

Campus Climate and Culture Initiative (C3I) External Advisory Committee (EAC) Review

EAC Committee Members:

Jandel Allen-Davis '80, MED'84 (Chair)

Cynthia Barnhart

Jennifer M. Gómez

Vicki Magley

Joanne Conroy-Mather '77

Carol Muller '77

Will Scheiman '14

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Overview

The C3I External Advisory Committee (EAC), established in early 2019, is charged with assessing Dartmouth's progress on implementing each of the action items identified for [Dartmouth's Campus Climate and Culture Initiative \(C3I\)](#), and with providing with an annual progress report to the President and to the Board of Trustees. Specifically, the Campus Climate and Culture Initiative (C3I) of Dartmouth College follows, and expands upon, the recommendations for institutions of higher education made in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) report, *Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*. In concert with two other initiatives launched within the past five years, Moving Dartmouth Forward and Inclusive Excellence, C3I is part of a comprehensive set of initiatives designed to create a more welcoming, inclusive, and equitable learning environment for all Dartmouth students, faculty, and staff.

In August 2020, Dartmouth [launched a search for a new Senior Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer](#), culminating in the appointment of [Dr. Shontay Delaloue in July 2021](#), a position reporting directly to President Philip J. Hanlon as a member of Dartmouth's Senior Leadership Group. The Title IX Office, the Inclusive Excellence (IE) project and the Campus Climate and Culture Initiative (C3I) were put under the aegis of the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity (IDE). The senior vice president is intended to serve as the primary thought leader and subject-matter expert responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating Dartmouth's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, to lead institutional compliance on matters of discrimination and harassment, and to work across the campus to deploy evidence-based practices to promote inclusive excellence.

During the 2020-21 academic year, the EAC itself had a very slow start since its prior chair had resigned in July 2020, and new members were recruited over a period of many months. EAC members were provided with extensive background materials about Dartmouth, the C3I initiative, and two other related initiatives, Moving Dartmouth Forward, and Inclusive Excellence, as well as with a November Progress Report from the President's Office. Gilda Barabino, who served as chair in the academic year 2019-2020, and Susan Finegan resigned in May, 2020. Several new members of the EAC were appointed by President Phil Hanlon in consultation with Dartmouth's senior-level administration and the plaintiffs in the case of *Kristina Rapuano et al. v. Trustees of Dartmouth College*. The newly reconstituted committee consists of [Jandel Allen-Davis \(chair\), Cynthia Barnhart, Joanne Conroy, Jennifer M. Gómez, Vicki Magley, Carol B. Muller, and William Scheiman](#).

The 2020-21 EAC was convened virtually on April 12, 2021 and members were advised that the President and Provost would identify a chair for the group. On May 24, 2021, a second Zoom meeting was arranged by Dartmouth administrators as a "virtual campus visit," inviting input from all members of the EAC in shaping the agenda, with times for

the EAC to meet with several stakeholders at a time. The EAC, still without a chair at that time, met in executive session at the start and end of this meeting by request of its members, and determined that despite the very late start to the committee's work in 2020-21, an annual progress report should nonetheless be undertaken. We were particularly pleased that Dr. Delalue and a member of her incoming staff were able to join and engage actively in both of these spring meetings. On July 12, 2021, President Philip Hanlon announced to the members of the EAC that its new chair would be Jandel Allen-Davis. Asked by the President's office if a report to the Board of Trustees might be delayed from the Board's June meeting to its July meeting, the EAC agreed. Subsequently, the EAC was asked if the report might be further delayed to the September meeting, and we agreed to this delay.

