Advisory Committee on University Resource Management (ACURM) Meeting Minutes

Open Meeting of November 8, 2021

Attendees

- ***Present:*** Lisa Di Carlo (chair, faculty), David Muller (alum), Ana Boyd (undergrad), Sara Cunningham (alum), Mukul Khanna (undergrad), Tiffany Amaral (staff), Michael Santoemmo (staff), Fulvio Domini (guest, professor in linguistic and society department), Dawn King (guest, senior lecturer, environment society), Timmons Roberts (guest, faculty), Christine Geib-Ayala (staff)
- ***Absent:*** Kayla Rosen (alum), Melvin Rogers (faculty), Meaghan Carley (grad)

Agenda

1. SBCA Presentation by J. Timmons Roberts, Fulvio Domini, Dawn King
2. All other busines
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Notes

- **Presentation, Scholars at Brown for Climate Action**
    - Looking at climate issues at Brown, looking at faculty options for more sustainable investing, look into environmental issues at the university
    - For past two years, looking into minimum standards, specifically money going out of Brown
    - Wanting to add that the university won't pay money to (licensed, contracted, business relationships), that purposely spread science disinformation
    - ACURM's role
        - Something that ACURM can look into, but was told that wasn't in ACURM's purview
    - The Organization
        - Organized science disinformation is in disservice to the public good, and exploits and depends on the tacit acceptance of universities
        - Call to action: Brown should update our business and ethics standards to exclude relationships with companies and nonprofits who knowingly support disinformation
        - Benefit to Brown: low-cost action that builds on our leadership on climate change and public health
            - Has to do with accuracy, not political opinions
    - Background: science disinformation

        - Intentional dissemination of false, inaccurate, or misleading information so as to bury emerging research; different from misinformation, which isn't intentional
    - Proposal to ACURM:
        - Review and advance the modifications of Brown's ethics statements and requirements of business partners to the effect that, essentially, organizations doing business with Brown University may not knowingly disseminate false information
        - Potentially adding this phrase: "Unless vendor is critical to the research or teaching mission of the university"
    - Possible process:
        - Now: discuss these additions, assisting the Administration in overseeing them to assure compliance
        - With each organization, ACURM alerts them and then the university has a year to provide documentation regarding a change in their actions
- Public Discussion about Proposal
    - Question: Is this a self-policed policy? Is it ACURM's duty to review every organization?
        - Not ACURM's duty to review every organization, but if somebody brought a concern to ACURM, the committee would review the claim
    - Potential for Ivy-wide initiative, inform other schools of our actions so that they can potentially echo our initiative
    - Not as much looking at individual donors (part of the reason why money coming into Brown is not as much the focus)
    - Potential for displaying Brown's leadership in publicity of this initiative
    - ACURM considers gift acceptance, if it doesn't align with our policies/standards, we can reject the gift
        - Should ACURM then look into gift acceptances/money coming into Brown regarding organized science disinformation? → up to ACURM