HFA Racial Justice Action Statement and Plan
July 1, 2021

Introduction and Context

The Division of the Humanities and Fine Arts committed itself to the College of Letters and Science plan for accountable action in response to long-standing patterns of systemic violence against Blacks and other people of color in this country (https://www.college.ucsb.edu/news/statement-racial-injustice-plan-accountable-action). As a first step in fulfilling that commitment, the leadership of HFA invited each academic department or program to discuss together the L&S plan and devise a set of strategies for improving equity and inclusion among faculty and students, in departmental governance, and in the classroom. We recognize that each department has its own history of challenges and accomplishments, and that because histories of racist and anti-Black patterns of thought suffuse our curricula, standards and mechanisms of evaluation, and hiring and admission practices, systemic changes are necessary to ensure a truly quality education and supportive environment for everyone. To that end, we proposed an ongoing, tiered process that began with individual departments establishing their priorities in action plans to be followed by financial and administrative support at the divisional level to coordinate and facilitate these priorities. What follows is first, a discussion of contextual considerations relevant to the HFA division and second, a series of recommendations for division-wide action based on those plans and other consultations.

An important indicator of long-standing and systemic inequity is in faculty diversity. The percentage of URM faculty in the Division of Humanities and Fine Arts has been more or less the same for the past ten years. In 2010-11, HFA had 11% URM and stayed at 11% through 2013-14, then had 12% in 2014-15, 11% in 2015-16, and as of 2019-20 was at 12%. Though our percentage is better than in some Colleges and Divisions (for example, Engineering reached a ‘high’ point of 5% in 2014-15 but is now at 3%), HFA is behind the Division of Social Sciences and the Graduate School of Education. It also significantly diverges from the demographic composition of the state of California.

This lack of progress is unacceptable in itself but also ethically irresponsible in light of the multiple declarations made by campus officials and individual departments in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and other unarmed Black people in spring of 2020. These statements all acknowledge the university’s long participation in racist and anti-Black pedagogy, knowledge systems, faculty recruitment, and admissions policies and vow to not only stop them but also rectify the damages and structural asymmetries that continue to exist because of this history. Those asymmetries have resulted in inadequate pipelines that contribute to the difficulty of hiring diverse faculty, which is why proactive and innovative strategies are necessary if we wish to rectify these historical injustices. It is also why practices regarding undergraduate and graduate admissions and training are an integral part of any antiracist action plan. Given the lack of progress, despite increasing attention to equity and inclusion at UC Santa Barbara, we
need a concerted holistic approach that makes considerations of equity central to every component of the academic and intellectual mission of the university, not just to those tagged as DEI-related concerns. As Dr. Joyce M. Bell (Professor of Sociology, U of Chicago) outlined in a recent talk in the “Difficult Dialogues” series, reliance on ‘diversity’ as a master frame for understanding race has thwarted the overturning of racism in higher education (“How ‘Diversity’ Underdeveloped Higher Ed,” 26 February 2021).

Divisional Aims and Principles

HFA’s Racial Justice Action goals are motivated by three interlocking principles:

First, we seek to achieve a shared understanding of what antiracism, anti-Blackness, racial justice, and intersectionality mean in the context of the HFA Division at UC Santa Barbara and a shared commitment to recognizing and overturning racist and sexist practices in all components of university life. HFA supports state mandates to increase the percentage of underrepresented minorities (URM) in faculty and student bodies and to better reflect the demographics of California. It also seeks to foster other modes of diversity (including queer and trans people, non-Anglo-European populations, religious minorities, first generation scholars) and thus is committed to working through tensions between US-based and international/global understandings of racial categories, intersectional identities, and histories of settler colonialism.

Second, we believe that training in the humanities and fine arts is crucial to both knowledge and achievement of racial justice. Because all of the US ethnic/area studies are housed in the Division of Social Sciences and because matters regarding race and sexuality are generally associated with social scientific methodologies and policy-making, HFA accentuates and fortifies the special contributions that humanities training makes to racial equity and justice. In particular: skills in interpretation and the ability to “read” beneath and beyond surface or manifest content; performative and improvisational understandings of concepts (including of ‘concept’); expansion of archives and what counts as an archive; interconnections between expressive and political cultures, curricular and social movements, cognitive and affective study or embodied ways of knowing; community-facing initiatives and collaborations.

