variety of meetings with students, we heard from both athletes and non-athletes that student-athletes fear blame for any racially/ethnically insensitive event occurring on campus. Indeed, students spoke of concern that athletes are stereotyped in negative ways with respect to their racial attitudes and a perceived tendency toward racial insensitivity, particularly in light of recent events.

As a consequence of these concerns, students from all backgrounds spoke of consciously avoiding certain places or events on campus, self-censoring themselves or avoiding certain questions or conversations for fear of being misinterpreted, and of only discussing race or inequality with those they already knew largely agreed with them if they discussed it at all. For example, more than one white student shared feeling too afraid to ask black friends how they were doing after the "gangsta-themed" party, for fear that it was offensive to "notice their blackness" and that it would result in being labeled "racist." This way of thinking highlights a problem with seemingly well-meaning color-blindness, in that black students reported being particularly hurt by *not* being asked by their white friends, advisors, and professors how they were feeling. White faculty and staff expressed similar worries over "saying the wrong thing," "being misunderstood," and—worst—"being labeled racist." Several shared that they said nothing in these moments rather than risk saying "the wrong thing," while also feeling that they "just don't have the skills" or appropriate training for talking about issues of race.

**A sense of confusion**

White students, faculty, and staff also expressed a sense of confusion about the role they play in conversations about race and racial inequality. Most notably, several students and staff emphasized social class differences and the absence of class privilege for many white people, especially in Maine. However, the lack of one form of privilege (socioeconomic) does not negate the existence of another form of privilege (skin color or race). It only complicates how privilege operates for an individual.

Staff and, to a lesser degree, faculty expressed uncertainty around their roles in creating and maintaining an inclusive community, in supporting students—especially students of color—in times of need, and in openly criticizing the status quo. For some, in fact, that confusion led them to opt out of these activities entirely, saying, "I'm not a therapist," or "I'm just a professor." Often, this was also tied to feeling ill-equipped to confront these issues head-on, but there was also a measure of confusion about what to do, how to do it, and who should do it. More than anything, white students, faculty, and staff expressed both a need and a desire for additional knowledge and training so that they could feel adequately prepared to engage and participate. This was especially true among

those individuals who shared their decisions to "opt out," suggesting once again the great potential for institutional transformation.

Irrespective of their origins, these factors exact a substantial psychological toll on Bowdoin's community. Feelings of dissatisfaction, disaffection, fatigue, trepidation, and confusion leave some individuals feeling like "invited guests" instead of full community members. This can exacerbate the impact of racially insensitive comments or actions (and the backlash against such concerns), make meaningful dialogue more difficult, and divide the community. The differing experiences, the fatigue, the trepidation, and the confusion notwithstanding, there is widespread interest and commitment—across all segments of the population—to continue building a more inclusive community at Bowdoin.

**Recommendations**

The common approach to improving the campus racial climate has historically been to look for and employ strategies that result in "immediately noticeable change." However, while these efforts may have significant effect on the numbers, they usually do not and cannot promote the kind of deep and enduring change required to achieve and maintain Inclusive Excellence. These so-called "first-order changes" include things like increasing an institution's visibility among populations they are interested in attracting to campus.

Successful institutional transformation, however, requires attention to so-called "second-order changes." These changes are systemic, addressing structures, processes, and norms, and are therefore also enduring. The sort of transformational, enduring change required to achieve Inclusive Excellence can only occur when these second-order changes occur along with the more traditional, first-order changes. This is best achieved through "organizational learning", a process of reflection that is required to bring about meaningful and lasting change and that is crucial to confronting consideration of both formal and informal values, norms, and processes that may facilitate or constrain efforts at creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive campus community (Hanson 2003; Williams, Berger & McClendon 2005). The set of recommendations below are offered in this spirit.

**Create an office that reports directly to the president for diversity and inclusion**

An important lever for change identified by the AAC&U is senior level institutional support for change, accountability processes, and sufficient resources to ensure that the vision for Inclusive Excellence becomes part of the institution's wider culture.

