The Department of Athletics is a microcosm of the Brown community. As the University endeavors upon a Diversity and Inclusion Action plan, so too must the Department of Athletics engage in the meaningful work of ensuring all student-athletes, coaches, and staff are able to thrive in an environment representative of the larger community and beyond. These efforts must include reflection and careful consideration of departmental practices, including recruitment of student-athletes, hiring and retention of exceptional coaches and staff, and community outreach and engagement.

Additionally, the Department of Athletics must serve as a leader by promoting the achievements of historically under-represented student-athletes and coaches and by using athletic events to recognize those of Brown’s community as well. Finally, by establishing a well-defined set of metrics, the Department of Athletics must hold itself accountable to ensure the goals of the departmental plan, as well as University goals, are met, if not exceeded.

In order to accomplish this, the Department of Athletics will focus on the following four areas (People, Signals of Inclusion, Professional Development/Knowledge, and Community):

**PEOPLE**

One of the highest priorities of the Department of Athletics is the experience and development of our student-athletes, coaches and staff. Our endeavors to provide opportunities for all student-athletes to experience individual and team success must be coupled with efforts to create an inclusive environment that values diverse experiences and opinions and is rewarding for all student-athletes, coaches and staff. As a member of an athletic program that includes varsity, club, intramural, and fitness and recreation, students and other participants have countless opportunities to engage in meaningful interactions with one another in both formal and informal contexts.

**Coaches and Staff**

The Department of Athletics seeks to recruit, hire and retain individuals from groups that have been historically underrepresented in athletics for all coaching and administrative positions. It is also important that we think about the future of the profession and help ensure the next generation of those interested in a career in athletics have opportunities to gain working experience. Through several internship opportunities, the Department has provided experience to students from local universities many of whom were from historically underrepresented groups. Efforts such as this can help to create a pipeline of staff from diverse backgrounds.

In order to measure progress in this important area, the Department has maintained a record of early career professionals and assistant coaches who have advanced either within the Department/University or outside of the University (since 2014). For example, as a result of an internship and/or entry-level position in Brown’s Department of Athletics, three native Rhode Islanders from HUGs have advanced their careers and were hired into full-time positions within Division I athletics.

In order to continue this work, we will:

1. Continue to evaluate and write position descriptions that accurately reflect the responsibilities and desired qualifications for all vacancies.
2. Seek qualified diverse candidates for all vacant positions through broad outreach with personal networks and professional organizations, particularly those representing diverse constituencies and HUGs.
   a. NCAA The Market
   b. NACDA
   c. D1 Ticker
   d. Women Leaders in College Sports (formerly NACWAA)
   e. Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA)
   f. National Association for Coaching Equity & Development (NACED)
   g. Promote job announcements with historically diverse colleges and universities.
   h. In addition to those listed above, many sports have their own professional coaching associations (i.e. Women’s Basketball Coaches Association, National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Intercollegiate Women’s Lacrosse Coaches Association, etc.).

3. Continue to work with University Human Resources to ensure diverse representation among candidates selected through every stage of the search process, conducting additional outreach if necessary.

4. Continue to ensure diverse representation on all search committees, involving other Brown University offices (Human Resources, Office of Institutional Diversity & Inclusion, Campus Life Colleagues), as necessary.

5. Continue to offer internship and entry level opportunities that enable individuals from HUGs to gain experience in Intercollegiate Athletics and create a pipeline of talent.
   a. Utilize available grants (e.g. Ivy League) to support hiring women and individuals from historically underrepresented groups.
   b. Establish relationships with local institutions for internship opportunities.
   c. Maintain a population of students working for the Department that is representative of Brown’s student body in order to provide students with broad career exposure.
   d. Provide mentoring opportunities for current Brown students who are interested in a career in Intercollegiate Athletics.

6. Encourage opportunities for staff and coaches to interact in both formal and informal settings to increase collaboration and retention.

