A "Great Conversation" Model of University DEI:
At the University of Chicago, for Example

The "Great Conversation" model of the university presupposes an intellectual posture of skepticism and humility that is incompatible with claims of epistemic privilege, the notion that some individuals or groups have greater inherent access to truth. UChicago DEI initiatives should reflect this by incorporating perspectives that question all aspects of DEI. Not doing so results in a "Great Monologue" that impedes the quest for truth and diminishes the possibility of truth-based activism, as well as denigrates those holding currently unfashionable views.

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Teach thinkers to think, — a needed knowledge in a day of loose and careless logic; and they whose lot is gravest must have the carefulest training to think aright.
— W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)[2]

Plato is my friend, Aristotle is my friend, but my greatest friend is Truth.
— Isaac Newton, *Certain Philosophical Questions* (c. 1661)[3]

Introduction

In his 2017 journal article, "The End of the Modern Academy: At the University of Chicago, for Example", UChicago professor Richard Shweder described threats to the mission of the modern university.[4] This mission is "intellectual, not moral" and consists exclusively in "improving the stock of ordered knowledge and rational judgment".[5] Contemporary developments that threaten this mission, wrote Shweder, do so because they undermine one or more of the modern university's three core values. One of these is that universities must promote the widest possible viewpoint diversity in the "modern" sense — that is, where "the authority of a voice has very little to do with the social identity of who speaks".[6] Shweder, a cultural psychologist, contrasted this modern sense of viewpoint diversity to "two other senses of viewpoint diversity" that "have gained currency in the contemporary academy": the

"premodern" sense ("you have to be one […] to know one") and the "postmodern" sense ("everything is in the eye of the beholder").

> Combine the[se] two Trojan horses, however, and a new force is created: the academy as a platform for expressive-demonstrative identity politics. The players are not impartial contentious skeptics but rather interest groups who are basically uninterested in any side but their own story and morally motivated to engage in pursuits (e.g., knocking down the doors to rectify what they view as historical injustices) that take precedence over assumption-questioning discourse and the disinterested search for truth. Working independently and together, those two Trojan horses (the premodern and the postmodern) have now exerted a structural pressure that threatens the integrity of the modern academy and challenges several of its ideals.[7]

Shweder addressed these issues with reference to the University of Chicago in particular but believed his analysis to be of wider significance. The University of Chicago, Shweder wrote, is "associated in the minds of many academics around the world" with the very ideals of the university as such.[8] Indeed, in a 2005 address, recently reprinted, Shweder characterized the University of Chicago as a "temple of critical reason" that is a "mecca for an international community of free spirits who also love lively debates corrosive of dogma".[9] In a 1993 address, he approvingly quoted past UChicago President Hanna Gray's characterization of the University of Chicago as "the only true American university".[10]

Shweder is not alone in this estimation of the University of Chicago's place in the academic firmament. In a 2017 blog post promoting and excerpting Shweder's article, for example, social psychologist and Heterodox Academy Chair Jonathan Haidt characterized Shweder's article about the state of the University of Chicago as "essential reading" for anyone concerned with the health of American higher education. UChicago, Haidt wrote, "has distinguished itself in recent years as the leading American university supporting viewpoint diversity and a culture of vigorous argumentation" and has "achieved the highest score, by far" in the Heterodox Academy's "Guide to Colleges". Thus, despite its superficial narrowness, Shweder's article was of much wider relevance because

> [i]t helps us think about the recent history of universities, it helps us see recent trends as continuations of longer-term trends, and it

> gives us a language that will help people at each university discuss
> the kind of institution they want to be going forward.[11]

(Haidt did his post-doctoral work with Shweder at the University of Chicago where our paths crossed briefly because Shweder was then one of my professors in graduate school. Until I recently sought their comments on a draft of this essay, I had not been in contact with either of them for over 20 years.)