However, Inclusive Excellence needs a home base to ensure that such momentum does not slow. In particular, many of our conversations on campus bemoaned a lack of a clear "go-to" person or office for issues of diversity and inclusion. Students were concerned about overloading the few staff whose jobs directly spoke to diversity and inclusion, while staff and faculty either felt there was no one to discuss these topics with or that the people who were tasked with focusing on these issues were often in positions of authority over them. Additionally, funding for programs on race, inequality, and culture is not centralized, and no one on campus has been identified as a resource for the training of staff, faculty, and students that was nearly universally requested during our meetings.

An Office for Diversity and Inclusion would provide that home base. Defining the specific roles of that office with regard to funding, staffing, and other responsibilities is best done by the Bowdoin community. We believe its portfolio might include, but not necessarily be limited to:

1. A senior level administrator and/or rotating faculty director
2. Regular funding for annual campus events
3. A yearly Inclusive Excellence scorecard/report
4. A strategic plan for enhancing the Student Center for Multicultural Life
5. Coordinating with alumni relations for the creation and support of alumni affinity networks
6. An ombudsman program
7. Coordinating with the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs on creating/enhancing efforts to support students of color and first-generation students
8. Coordination/oversight of faculty development and provide additional mentorship for faculty of color
9. Coordination of the faculty and staff training discussed below

Philosophically, there are strong reasons not to create an Office of Diversity and Inclusion, out of concern that it may be marginalized or allow people not directly in that office to see diversity and equity as "someone else's job." In proposing such an office, we caution that its position in the organizational structure be well integrated in the broader Bowdoin community, both in terms of its physical location (we recommend a central campus location), but also having regular meetings with other senior staff. There are multiple models of such an office: one in which they have oversight of staff in other units or another in which they act in an advisory capacity to other units but also ensure that there is a liaison with their office (it also does not have to be restricted to diversity with regard to race, but can also include class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and religion). We do not have a particular recommendation on how best to organize such an office at Bowdoin, but we encourage that it exist and be tasked with creating programming for the community, engaging faculty and staff in efforts to recruit and diversify and providing regular reports on the status of and efforts to improve institutional diversity and inclusion.

**Curriculum for Intellectual Inclusivity**

Inclusive Excellence is not only a commitment to creating an inclusive social culture and structure, it is also a commitment to the academic study of social identity and inequality. Bowdoin's "Exploring Social Difference" distribution requirement is a positive signal of that intent. After ten years, it is worth evaluating the courses that fulfill that requirement. Specifically, we recommend that the requirement should be oriented to the contemporary United States experience (as Bowdoin also has the "International Perspectives" distribution requirement). Second, the courses should also be expected to analyze not only difference, but *inequality*. This would build a stronger academic background for all students in discussing and understanding issues both on and off campus. We also recommend that students be encouraged to fulfill this requirement early in their academic career and that Bowdoin consider allowing first-year seminars to count toward this requirement to promote early engagement with the academic study of difference.

Much like the polarization of media in the United States and the rise of social media as a news source, many academic events are presented as polarized debates between two opposing sides, or that only consider a single side on an issue. Students are tired of such

models and see them as constraining. Conscious effort should be made to create events that offer a range of ideas and philosophies on an issue and thus model intellectual disagreement without dissension. Events with scholars and members of the administration in which questions and reflection are the root of the discussion, like the successful ”town hall” in the fall of 2015, would also support that goal.