Third, we know that community-building, social interaction, and receiving adequate support are key to making justice work doable. This work may unsettle and challenge some assumptions, but it can also be engaged as something that we desire and thus feel encouraged to build. This means devising concrete ways to reward faculty of color and justice activists who perform invisible as well as visible labor and service to the campus. In addition, we recognize that although budgetary constraints exist, budget considerations are always choices that indicate campus priorities. We view funding decisions in this light.

The following proposals also should be considered in light of plans being developed by VC Belinda Robnett for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Those plans include conducting a campus climate survey and developing a more robust campus infrastructure for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in staffing and administration, faculty hiring and
retention, and student recruitment and retention. It is also important to acknowledge that this past year (2020-21) has seen numerous efforts by departments and clusters that inform and anticipate the proposals in this plan; these plans are included in the Appendix [To be added]. Nearly all departments and programs prepared anti-racist action plans; we have pursued 5 UC President’s Postdoctoral Fellow faculty hires in 3 departments; faculty have submitted proposals for 3 UC-HBCU partnerships (a program in which HFA participation leads campus participation overall); departments have mounted ambitious programming and curricular re-design initiatives that foreground inclusivity and anti-racist action; most departments have participated in DEI workshops sponsored by the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In order to foster and sustain the institutional practices needed to improve diversity (faculty, students) through recruitment, retention, and student success, HFA’s Associate Dean/FEA has brought together departmental diversity officers to share information and encourage best practices.

Goals and Strategies

Our five-year goals are as follows:

- By 2026-27 increase the percentage of URM faculty in HFA from 12% to 15%. In addition, increase the percentage of other types of minority faculty by 10%.

- By 2026-27 increase the percentage of URM and other minority graduate students in HFA (currently around 26%) by an additional 15%.

- By 2026-27, sustain and possibly increase the representation of undergraduate URM students (currently 38%), minority (currently 51%), and first-generation students (currently 41%), in both recruitment and retention.

The five-year goals rest on actions in both faculty hiring and retention, and in student recruitment, retention, and success. Of particular importance are pipeline programs for student mentoring and recruitment and for recruitment to the professoriate. Crucial for the success of those efforts, however, is the ongoing work of identifying the implicit biases and overt practices that reproduce inequities and developing transformative practices to create environments in which minority faculty and students are empowered and supported. We recognize that, alongside faculty and student recruitment and retention, public-facing work in the humanities and arts can be an important catalyst for these conjoined efforts. Key as well are ensuring that graduate students receive a living wage and developing creative strategies to address housing needs and other matters critical for recruiting and retaining URM faculty.

Because graduate and undergraduate student recruitment, retention and success are addressed in a range of campus-wide programs, led by Graduate Division, by the Division of Undergraduate Education, and by Student Affairs, we do not address those issues here, focusing instead on faculty recruitment and retention and climate. We underscore, however, that the work of advancing diversity among both faculty and students are deeply interlocked
projects. Below, we describe proposals designed to achieve those aims in the hope of initiating dialogue within departments and between departmental faculty and divisional and campus leadership.

**Faculty Hiring:**

Two general principles guide these proposals. First: Hiring URM faculty is not an additive process; instead, it involves rethinking hiring practices and departmental curricula. Second: Budgetary considerations are necessary but are always also a choice about priorities. Thus, we need to envision the university that we seek to create before narrowing the vision to what the budget “allows.”

An important priority is the continuation and expansion of the [UC President’s Postdoctoral Program](#) hiring incentive. This could entail the following measures:

- Prepare and disseminate information that clarifies the hiring incentive and debunks misinformation regarding the program.
- Record and make available a presentation of former PPFP faculty talking about their research, pedagogical practices, and the nature/value of the program.
- Develop a social support structure for current and former PPFP and Chancellor’s fellows. This would include a peer network, as well as more formal programs, such as programming and collaborative scholarship and/or pedagogy projects that PPFP faculty wish to initiate or pursue. For the latter, we would need to work with UCOP to secure funding.
- Make campus visits of current PPFPs more visible; portray and advertise them as opportunities to learn about the most exciting developments in humanities research.
- Consult with UCOP about the feasibility of a system-wide PPFP hiring “season” during the academic year calendar in order to facilitate PPF recruitment within strategic FTE planning.

A related program, the Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellowship, offers similar opportunities. Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellows are selected from the highly ranked alternate PPFP candidates by individual campuses. Currently, UCSB funds one such fellowship, but would benefit from more; for example, UCLA funds up to four such fellows per year.