7. Continue to collect and track retention and promotion data for all coaches and staff.

Accountability

1. Review demographic information on coaches and staff, annually as required by the NCAA.
2. Maintain involvement of coaches and staff in the governance and decision making of the department to ensure broad representation of views and priorities.
3. Maintain database of professional organizations with which the Department partners, including success rate in attracting diverse candidates for vacancies.
4. Maintain database of professional development opportunities for coaches and staff, including those opportunities specifically designed for individuals representing historically underrepresented groups; measure outcome of those opportunities.
5. Utilize exit interview data to continue to evaluate effectiveness of initiatives.
Student-Athletes

Brown University has built its athletic program on the principle of attracting and fostering scholar-athletes; men and women who are dedicated to achieving both academic and athletic success. We want to attract student-athletes who are academically motivated, engaged in campus activities, and outstanding representatives of the student body and campus community. Athletic participation enhances interactional diversity by providing an environment of collaboration and cooperation unlike any other on campus. In addition, athletic participation enriches the educational experience of students, serving as a complement to the classroom for learning, collaborative problem solving, teamwork, maturation and growth. We must provide all 900+ student-athletes, representing 38 varsity programs, with instruction, support, and opportunities for personal growth that complement and enhance their experience at Brown.

At the conclusion of each season, all student-athletes complete a student-athlete survey. A component of this survey is a section related to climate and culture. We are able to compare responses to these questions annually to measure progress in diversity and inclusion initiatives. In order to accurately compare from year-to-year, questions in this section have remained mostly unchanged. However, the section was expanded for the 2016-17 academic year in an effort to gain a better understanding around how comfortable student-athletes feel in athletic vs. non-athletic settings, particularly regarding diversity and inclusion, and the types of development opportunities that are of interest to student-athletes.

In order to continue this work, we will:

1. During recruiting visits, encourage coaches to have prospective student-athletes, particularly those representing HUGs, meet with a diverse group of athletics staff, coaches, student-athletes, and other campus representatives.
   a. Showcase the University’s academic and student support services, various clubs, organizations, and programs, including those that support and address diversity, for example:
      i. Academic Advising
      ii. Academic Tutoring
      iii. Athletic Tutoring program
      iv. Faculty/Dean Liaison program
      v. Counseling & Psychological Services, including support groups
      vi. Student & Employee Accessibility Services
      vii. Student Support Services
      viii. Student Centers, including:
         1. Brown Center for Students of Color
         2. LGBTQ Center
         3. Sarah Doyle Women’s Center
         4. FLi Center
   b. Encourage coaches to have prospective student-athletes meet with faculty member(s) from specific academic areas of interest.

2. Provide one-on-one support, workshops, training and mentoring for all student-athletes to develop academic and career skills.
   a. Currently working with Provost Office and Dean of the College to collaborate on enhanced academic support for all student-athletes, particularly those who may need assistance navigating Brown’s curriculum.

3. Develop a schedule for open forums to discuss campus climate, as necessary.
a. Create a database of opportunities that already exist at Brown and in Providence.
  b. Promote schedule to all student-athletes, coaches and staff.

4. Encourage participation in the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and other leadership positions that broadly represents the population of student-athletes.
   a. 11-member SAAC Executive Board and various committees.
   b. Create two additional E-Board positions, Diversity and Inclusion co-chairs, for 2017-18.
   c. Expand SAAC to offer additional opportunities for those who identify with affinity groups to come together for discussion and collaboration.
   d. Expand SAAC to promote additional community service opportunities, beyond those that are fundraising ventures for various organizations.

5. Inform all eligible student-athletes about available opportunities for leadership positions, scholarships, grants, internships, awards, etc. and encourage those who are qualified and interested to apply.
   a. Ensure that nominations for NCAA, Ivy League and Conference committees, and other leadership opportunities are as diverse and inclusive as possible.
   b. Encourage student-athletes, with particular attention to diversity, to apply for leadership positions on campus and other student organizations.
   c. Encourage student-athletes to apply for the NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum.

**Accountability**

1. Continue to gather feedback about department/team climate and culture through the student-athlete surveys, senior exit interviews, and other conversations with student-athletes.
2. Utilize SAAC and other student organizations to continue to discuss diversity and inclusion and to raise concerns among student-athletes and staff.
3. Review demographic information on student-athletes, annually, as required by the NCAA.
4. Track metrics regarding those who apply for and ultimately secure leadership positions, scholarships, grants, awards, etc. in order to identify and reduce any barriers that many exist.
5. Through SAAC and the Campus Life Subcommittee on Athletics & Physical Education, provide opportunities for student-athletes to be involved in the governance and decision making of the department.

** SIGNALS OF INCLUSION**

The Department of Athletics is positioned to showcase the University to a broad audience through continuing our commitment to promoting human interest stories about Brown students, faculty and staff, hosting events that benefit a wide variety of constituents, and recognizing alumni and local citizens. As a highly visible department on campus, athletics has a variety of touch points along an individual’s experience with the University; from the initial introduction to Brown as a prospective student, to the experience of current students and staff, to connection to one’s alma mater through athletics.