Inclusive Excellence also is attentive to the cultural differences that different learners bring to Bowdoin. One way to be attentive to such differences is through a bridge program before a student's first year that would provide academic opportunities, as well as an opportunity to gain comfort and familiarity with Bowdoin's campus and community before the academic semester begins. Such programs, when created and presented as advanced and non-remedial, have positive effects on student grades and retention, especially in STEM programs. Faculty in the sciences have already taken important steps in this area, particularly with the Bowdoin Science Experience (BSE) and other innovations, and through the introduction of alternative gateway courses that incorporate quantitative reasoning (QR) into the teaching of introductory STEM courses. Economics has also introduced alternative gateway courses. We recommend expanding the BSE into a longer program that is offered to all students interested in the sciences, as well as targeted recruitment for students with low QR scores who were flagged by admissions, students of color, and/or first generation students. Ideally, the program would incorporate QR labs for all students. A similar program in the humanities and/or social sciences focused on the academic study of inequality should also be considered for a bridge program for non-STEM students. Student retention in STEM majors and grades should be monitored to ensure the program is providing a benefit.

Bowdoin has already committed to adding a section to Orientation that directly addresses race. We support that decision and emphasize that the program be prominently placed within the orientation schedule as a signal of the topic's importance. We also recommend incorporating both an educational component and opportunity for student dialogue with trained peer facilitators, perhaps modeled on the successful training on unconscious bias required of faculty search committees.

**Development for the Entire Community**

A sense of trepidation and confusion by community members has often impeded efforts to promote inclusivity. This sense is born from the broader American context in which racism is a matter to be denied or politely talked around, rarely faced directly. The social causes of that avoidance are broad, and Bowdoin cannot fix those contexts. However, it can promote a community in which the tendencies to avoid or deflect from the issues of racial and ethnic inequality are minimized.

Recent trainings on unconscious bias by Romney and Associates for faculty on search committees were highly regarded by faculty with whom we spoke. We recommend similar trainings for faculty and staff that do not focus on the hiring process, but rather on unconscious bias in academic and employment settings more broadly. Unconscious or implicit bias can influence individuals' sense of being treated as equal members of communities without any intended animus.

All members of the community with whom we spoke expressed desire for more knowledge about racism and inequality in society. However, few felt like they had access to enough resources on these issues. We recommend that an Office of Diversity and Equity offer such trainings, much like those already offered by the Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity.

The educational trainings discussed above will help to improve experiences with mentoring among faculty, students, and staff. Nonetheless, additional sources of mentorship for faculty of color can also help them to successfully integrate with and improve a college as well. Bowdoin has no official mentoring program for faculty. Mentoring is valuable for all faculty, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds. Research has also shown that faculty of color and female faculty are offered informal mentoring less frequently than others in academia. As such, a formal mentoring program would ensure that all faculty receive non-evaluative support in transitioning to Bowdoin from their previous positions. Implementation and oversight of this process could reside with the diversity and inclusion position described previously.

**Inclusive Diversity**

Diversity has often been treated as an outcome—how many people of color are on campus or how many first-generation students or how many students on financial aid. This compositional diversity is a critical step, and Bowdoin has made substantial progress over the past few decades in improving its compositional diversity especially among students. As a part of Inclusive Excellence, however, diversity is better understood as a "process toward better learning" (Milem, Chang, and Antonio 2005). Compositional diversity is only inclusive when it is used to enhance the educational experience for all on campus.

For faculty and staff, as is true for all elite colleges and universities, Bowdoin should continue to actively strive to diversify and retain those individuals who do come to the College. A centralized fund could be available via human resources for targeted advertisement and recruiting efforts for positions. We recommend that short-term positions have a standardized process for extending them or granting them interviews for other positions on campus after their contracts conclude. Regular scorecards of staff and faculty diversification should identify departments and divisions that have successfully hired and retained diverse staff/faculty, and best practices should be shared among divisions of the college.

Specifically with regard to faculty, Bowdoin has a long history of working with the Consortium for Faculty Diversity (CFD). We admire Bowdoin's desire to support CFD fellows in their job searches, but that does not mean Bowdoin should not regularly evaluate and consider the CFD fellows for transition to a tenure-track position without shrinking the number of CFD fellows on campus at any given time. Additionally, target-of-opportunity hiring should not be used as replacement hires but rather as additional lines for departments that have actively identified and recruited to diversify. This would reward departments that see diversity as a positive part of their growth and learning for students, regardless of field.