Advancing both programs could be the charge of a divisional or campus-wide committee made up of FEAs, selected diversity officers and/or DEI office representatives, and AP representatives.

The annual [FTE planning and recruitment cycle](#) should also be informed by these aims.

Departmental FTE planning should incorporate specific attention to a department’s efforts to advance diversity, equity and inclusion and should explain its progress. Relevant findings about diversity and climate (derived from Program Reviews or other sources) should be addressed. And, searches themselves should be carried out in accordance with best practices for advancing
diversity, equity, and inclusion. In HFA, the Associate Dean/FEA participates in the review and approval of search proposals, job ads, and search plans. We also intend to work with AP to incorporate consultation with the DEI office as part of our search processes going forward.

As part of FTE planning, the EVC has encouraged the consideration and pursuit of cluster hiring initiatives and this is an approach that we consider critical for advancing faculty diversity. The current Mellichamp Cluster Hiring Initiative in Racial Justice is one example and HFA faculty submitted several excellent proposals, with final decisions now pending. Regardless of its outcome, we intend to facilitate cross-departmental planning for a HFA cross-disciplinary cluster hire that foregrounds humanistic and/or arts-based techniques to achieving social justice and to seek campus and extramural support for this cluster. Part of this planning would ideally include consultation with BIPOC scholar-artists, perhaps via a two-week residency or other program, to develop a vision and concrete plan for the cluster’s aims, composition, and organization.

Search and recruitment policies and practices, which are governed by campus- and system-wide provisions, would also benefit from interventions that are attentive to the needs of URM and other minority faculty, including LGBTQ+. For example, “housing” provisions might be expanded to include mortgage and MOP protocols for non-family or domestic partner joint domiciles; “shared equity” arrangements (e.g., Landed, https://www.landed.com) might be explored. To effectively recruit minority faculty, our start-up packages should also recognize the striking and well-documented differences between the net worth of Black, Latinx, and White households. For example, the possibility of allowing monies to be used for student debt repayment could be explored. More consultation with other campuses as well as with the experts in our and the UC-wide DEI units will be important.

Faculty Retention

Faculty retention is usually pursued on a case-by-case basis, making it an individualized and individualistic set of provisions and practices. While that is unlikely to change in the short term, as we strive to recruit a more diverse faculty, we need to be attentive to creating conditions that will support faculty and enable them to thrive. These conditions exist at the level of departmental cultures, and numerous strategies for identifying and addressing barriers were discussed in the departmental plans, from diversity training modules and anti-racist programming, to ongoing curricular innovation. At the divisional level, we have worked with departments to establish transparent workload and course release policies, but there is more to be done in this area. One approach is to review and consider adopting strategies in the recent report on “Equity-Mindedness in Faculty Workload” that address unequal service workloads assumed by women and BIPOC faculty. https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Equity-Minded-Faculty-Workloads.pdf. A recent campus project funded by the UCOP Advancing Faculty Diversity program also produced recommendations about service workloads. Finally, to help diagnose barriers to retention, we propose that exit interviews with departing faculty be systematically conducted.

We also believe that there may be opportunities for collaboration that build on the UC-HBCU program in which several HFA departments have participated. The existing UC-HBCU is designed
as a mentorship collaboration and pipeline for recruiting undergraduate students from HBCUs to UC graduate programs. This program may offer further opportunities for a faculty exchange component – for example, through a Black faculty exchange program with partnering HBCUs, where a professor from an HBCU and from UC Santa Barbara swap departments for a quarter. This would achieve better familiarity between both universities, bring exciting Black scholars to individual departments for a quarter, and allow UC Santa Barbara’s Black faculty to teach elsewhere while envisioning additional possibilities for student-, program-, and resource-exchanges between UCSB and HBCUs. This could be developed as a divisional or College initiative.

