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1. How important should diversity be at Harvard? What strategies should the University pursue regarding this? (Please discuss specific programs, including Ethnic Studies, and policies if you can.)

Diversity across all visible and invisible dimensions of difference should be paramount at Harvard, befitting its place as a premier institution of higher learning and one of the (sadly) few remaining institutions that still commands something approaching reflexive respect and trust in the world. We should be deeply committed to developing strategies to ensure that our doors and our minds are wide open, and that, as or more important, students, faculty and staff across all dimensions of difference feel that they belong once they arrive here.

While I am aware of the concerning news regarding Ethnic Studies at Harvard, I was not close to the two faculty members we have recently lost; I am, however, fully supportive of the goal of building a thriving Ethnic Studies program and faculty at the University. The two corners of Harvard with which I am most familiar, the business school and the divinity school, have been quite progressive in this area. The divinity school curriculum and faculty are incredibly diverse, in background and in scholarship, and the student body demographics mirror this diversity. In addition, both schools have been leaders in the University in developing programs to promote diversity, most successfully through expanding our admissions pipelines. The Diversity and Explorations (DivEx) program at the divinity school and the Summer Venture in Management Program (SVMP) at the business school have both been highly successful at planting the idea in the minds of diverse applicants that “I could belong here too!” (President Faust’s signature framing of the issue, with which I enthusiastically concur.)

In our attempts to build this sense of belonging, some of the most difficult aspects of diversity are invisible, relating to areas such as politics and religion and class and privilege. My teaching focuses on these areas of “invisible diversity,” which are important aspects of building and maintaining a thriving community. These dimensions of difference require constant vigilance to ensure that we are communicating our community values of inclusion and respect.

In conclusion, as a faculty member at the business school, I can attest that we work on these issues every day, and also that we are profoundly dissatisfied with where we are today. Most of the work remains ahead of us.

2. How can Harvard encourage more diversity among its alumni leaders and activities? (If not discussed above.)

I think that at some level encouraging more diversity among alumni leaders is a communications and outreach challenge, which begins by asking the right questions. Many of the visible signals of “traditional Harvard” communicated messages of exclusivity, whereas we now have the tools and awareness to be able to message and

behave significantly differently. In the program I run at HBS, for example, involving relationship- and community-building with alumni, we are constantly testing the programs we offer to ensure that we are appealing to the widest catchment of our alumni base possible. Furthermore, we do not track our progress by demographics, but rather by how deeply and completely the programs we offer are serving our alumni, helping them make the progress they seek in their personal and professional lives.

I'm not fully aware of the financial support available to alumni to help underwrite the costs of traveling to and staying in Cambridge, but this is an area I'd like to work on if I were elected to the HAA. I know for example that the divinity school has difficulty maintaining a cadence of annual reunions, while the business school does not. Given the great popularity of the divinity school's bicentennial reunion event, two years ago now, I feel certain that what we face is a fundraising and stewardship challenge, and not an enthusiasm deficit!

I'd be pleased to bring this thinking, and some of the techniques and approaches we use in our work at HBS every day, to work in the Harvard Alumni Association. If we build programs that are meaningful to a diverse pool of alumni, and we signal our openness to diverse learning experiences, I feel confident that our alumni will raise their hands and lean in cooperatively.

3. Please state your views on affirmative action and race-conscious admissions.

Well, race-conscious admissions has certainly been a front-page issue for us this past year! I completely support Harvard's view here of the place that race should have in admissions—as one factor among many that we should be conscious of as we build the most diverse, well-fitting entering class possible each year. (I loved Sarah F. Cole's ('16) amici statement that “Race-blind admissions is an act of erasure. To not see my race is to not see me.”) I am also in favor of the University's strategy of over-indexing on traditional “admissions deserts” and communicating the message that this remarkable institution is deeply interested in expanding its catchment and service to all of society.