Mentoring and advising is the responsibility of all faculty members, yet there are some—junior faculty, female faculty, and faculty of color—who often do more of this work than their colleagues, particularly with respect to the informal mentoring and support of students of color. This is true of colleges and universities in general and was reiterated by students and faculty at Bowdoin. However rewarding this work might be for those who

engage in it, this "invisible labor" should be formally recognized and rewarded as part of the teaching and advising responsibilities required of all faculty members.

There are many ways to incorporate these activities into formal performance evaluations, both pre- and post-tenure. For example, faculty members can be asked to report on both formal and informal mentoring and advising in their annual activity reports, and students can submit letters about mentoring and advising experiences as part of the tenure and/or promotion process. Alternative mechanisms for rewarding these activities include financial incentives (e.g., salary increases like those provided for BASE advisors, bonuses, summer support, or research funds) or course reductions for faculty who serve in this capacity. An annual advising award that specifically targets this sort of advising is also a possibility. Ultimately, this type of mentorship should be encouraged and acknowledged as a normal part of faculty responsibilities and not the exclusive purview of those who feel a particular ownership of issues of diversity and inclusion for students; we encourage other activities that will leave concerned and invested faculty members feeling better equipped to participate in these activities (perhaps modeled after or integrated with the training given to BASE advisors), thereby expanding the pool of allies for students.

Turning to the student body, we recommend that admissions and athletics continue to work together to determine how best to leverage their shared interest in diversifying the student body while also recruiting athletes with the athletic and academic ability to succeed at Bowdoin. We also recommend that Bowdoin's alumni of color be better engaged via affinity networks to help connect them with the College in more depth as alumni, to provide them as a resource to current students of color who may be struggling with similar issues, and to leverage their social networks to enhance Bowdoin's compositional diversity when opportunities arise in hiring or recruitment.

**Campus-wide engagement**

One of the four elements of Inclusive Excellence is "a welcoming community that engages all of its diversity in the service of student and organizational learning." Bowdoin's community was nearly unanimous in desiring to play such a role, but many were unsure of how to do so, which is part of the transition from compositional diversity to inclusion. Students and staff want to see each other as family, and many related extremely positive

experiences at events like “Dinner with Six Strangers” and being invited to a dinner held by a student affinity group. Students applauded specific staff members for taking time to engage in conversation and to get to know them as beyond their role as student or worker. For many students of color, first-generation students, and students from Maine, staff are the closest reminder of friends and family back home, and for many staff, such interactions make them feel like valued and valuable parts of the Bowdoin community.

Unfortunately, some staff reported feeling discouraged by superiors from attending events or having extended conversations with students. They also felt left out of invitations to events in which faculty and students are explicitly invited, but not staff. We recommend encouraging such conversations, having senior staff model such interactions, and an official policy allowing staff of all types to be able to attend a set number of events during work hours, either by strengthening “Common Hour” or allowing for flexible time or a set number of paid hours each month in which staff can attend an official event. We would also recommend an official award for individual staff who go above and beyond in fostering that type of community.

Students with personal or financial crises do not always feel comfortable going to a powerful figure like a dean to ask for support or assistance. Often, they confide in staff at their jobs, trusted faculty, residence staff, or other members of the community, and not everyone knows who to call or how things get done. That moment of contact should be treated as a request for support. All staff and faculty should be empowered to assist students by acting as advocates. A clear policy and/or protocol for staff and faculty to request funds to support students in financial and/or personal distress should be communicated to every member of the staff and faculty. This includes attending a meeting with the student at his/her request and/or acting as the point person for helping that student (e.g., driving them to a store or the airport). One option is a centralized office or team that includes representatives from academic advising, housing, student health/counseling, and financial aid to triage. The person in charge of this group would also serve as the person everyone knows to call.