Another way of creating a supportive environment for minority faculty would follow from the cluster-hiring principle. It would begin by identifying 2-3 cross-disciplinary areas in which the development of an emphasis, minor (or major) or even an MA program would support a critical mass of BIPOC faculty and students. Existing spaces that could be developed toward this end include the Literature and Writing emphasis (CCS and the Writing Program) and some of the professional/applied/public humanities initiatives:

- A cross-disciplinary cluster in Creative-Critical Writing that foregrounds BIPOC voices, artists, and creative production could draw on ‘creatives’ in departments of literature, Film and Media Studies, Theater and Dance, and History as well as “creative” writers in Black Studies, Chicano Studies, Asian American Studies and Feminist Studies.
- A cross-disciplinary cluster in Health Humanities and Legal Humanities, both of which are areas where justice and equity concerns are at the forefront of training and curricula.
- A cross-disciplinary cluster in Public Humanities that draws on the energy and aims of programs such as the IHC’s Public Humanities Fellows program and the Global Latinidades project.

**Cross-departmental Curricular Change**

Following closely on the proposals for faculty retention are proposals for curricular innovation and inclusive pedagogy. At the divisional level, we would benefit from collaborative work on humanities-based approaches to social and racial justice. This could be done by developing co-taught cross-departmental graduate seminars on pedagogy and curricular change that address trans-departmental challenges to redeveloping department curricula. To implement this, one or two per academic year could be offered with funding support. These seminars would include curated bibliography and other resources (housed on the HFA website) and would devote time to assignments tailored to individual department needs. Faculty co-instructors would receive teaching credit; programming and supplies funds, web site support funds, and graduate participants’ stipends would be provided.

Possible topics include:
• Distributive Justice: Rethinking Distribution Requirements and Ideas of ‘Coverage,’ ‘Expertise,’ and ‘Core Knowledge.’ On undergraduate and graduate levels, what do our students need as training and support for the next phase of their lives? What requirements and benchmarks are most likely to get them there?

• Re-evaluating ‘Evaluation’: What are we trying to teach, measure, accredit? What constitutes effective writing assignments, prompts, exams, grading and feedback? How can we make these more neuro-diverse and representative demographically while also (and as a way of) foregrounding what humanities training facilitates?

• ‘Triggers,’ ‘Civility,’ and other pedagogical flashpoints: how to maintain academic freedom in the classroom and sensitivity to traumatic histories, racist texts and commentary. How to teach graphic materials in terms of sex, sexual and racial violence, war, torture, and other forms of dehumanizing practice while maintaining a humane and open sphere of discussion?

• ‘Performativity’: how is knowledge performed and embodied? How do we teach this and how do we evaluate it?

• The US is not the World: devising strategies, terminology, and methodologies for highlighting this point in discussions of race and intersectional identities in courses focused on the US, in courses focused on ‘globalization,’ migration, decolonialization, and in courses focused on specific regions of the world.

• Partiality in Theory: debunking the white-maleness of ‘theory,’ citational practices that reinforce group think (i.e., white supremacy, European hegemony), ‘felt theory’ as il/logical practice

• Challenging the Archive: as a research and scholarly practice that blurs boundaries between fact and imagination, source and resource, critical and creative writing within university and departmental frameworks—problems of memory, memorializing practices, revisionist history as department politics.

Other initiatives that foreground what the humanities and fine arts contribute to racial justice in society have more public-facing components. HFA currently provides editorial support for several journals, including some housed at UCSB; some, such as Kalfou and The Public Historian, foreground humanities and artistic approaches to intersectional racial justice. A quarterly or annual division-sponsored event that featured their work could be organized. HFA could also facilitate meetings of faculty and students involved in these journals to encourage networking and collaboration as a way of supporting and highlighting these efforts.

Concluding Notes
This document includes both long- and short-term measures. We realize that the return to in-person instruction as well as numerous initiatives (e.g., Advancing Faculty Diversity) demand faculty commitments of time and energy. Further consultation on this plan will be needed, but in the immediate future and mindful of faculty workloads, we aim to inaugurate the following:

- **Faculty Hiring**
  - Prepare and circulate information about the UC PPFP program that will assist departments in pursuing such recruitments.
  - Develop a campus peer network of PPFP faculty (and current fellows).
  - Encourage additional departments to consider these recruitments – we would like to pursue 2-4 such recruitments in 21-22.
  - While open searches will continue at a reduced rate, we will continue work on a plan for a cluster hire in racial justice that foregrounds practices honed by arts and humanities, either within or alongside the next Mellichamp Cluster hire in Racial Justice.