Given these opportunities to connect with such a high volume of people from various backgrounds, the Department of Athletics is cognizant of taking necessary steps to ensure that public relations & promotional materials (Annual Report, Posters), graphic displays (wall murals), digital content (BrownBears.com, Ivy League Digital Network), and social media content (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) accurately reflect Brown’s diverse population.

We can increase engagement in each of our communities – campus, Providence/Rhode Island, and alumni, by taking advantage of all of these mediums to promote not only Brown’s athletics program and
student-athletes, but also the University and its distinguished staff, students and alumni. Ultimately, this type of communication will lead to enhanced brand recognition, thus improving diversity in recruiting efforts and overall institutional pride, not only for the Athletics Department, but also for the entire University.

In order to continue this work, we will:

1. Continue to utilize BrownBears.com, the Ivy League Digital Network, and printed materials to increase promotion of Department and University achievements, including those related to diversity and inclusion.

2. Maintain an ongoing schedule of outreach and community building efforts at games and events to recognize broad engagement and welcome community members to contests, such as:
   b. LGBTQ Pride Night
   c. Literacy Day
   d. Salute to Service

3. Encourage student-athletes to participate in nationally poignant initiatives, such as:
   a. If You Can Play, You Can Play
   b. It’s on Us
   c. Team Up Speak Up (Concussion Awareness)

Accountability
1. Continue to review all public relations materials to ensure diverse representation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/KNOWLEDGE
The overall success of an athletics department is impacted significantly by the quality and preparation of the coaches and administrative staff. We must focus on ways in which to attract and retain a diverse and talented staff that share a common vision for excellence. Therefore, it is imperative to provide and nurture an effective professional development program for all employees in the department, while enhancing those opportunities specific to diversity and inclusion.

In addition to ensuring that our coaches and staff receive adequate opportunities for professional and personal development, we must also enhance the connection among staff and create a collaborative and productive environment that enhances departmental camaraderie, communication and effectiveness, and leads to a satisfying work atmosphere.

Just as important to providing professional development for our coaches and staff, is providing opportunities for our student-athletes to enhance the learning and growth they experience in the classroom and as a student-athlete.

In order to continue this work, we will:

1. Continue to support and enhance retention of coaches and staff through professional development opportunities such as:
   a. NCAA Inclusion Forum
   b. NCAA Leadership Institute
c. NCAA Coaches’ Academies (i.e. Women Coaches Academy)
d. Sports Diversity & Inclusion Symposium
e. Women’s Leadership Symposium
f. Women Leaders in College Sports Institutes
   i. Administrative Advancement
   ii. Leadership Enhancement
   iii. Executive

2. Continue to offer periodic programming that will allow coaches, staff and student-athletes to explore and learn about diversity and inclusion, utilizing on-campus resources and/or outside consultants, as necessary, and encourage participation. Share scheduled opportunities as they arise. Possible topics include:
   a. Five Generations in the Workplace
   b. Question Persuade Refer (QPR) Training
   c. Safe Zone Training
   d. Student and Employee Accessibility Services (SEAS) Awareness
   e. Title IX Training

3. Develop a standard for ongoing diversity education for coaches, staff and student-athletes.
   a. Explore appropriate schedule (i.e. once per semester) and topics
   b. Develop list of outside consultants

4. Encourage coaches & staff to participate in Brown’s New Employee Advisory Program and Staff Mentoring Program.

Accountability
1. Maintain database of professional development opportunities for coaches and staff; measure outcome of those opportunities.
2. Utilize exit interview data to continue to evaluate effectiveness of initiatives.
3. Incorporate commitment to diversity and inclusion in performance appraisals.

COMMUNITY
Service to the community is vital to the framework of Brown Athletics. At the heart of the department’s core values is Strength in Community, “a community encompassing our teams, the athletic department, the university, alumni, friends of Brown and the Providence area.” Brown student-athletes are committed to engaging with the community, local neighborhoods, schools, hospitals and community groups; beyond the long-standing relationship with the Vartan Gregorian Elementary School. Additionally, various Brown Athletic teams take on several projects each year.

The Department of Athletics must also focus on providing opportunities for our community at large – those who participate in club and intramural sports, fitness, personal training, and general recreation – that are inclusive and representative of Brown’s diverse community. Currently, the Department of Athletics supports approximately 2,500 club and intramural athletes and more than 10,000 recreational users (students, faculty, staff and community members) of our facilities.