A common theme in meetings was that white community members do not feel there is a space to have difficult conversations and discussions about race, racism, and inequality, while non-white community members felt they either had or were asked to have those

conversations frequently. That divided perception is common. We recommend the regular provision of a venue for students, staff, and faculty to discuss race, racism, and inequality, especially in times of crisis. Importantly, these spaces should be organized in such a way that students, faculty, and staff of color do not feel burdened or expected to not only organize and attend, but to engage and "educate" as well. A renewal of "Common Hour" could be utilized to offer regularly scheduled public lectures or panels that offer balanced presentations around diversity, inclusion, and difference, broadly defined, but with particular attention paid to race/ethnicity and inequality. Creative ways for individuals to ask questions anonymously might also be helpful. All are welcome, but these would be spaces for people to ask questions anonymously and have those questions respected and engaged either in person or soon thereafter in writing.

**Concluding Thoughts**

While we have provided our best recommendations based on our expertise, knowledge of best practices, and data collection and analysis, we are also aware that these are neither exhaustive nor perfect. As such, we close our recommendations by pushing for Bowdoin to promote individual change agents within the culture, by having a form of kudos for members of the community who actively enhance the campus culture in a positive direction, and/or are brave speakers of difficult truths as well. An inclusive and equitable campus is one in which everyone is engaged in making it so, in which those who put in the effort are acknowledged and rewarded for that effort, and in which there is always space for differing viewpoints, perspectives, and criticism.

As Bowdoin considers and/or implements these recommendations and other changes, some unintended consequences or unforeseen complications will arise. This is the nature of change—especially for an institution with as long and prestigious a history as Bowdoin. Such moments of frustration or failure are evidence that effort is being made, not that effort is fruitless. The institution should expect and embrace failure as a model for students challenging themselves in similar ways in their studies and time at Bowdoin.

**Works Cited**

Clayton-Pedersen, Alma and Caryn McTighe Musil. 2005. "Introduction to the Series: Making Excellence Inclusive." Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Hanson, E. Mark. *Educational Administration and Organizational Behavior* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Milem, Jeffrey F., Mitchell J. Chang, and Anthony Lising Antonio. 2005. "Making Diversity Work on Campus: A Research Based Perspective." Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Williams, Damon A., Joseph B. Berge, and Shederick A. McClendon. 2005. "Toward a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change in Postsecondary Institutions" Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

## Appendix

Meetings with Members of the Bowdoin Campus Community

**FACULTY**

Open forum meetings attracted various individual faculty from across the College, including senior and junior, tenure-line and non-tenured, and post-docs, as well as professors. Other meetings included:

- BASE advisors
- Committee on Governance and Faculty Affairs
- Committee on Governance and Faculty Affairs
- Faculty Diversity Committee
- Office of the Dean for Academic Affairs

**STAFF**

Meetings included sessions with senior officers and president's office staff.

Other meetings included sessions with specific office and departments and open forums attended by staff from the following areas:

- Admissions and Student Aid
- Athletics
- Bowdoin College Library
- Bowdoin College Museum of Art
- Bowdoin Outing Club
- Career Planning Center
- Center for Co-Curricular Opportunities
- Center for Learning and Teaching
- Communications and Public Affairs
- Joseph McKeen Center for the Common Good
- Student Center for Multicultural Life
- Counseling Service
- Development and Alumni Relations
- Dining Services
- Facilities Management
- Health Services
- Housekeeping
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Institutional Research

- Registrar's Office
- Religious and Spiritual life
- Residential Life
- Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity
- Safety and Security
- Student Activities
- Upward Bound
- Women's Resource Center.

**STUDENTS**

Meetings included open forums that brought together a wide variety of students from all corners of Bowdoin student life.

Meetings with organizations included, but were not limited to:

- BASE advisees
- captains of athletic teams
- LGBTQ students of color
- residential staff
- student government leaders
- students involved in multicultural affinity groups
- student members of the Working Group on Equity and Diversity

**OTHER**

- Advisory Committee on Diversity and Community (a group that includes faculty, students, and staff)