Beyond merely signaling openness, we do have some affirmative ground to close in making this institution truly representative. At the business school, for example, we are well aware that it is important for students from traditionally under-represented segments (whether gender or race or otherwise) to be able to look up and see people who look like them in positions of leadership. This requires us to take extraordinary care in how we construct our admissions pipeline, how well we understand the progress our applicants seek, and what their experience is like once here, both inside and outside of the classroom. We have made tremendous strides in recent years in some areas, such as gender, and we have a long way to go in others, particularly related to race, class and wealth.

In my own efforts in the classroom, I have made sure that my case-writing, teaching and guest visitor selection expose my students to as wide a swath as possible of examples of diversity from “the real world.” We include several cases in our first-year curriculum on

the challenges of the working poor (As State Representative Marjorie Decker can personally attest, reflecting on her childhood, “Being poor is exhausting.”). We also administer a poll to the students asking them to pass judgment on whether certain business practices are “fair”—and then we show them how a random sample of the population judges those same strategies. It is an amazing moment of teaching and empathy in the classroom.

Provost Garber has made many of us aware of the importance of retaining the discretion that institutions of higher education have always held regarding admissions and curriculum, and I trust Harvard to (at least attempt to) do the right thing on affirmative action and race-conscious admissions. Our students’ effectiveness across their working lives depends on our ability to for us to see them clearly and teach them justly.

4. What do you think Harvard's role should be in creating a more equitable, inclusive and just society?

Harvard’s role should be a leadership role, both in the productions of our faculty as well as in the efforts and achievements of our alumni. And I believe that we are currently playing that role.

Across every corner of campus, I see earnest and productive and careful inquiry, as we attempt to understand where our society is today, and solutions being offered as to the directions we should pursue to improve it. In the business school, for example, we have been trying to understand the root causes of inequality in a capitalist society, the drivers of unbalanced returns to labor and to capital, for example, and how entrepreneurship and market creation can help to right that balance. The question of what defines a just society—how “justice is what love looks like in public,” to quote Dr. Cornel West—is home terrain for the divinity and law schools, and through their efforts and those of others we are empowering our alumni to bring about that just society.

If Steven Pinker is right, and I have no reason to doubt that he is, that the story of human history is a story of uneven but gradual improvement, it is institutions such as Harvard that provide the fuel for that improvement. And the various manifestations of “One Harvard,” where we get disciplines within the University to work together to build understanding, are some of our most exciting opportunities to speed the pace and accomplishment of our collective efforts.

5. What steps have you taken to bring diversity and inclusion to Harvard, to your workplace, and/or to an organization that you have been involved with?

As director of the Forum for Growth and Innovation and as a faculty member here at the business school across the past seven years, I have tried to bring a diversity and inclusion mindset to my work as a manager as well as to my teaching.

When I joined the Forum, I was conscious that the organization had been pretty exclusively a white male province across its history. In addition, we had hired for a

certain mindset that limited our ability to contribute novel insights to the business school. We've made great strides across these dimensions in recent years. As the most visibly obvious dimensions of difference, we have hired African, South Asian and Eastern European researchers to broaden our geographic focus, and we have hired African-American and female researchers each program year as well. As important, and much less visible, we have broadened our fields of study to include global economic development as well as green innovation and entrepreneurship in government. We are constantly on the lookout to expand our coverage horizontally, across domains, as well as vertically, from the individual up to the societal level.

As a teacher, I have gravitated to the course areas that deal most directly with diversity and inclusion and have impressed upon my students the wonderful opportunity that managers have to have an impact on the lives, advancement and enjoyment of their team members. I wrote the first case on managing religion in the workplace for our required first-year MBA course, Leadership and Corporate Accountability, and I have written cases on innovation in India and Africa for our second-year strategy course.

Every time we discuss increasing diversity, inclusion and belonging at our faculty meetings, we leave with the individual charge that this is everyone's responsibility, and it is my pleasure to do my part to advance this very important work.