

July 3, 2018

Dear SLS Students and wider SLS Community:

On February 26th, 2018, I announced the appointment of a Working Group on Diversity and Inclusion, chaired by Professor Jenny Martinez, that included faculty, staff, and students. I asked the group to recommend ways to strengthen the student experience at SLS so that this institution can be the best it can be—a model of a diverse and successful academic community, one where all members of our student body can thrive and have a sense of belonging to our collective enterprise of excellence in teaching and research.

The Working Group threw itself into its work immediately—meeting with students, staff, faculty, and conducting an enormous amount of research. The group recommended interim, immediate recommendations on March 18th and May 17th, and I adopted all of those recommendations. They included:

- Creation of a standing cabinet on diversity and inclusion
- Hiring of a new student affairs professional to work on diversity and inclusion issues
- Creating a pipeline program starting in the summer of 2019 to recruit promising college students who might not otherwise apply to Stanford Law
- Recruiting and hiring a visiting instructor with experience in civil rights law to teach classes related to race and the law
- Establishing a speaker series on identity and bias
- Adopting immediate changes to admitted student weekend
- Creating a community leadership award for students
- Developing cultural competence training for our pro bono program
- Hosting the then-upcoming Culp Colloquium (a workshop for untenured faculty of color and emerging scholars and a boot camp for minority candidates going on the teaching market) lead by Professor Rick Banks
- Expanding course offerings relating to race and the law

I am now in receipt of the Working Group's final report, which I am sharing today with the SLS Community. You can find a link to the full report [here](#). The report focuses on and makes recommendations regarding five areas: climate at SLS inside and outside the classroom; our curriculum; our admissions and recruiting efforts; faculty hiring; and data collection. I have reviewed the report carefully and I accept all of its recommendations, which are summarized here:

- With respect to the **climate** at the school, the report recommends that SLS: integrate additional inclusive classroom practices; expand and clarify for students the available channels to provide feedback when they experience challenges; provide broad exposure for students and faculty to leading researchers on bias and identity; take steps to increase access to opportunities for all students, especially students of color; create a standing body, and hire a staff member, charged with focusing on diversity and inclusion issues; increase support for affinity groups, including increasing the channels of communication between alumni of color and students of color; encourage and facilitate

at SLS rigorous research on interventions designed to increase diversity and/or promote inclusion; take steps to further connect advanced degree students and JD students; stage programs at orientation that make it easier for students to have critical conversations with one another across ideological, cultural, political, racial, religious, and other differences; and create an award that recognizes students for their contributions to the community at SLS.

- With respect to the **curriculum**, the report recommends: continued and expanded development of curriculum to prepare students to work with people from diverse backgrounds, including treating cultural competence as a professional skill we are seeking to cultivate; continued attention to both offering and publicizing courses on the impact of race in our legal systems; creation of a center for racial equity and social justice; and faculty consideration of changes to the 1L curriculum, including the movement of a required course out of the 1L fall, the creation of opportunities for additional feedback during the fall 1L term, and the creation of elective reading groups that would allow 1L students to explore issues of interest to them.
- With respect to **admissions**, the report recommends various efforts to deepen and expand our efforts to encourage under-represented students to apply and then recruit them once they are admitted, including the creation of a pipeline program that we would run and carefully evaluate for efficacy.
- With respect to **faculty appointments**, the report recommends a variety of changes to the process followed by our hiring committee: explicit discussion of diversity concerns and the research on unconscious bias; closely monitoring the actions of the committee's attention to diversity as it goes through its process, as well as its outcomes each year; the development of explicit criteria to guide determinations of candidates; the creation of more mechanisms to seek student feedback on visitors; continued support of efforts to strengthen the pipeline of diverse candidates for academic positions; increasing communications with students; and continuously assessing, in a self-conscious way, whether our efforts are proving successful.
- Finally, with respect to **data**, the report recommends the systematic collection of data related to important processes like faculty appointments and admissions, as well as student success at various badges of achievement.

I am committed to implementing these recommendations. The law school's faculty and administration have already begun the work needed to do so. I will report more in the coming months, but, for now, I can report the following actions:

- As I write this, the law school is posting for the position of the full-time student affairs professional who will work on diversity and inclusion issues (in student affairs and in admissions), and, in concert with the standing cabinet, be a key player in executing and leading the charge to make sure that these ideas and recommendations are made a reality. Students will, of course, be involved in interviewing the candidates for this position.

- The faculty appointments committee, under the leadership of Professor David Sklansky, has taken on board and is executing the recommendations contained in this report for the coming recruiting season.
- We are taking steps to pursue the pipeline program to launch it in the summer of 2019.
- We have launched a diversity and inclusion web site and will continue to update it with various materials and information in the coming weeks and months.
- The faculty is presently considering the issues associated with the changes to the first-year curriculum, with a plan to formally take the issue up early in the coming academic year.
- Orientation this fall will include the programs recommended in the report, and several people are at work on cultural competence modules to be used in a variety of classroom and non-classroom settings.
- Several of the recommendations contained in the report (the creation of a center, funding the pipeline program, for example) require the raising of additional funds, and I am busy working on that as well.

Before I conclude, I want us all to take a moment to recognize two things. First, members of our SLS family—faculty, staff, and students—performed heroic amounts of work in a very short period of time to further the goal of creating a stronger academic community. The 85+ page report (with appendix) is a testament to the energy, commitment, and smarts that our colleagues have been willing to invest in making this law school the best place it can be. It is also a sign of our great good fortune to be among such people. Second, we should all be justly proud of the depth of the consideration of the issues the report takes up, and the attention given to the important values of an academic institution like ours. This report is driven by our vital missions of teaching and research. As such, the report is keenly attuned to and guided by what research tells us on these topics, and governed by a bedrock commitment to an environment where all are welcome—treated with dignity and respect—as they engage with one another, even on contested matters, in a spirit of free and open inquiry.

I am excited about the path forward and the work we will do together in the coming months and years. As always, I am eager to hear your thoughts, reactions, and ideas. My door is open.

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