It is clear that 2020-21 has been a year of many externalities that impacted anticipated progress on C3I. The global pandemic that descended in March 2020 disrupted and required dramatic changes in campus practices toward teaching, learning and research, and re-shaped the co-curricular and social lives of students, postdocs, faculty, and staff. In the U.S., heightened awareness of longstanding injustices severely impacting many and particularly Black people grew in the wake of national protests following the murder of George Floyd in June 2020. Dartmouth experienced an unusually large number of transitions of leaders in roles key to expected progress on C3I [goals and action items](#), including but not limited to the vacated roles of the Director of the C3I (April 2020), the Vice President for Diversity, Inclusion & Equity (July 2020) and Provost Joseph Helble (June 2021), who left Dartmouth in June 2021 to assume the presidency of Lehigh University.

Prior Work

The May 2020 report of the EAC was sobering. While acknowledging some progress against goals, by and large, the EAC noted that its ability to undertake its charge was hampered in particular by:

- Inadequate communications, possibly resulting from under-resourced staff
- Lack of metrics to evaluate performance of C3I initiatives
- Inadequate support for the EAC

Further, the EAC report of 2020 noted:

- Dartmouth has developed numerous initiatives aimed at culture change, but significant progress was stalled on these intentions due to a lack of coordination and Dartmouth's siloed culture.
- C3I feels less like an effort to transform culture across a whole campus, and more like a response to a lawsuit
- There is a significant opportunity to address structural and other issues in considering how best to replace the functions formerly assigned to the outgoing C3I Director, including enabling a "visible face" of the initiative.

The EAC therefore recommended a more intentional approach to the C3I and its efforts toward a cultural shift, to include:

- Consideration of a reporting structure for the C3I Director integrated into the academic hierarchy, with access to resources and budgetary control.

(Completed)

- Consideration of restructuring for better coordination among C3I, IDE, Title IX, and SVPP (Sexual Violence Prevention Program). (*Completed*)
- Ensuring full engagement of faculty, students, and staff in C3I. (*Incomplete*)
- Developing and implementing a communications plan encompassing appropriate messaging, urgency, commitment, proactive stance, and transparency. (*Incomplete*)
- Developing metrics that reflect institutional change and enable tracking progress (*Incomplete*)
- Delving more deeply into behaviors that need to change for culture and climate transformation, both obvious and subtle. (*Not started*)
- Recognizing that campus climate issues go well beyond “bad actors” (*Not begun*)

Progress Since the May 2020 Report

Against the backdrop of the many challenges Dartmouth encountered in implementing C3I in the last year, reported progress has been made in some important directions:

- **Organizational structure:** has been revised to enable new leadership in the form of a Senior Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, reporting to the President and serving as a member of the senior leadership team, with the expectation that this leader will enable coordination of the various initiatives related to campus culture and climate in a more integrated and synergistic fashion.
- **Climate survey assessment:** More than 15 academic departmental climate surveys have been conducted, analyzed, and used as a springboard for critical departmental conversations and workshops designed to focus on departmental climate improvement, with 36 more anticipated for 2021-22.
- **Infrastructure:** The Title IX office has added staff, and revised policies to maintain compliance with federal policies and guidance (which continue to evolve).
- **Leadership Development:** 75 Dartmouth faculty and staff members attended one or more workshops focused on faculty development, and all department/program and search committee chairs participated in faculty recruitment procedures and implicit bias conducted in Fall 2020.
- **Data collection:** Dartmouth’s Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has compiled data on 40,000 applicants for faculty and fellowship positions since 2013, providing a yearly summary of the composition of applicant pools, candidates interviewed, those offered positions, and those hired, by race/ethnicity and sex. Beginning in 2021-22, all faculty searches will be tracked to enable monitoring of diversity represented in search processes by senior academic leaders and staff. OIR, the provost, and the deans are also compiling data on faculty retention, tenure and promotion, and departure rate by school and department, by race/ethnicity and sex.
- **Mentorship:** Fourteen faculty and staff members participated in “train-the-trainer” workshops, certifying them to conduct training sessions in mentoring for other faculty and staff members.
- **Additional student advisor support:** Advising committees, external advisors, and peer advising networks have been put in place for pre-doctoral fellows and

postdoctoral fellows in the Provost's Fellowship Program in order to ensure graduate students have access to varied opportunities for academic and community support.