Brown’s recreation programing provides something for everyone, while working to promote and advance healthy lifestyle choices through participation opportunities, educational experiences and supportive services. All programs are designed to maximize participation and accommodate a wide range of interests and abilities.
The state-of-the-art Nelson Fitness Center and Katherine Moran Coleman Aquatics Center provide opportunities for the entire Brown community to come together and share space that includes a fitness loft, a pool, a functional training/stretch area, fitness studios, locker rooms, and a social space in the lobby that includes a café. During the academic year, approximately 1,300 individuals visit the building each day, while approximately 80% of Brown’s undergraduate student population utilizes the recreation facilities.

In order to continue this work, we will:

1. Encourage participation in community service and outreach activities geared towards underserved children.
   a. Develop and strengthen relationships with diverse partners.
   b. Collaborate with Swearer Center on existing programming.
   c. Maintain database of local opportunities for student-athletes and teams to choose from.
   d. Provide information about outside organizations that focus on empowering youth, such as:
      i. Project Goal
      ii. Junior Achievement
      iii. Youth in Action
      iv. Providence Youth Arts Collaborative
   e. Regularly promote community service initiatives through various media channels.

2. Continue to promote Brown’s club and intramural sports, fitness, and physical education programming to campus.
   a. Department of Athletics will examine possible barriers to access for participation in club and intramural sports, fitness, and physical education.
   b. Explore opportunities to offer discounted pricing for those students who qualify for need-based financial aid.
   c. Continue to hire instructors and trainers who can teach a broad range of fitness formats.

3. Utilize alumni networks for mentoring programs, similar to football.
   a. Explore possibility of mentoring program for all female athletic alumnae.
   b. Expand upon those mentoring programs currently in nascent stages.

**Accountability**

1. Continue to survey student-athletes regarding participation in community service programming.
2. Continue to survey fitness and recreation members regarding fitness instructors and programming.
3. Create annual surveys for club and intramural participants to measure programming access and interest.

**SUMMARY**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has a document entitled, “Best Practices for Achieving Excellence Through Diversity and Inclusion” and many of Brown’s current practices around diversity and inclusion align with this document. Additionally, since 2010, the NCAA has also had an Office of Inclusion, which continues to look at the five key areas of inclusion: race and ethnicity, women, student-athletes with disabilities, LGBTQ, and international student-athletes; and seeks to develop programming and resources while effectively using conversations to convene key groups to
address critical issues of concern. Recently, the NCAA Board of Governors adopted a sexual violence policy, which requires coaches, student-athletes and athletic administrators to complete education each year in sexual violence prevention.

While using this Action Plan as a guide, Brown’s Department of Athletics will continue to incorporate many of the NCAA’s Inclusion Best Practices. Examples include:

**Race and Ethnicity**
1. Incorporate student-athletes and athletics staff into programming with regard to diversity.
2. Apply for grants and use funds to provide diversity education.

**Women**
1. Include gender equity and inclusion among the professional development and training opportunities for coaches and staff.
2. Develop a strategic plan for growing the local fan base for women’s athletics.

**Student-Athletes with Disabilities**
1. Ensure athletic facilities and equipment are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including locker rooms, athletic training and strength & conditioning facilities, competition and practice facilities, and spectator areas.
2. Train coaches and staff to work with student-athletes with disabilities.

**LGBTQ**
1. Model, at senior levels of the department, the inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes and staff.
2. Identify community partners (on and off campus) that can assist the department in the developing and maintaining team cultures that promote inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes.

**International Student-Athletes**
1. Familiarize staff and coaches with academic and immigration requirements for NCAA eligibility.
2. Assist international student-athletes in establishing connections with other international students on campus.

**PROCESS**
The Department of Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan has been designed as a foundation to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement and establish priorities specifically related to Diversity and Inclusion. Diversity and Inclusion was an element of the Department’s Strategic Plan (2014) and this document enhances and expands upon the work that was done in creating the Strategic Plan.

Throughout the development process, this Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan was reviewed at various stages by both the Campus Life Advisory Board Sub-Committee on Athletics and Physical Education and the President’s Advisory Council on Athletics. All of these individuals provided insight into the direction of the plan based upon their own experiences and their relationship to the University. Additionally, Department of Athletics staff and student-athletes provided feedback and input through a series of meetings during the year.