- **Curricular Reform**
  - We will pilot the curricular innovation/inclusive pedagogy in 21-22 as a single-quarter initiative (Winter or Spring 22).
  - We will pursue development of undergraduate minors in the Medical Humanities and in the Legal Humanities (NEH grants pending). A minor in the Medical Humanities emphasizes new approaches to research on public health, health equity and the broader socio-political contexts of health, disease and care, including the cultural, racial and gendered politics of health (expected by 2023). A minor in the Legal Humanities foregrounds existing injustices in the justice system and proposes alternatives to carceral logics and practices (expected by 2023).
  - We will initiate discussions aimed at identifying a cross-departmental cluster in Creative-Critical writing that foregrounds the voices of BIPOC artists. The feasibility of undergraduate and/or graduate degree programs will be evaluated.

- **Governance**
  - As staff and policies of the Office of DEI are put into place, we will establish a clear articulation of the duties, responsibilities, and activities of the Humanities and Fine Arts Division, led by its Dean, and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, led by its Vice Chancellor. In particular, we will establish a policy of interaction between the Associate Dean and Faculty Equity Advisor and the non-STEM-designated Associate Vice Chancellor of DEI. We also will develop a plan of interaction between the FEA and the Diversity Officers in each department who also report to the VC of DEI.
APPENDIX

Useful Ideas from Individual Department Plans with Applicability to Other Departments

- Incorporate antiracism goals into specified learning outcomes in individual classes and program requirements.

- Develop a departmental online library or archive of materials that support antiracist pedagogy and programming. This could include lists of primary texts and curated articles on antiracist pedagogy and practices.

- Create an archive of alternative grading practices and writing assignments (i.e., Asao Inoue).

- Create a salaried or stipendiary position for a Graduate Student Diversity Program Manager.

- Organize an ongoing department colloquium and/or reading group on anti-Blackness and antiracism.

- Devise clear minimal departmental expectations for research productivity. Clarify what constitutes a scholarly contribution that is ‘major’, ‘minor’, or ‘meets expectations’. Formalize these expectations and cite them in personnel reviews. Similarly, devise clear minimal departmental expectations for service and graduate advising.

- Create a departmental Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiatives whose compensation is equivalent to other department leadership positions [this proposal is superseded by the Office of DEI’s request to appoint three Diversity Officers in each department (Faculty, Graduate, Undergraduate)].

- Develop a lab-based mentoring model with a course load credit when number of mentees reaches a specified threshold.

- Engage in proactive recruitment of minoritized graduate students from the departmental BA program.

- Develop a Graduate Diversity Pilot Program (similar to the Berkeley History PhD Pipeline Program).

- For every faculty hire, have an appointed standing committee other than the designated search committee evaluate the Contributions to Diversity statement of all job applicants. Incorporate its assessment into the search committee’s assessment.
• Develop lecture series and/or workshops on differing meanings of race, racism, ethnicity, sexism, social justice in non-US-focused departments.

Ideas specific to departments focused on languages and literatures other than English

• Join forces with other departments on the west coast (or anywhere during zoom) to coordinate events on ‘decolonializing’ the [German, French, Korean, etc.] curriculum.

• Share resources on ‘inclusive language’ in languages that ‘gender’ nouns and other aspects of speech and syntax. Arrange a series of conversations around inclusivity in language instruction across HFA.

• Develop protocols for ‘diversity’ demographics that prioritize URMs as currently defined.

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1 UC Santa Barbara, a Minority-Serving Institution and a member of the AAU, enrolls close to 25,000 graduate and undergraduate students. Education, research and programming in the humanities and arts are centered in the Division of Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA), housed in the College of Letters and Science. HFA’s 22 departments and programs encompass creative practice and performance, history, global language and cultural studies, classics, religious studies and philosophy, and film, media and art historical studies; we offer 29 different undergraduate degrees and over 30 graduate degrees and interdisciplinary emphases. In 2019-20, our major count was 2970 and our total undergraduate student enrollment reached 6701. 41% of our majors are first-generation college students and 56% identify as minorities (URM and other). HFA graduate student enrollment in 2019-20 was 532; just over half are women and approximately 26% are minorities. We are keenly aware of the structural inequities that were deepened by the pandemic and are committed to educational and public-serving programs that will support the dismantling of these inequities. To these ends, we strongly support public humanities through activities that cross-cut our disciplinary and interdisciplinary specializations. These commitments are demonstrated in the research and programming offered by the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center and the Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Ethics, Religion and Public Life, and in curricular initiatives that include medical humanities, digital humanities, legal humanities, civic and professional leadership, and environmental humanities.