External Advisory Committee 2021 Findings

Based on information provided in background materials, through meetings with Dartmouth's leadership and stakeholders, and through discussion among members of the 2021-22 EAC, we offer the following observations:

- A more cohesive, aligned, and effectively-communicated framework is needed to provide an operational roadmap for the aspirational vision for C3I and Dartmouth's related initiatives: "to create a more welcoming, inclusive, and equitable learning environment for all Dartmouth students, faculty, and staff." In the absence of such a roadmap, the work of C3I ends up being presented as a "check the box" list of activities that may or may not have desired impact and outcome. It will be important to ensure that the overall vision is not limited by a fixed set of activities, since moving toward a more inclusive and equitable culture will require a dynamic process, and one that takes into consideration new learning and perspectives. For example, rooting the initial objectives in the framework of the 2018 NASEM consensus study report is admirable, yet there also needs to be a way in which new understandings gained from the work of the NASEM Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education are incorporated into Dartmouth's planning and execution. While data has been compiled, apparently in contrast to previous practice, it is not apparent that metrics for measuring progress have yet been considered or are in place. Moreover, and while there was a valid rationale for conducting the climate surveys at a department level, there isn't an aggregated report of the results that provides a systems-level look of the campus climate and culture in a manner that could inform change on the part of positional leaders such as the president, the provost, deans, associate deans, and vice presidents.
- While data has been compiled, apparently in contrast to previous practice, it is not apparent that metrics for measuring progress have yet been considered or are in place. Moreover, and while there was a valid rationale for conducting the climate surveys at a department level, there isn't an aggregated report of the results that provides a systems-level look of the campus climate and culture in a manner that allows for real change.
- The work that has been accomplished is not being communicated across the campus.
- Those faculty and staff members undertaking critical work to further the aims of C3I exhibit care and commitment, but too often seem to be doing the work as an "add-on" to their regular responsibilities, with insufficient time, support, or recognition, a situation which will inevitably limit desired impact. Some of them may identify or recognize issues that need to be addressed but are not in positions that enable them to influence changes needed.

- It's not clear if considerations of the needs of staff have been included in this initiative, and yet they are critical players in maintaining or working toward change in the existing campus culture and climate.
- While we are encouraged by the depth of knowledge, experience, and skills that Dr. Delalue brings to her new position, it is essential that the president and other academic leaders devote time, commitment, attention, skill-development, and knowledge to enable shifts in the campus culture.
- Many of the concerns that led to the creation of Moving Dartmouth Forward, Inclusive Excellence, and C3I are interrelated, with common underlying causes and issues.
- The anticipated work of the EAC continues to be under-resourced.,

Recommendations

- With new senior leadership in place, the time is ripe at Dartmouth for its leadership to review both the original report, [Sexual Harassment of Women](#), and its recommendations, *and* the discussions and recommendations of the Action Collaborative that have built upon that 2018 report, to consider additional actions that are warranted to achieve the goals for C3I which Dartmouth has outlined.
- Further, Dartmouth's leadership must create a unifying vision and framework for engagement that inspires, builds confidence and hope that substantive and sustained change can happen. This work requires will aid in the engagement of the entire community.
- We hope that the recommendations of the EAC in its May 2020 report (p. 7) will be considered by the incoming Vice President for Diversity and Equity.
- Many of the components for successfully leading and navigating the work ahead already exists among the component parts. But these components lack a cohesive, aligned, and elegant vision and framework to achieve desired results. Creating this cohesive vision and framework will require further investments of, time, support, expertise and financial resources. Questions such as the following might help guide the development of the needed plan:
 - *What are we trying to achieve and why?* (The clear and elevating vision)
 - *What's our plan to get there?* (A transparent and shared strategy, including metrics/measures of success and progress, who needs to engage and how, appropriate number of dedicated staff with clear authority to act and a sustainable budget to support the effort)
 - *How's it going?* (Frequent and structured performance review)
- There is a need to harmonize all aspects of the Initiatives in progress on the campus that are happening in pockets today and may be loosely connected. Dartmouth and its leaders should move toward an integrated vision and action plan that encompasses all 3 initiatives, while still maintaining their specific goals. With that in mind, we support the observations and [recommendations](#) of the external advisory committee for the Inclusive Excellence initiative.
- Dr. Delalue's role should serve as the central organizing point of the C3I work and her role must continue to report directly to the President. There is merit in having the initiatives separated as this allows for focus. Ultimately, however, there are commonalities between and among a number of sociocultural issues

- (e.g., race, ethnicity, ability, gender orientation, etc.) that would benefit from a unified approach and that should become part of a long-range vision/plan.
- While culture change involves both macro and micro elements within any community, Dartmouth's academic deans should come together, and with the President and Provost, identify the vital few agreements regarding the approach to expected outcomes on which they will work together. The department environmental surveys provide an opportunity to identify common themes from which to frame those strategies, while protecting privacy.
 - In pursuing the goals of C3I, it will be important not to overlook or ignore the origins that prompted this initiative and its implementation. There appears to be potentially beneficial additional healing that both the *Rapuno et al.* plaintiffs and the College should explore. The emotional toll that lawsuits take on all parties, let alone the genesis of this one, isn't trivial. Dartmouth should be a place of connection and community, even when there is disagreement or severe stressors such as this one. For example, health care has come to understand and indeed embrace the power of an apology even without any admission of culpability.

Summary

The pandemic necessitated a high level of focus and attention on a myriad of operational and safety issues in order to keep students, faculty and staff safe. Despite the impacts of COVID-19 on every facet of the Dartmouth College community, the Campus Climate and Culture Initiative (C3I) which began in 2019 has continued to make progress. As we have noted, a variety of early stage objectives were accomplished during the 2020 academic school year. In speaking with many key informants, it is clear that the College's preference would have been to make more progress. Nonetheless, the work done begins to lay a solid foundation for future success. Many of the right individuals are now in place to begin this work in earnest and there is still much to do, not only in order to meet the Initiative's objectives but also to create substantive and sustained change.

Throughout the report, we have made several observations and recommendations. However, there are four on which we particularly encourage the College to focus at the outset of this next phase of the work, as they cut across many other campus initiatives:

- Create a unified vision and an operating framework that is visible to the entire community which encompasses all campus initiatives whose goals are to create a healthy, vibrant, and inclusive academic environment. Identify those strategies that will be successful in the Dartmouth context and use those findings to set the objectives and priorities for the coming academic year.
- The C3I appears to have been under-resourced in time, expertise and budgetary support. The College leadership must determine the full scope and scale of the work and what resources are needed to assure its success. Many leaders commented that this work was an "add on" to their existing work and explicitly asked for help with change management and other expertise in order to move the work forward. While Dr. Delaloue and her staff are welcome additions to this ambitious Initiative, they can accomplish this work only with the appropriate

levels of resources, authority to act, and full engagement of senior academic leaders.

- If this work is critical to improving the College's culture and climate, regular opportunities for senior leadership to engage with the broader campus community, including leadership in each of the schools, must be provided with an opportunity for two-way communication and sharing of ideas, observations and reflections.
- Before the External Advisory Committee's Spring 2022 review, the College should conduct its own self-evaluation and self-study. The resulting report should be provided to the Committee before we meet with faculty, staff and students. In addition to updates regarding progress, the report must include metrics of success that the College will hold itself accountable for and progress against those metrics.

The College, whether out of necessity, desire or both, has undertaken an ambitious and important body of work that cannot succeed without a high degree of focus and commitment. Dartmouth has an opportunity start anew from a strong foundation and now is the time to solidify the path forward and dig in! We wish Dartmouth College continued success in this critically important and valuable work and look forward to continuing in our role as an external advisory committee.