Likewise, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (recently renamed the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression) has campaigned since 2015 to have the University of Chicago's "Chicago Principles" — which it considers the model "free speech policy statement" and about which more below — adopted by colleges and universities across the United States.[12] And, in a recent 2022 article complaining about the (allegedly) "appalling treatment of a classics professor by DEI [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion] administrators" at Princeton University, mathematics professor Sergiu Klainerman framed his analysis by contrasting Princeton's "enthusiastic embrace seven years ago of the principles of free expression, first formulated at the University of Chicago" with the practices of the past two years "that plainly go against the so-called Chicago Principles". Indeed, wrote Klainerman, the inferiority of Princeton to the University of Chicago in this regard is

> why the most respected campus free speech organization in the
> country, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE),
> ranked Princeton a dismal 135 out of 154 in its most recent free
> speech rankings of colleges and universities.[13]

In this essay I want to extend Professor Shweder's project for much the same reason that he undertook it. Unlike Shweder, however, I am not an important figure at the University of Chicago. On the contrary, I am the smallest of small fish in a very, very big pond. But I think the view from the trenches has its value nonetheless. By relating my own recent experiences around one of the University of Chicago "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" (DEI) initiatives — now sometimes called "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging" (DEIB) — I hope to make visible and comprehensible a small event and its aftermath that would otherwise escape public notice. This episode is in itself perhaps unimportant, but it takes on significance if it is seen as emblematic of pervasive attitudes and practices.

Nothing I relate below is personal and no confidences have been violated. On the contrary, with one exception, the doings and sayings I relate were either official, semi-public work events involving multiple participants or official, semi-public work communications directed to multiple recipients. The one exception was an official one-to-one work exchange between my supervisor and me. To the extent possible, I have anonymized the identity of every non-public figure other than myself because the real issue here is the message not the messengers, a culture rather than the actions of particular individuals. I apologize to anyone who feels that I have violated the canons of collegiality. But I don't see how it is possible for me to proceed in any other way — unless it is not to proceed at all.

The Great Conversation, The University of Chicago, and Me

For roughly thirty years, I have been a part-time instructor on the staff of a non-credit "great books" program for adults at the University's Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies. Founded in 1946 by Robert Hutchins, Mortimer Adler, and Cyril Houle, the Basic Program of Liberal Education for Adults ("the Basic Program" or "BP") is devoted to the collaborative close reading of classic texts of the Western tradition using a pedagogy inspired by Plato's *Meno* on the one hand and Adler's *How to Read a Book* (1972 [1940]) on the other.[14] The program has an instructional staff of roughly 25 permanent, part-time instructors, almost all of whom, like me, received their graduate education at UChicago and most of whom have other part- or full-time positions elsewhere. The instructional staff is managed by a part-time Chair who is elected periodically by and from the instructional staff itself. (I served as instructional staff Chair from 1996 to 1998 and have also acted as the program's unofficial historian since 1995.[15] From 2017 to 2019 I served in the temporary position of "Basic Program Educator" responsible for launching the program's online course and digital archive initiatives.)

The animating idea behind the Basic Program's "great books" approach to liberal education was most memorably and succinctly articulated in 1952 by Robert Maynard Hutchins, who had famously served first as President and then as Chancellor of the University of Chicago. In *The Great Conversation: The Substance of a Liberal Education*, Hutchins wrote:

> The spirit of Western civilization is the spirit of inquiry. Its dominant element is the *Logos*. Nothing is to remain undiscussed. Everybody is to speak his mind. No proposition is to be left

unexamined. The exchange of ideas is held to be the path to the
realization of the potentialities of the race.[16]

From this point of view, each "great book" is understood as a contribution to the ongoing "conversation" that constitutes "civilization" ("Western civilization" in Hutchins's 1952 view but "World civilization" in the view of most people today). Moreover, the full development of each person, both as an individual and as a self-governing citizen in a liberal democracy, is understood to require at least a vague familiarity with the broad contours of this conversation, preferably gained through first-hand encounters with at least some of the great books. As the preface to an old University of Chicago college "great books reader" called *The People Shall Judge* (1976 [1949]) put it:

> If the United States is to be a democracy, its citizens must be free.
> If citizens are to be free, they must be their own judges. If they
> are to judge well, they must be wise. Citizens may be born free;
> they are not born wise. Therefore, the business of liberal
> education in a democracy is to make free men wise. Democracy
> declares that "the people shall judge". Liberal education must
> help the people to judge well.[17]

In other words, a well-functioning democracy requires "philosopher-citizens", and it is the task of "liber-al" education — that is, of education for the "liber", for the "free" who dwell in liber-ty — to cultivate these "philosopher-citizens" by teaching students of all ages <u>how</u> to think, rather than <u>what</u> to think. And this, in turn, requires onboarding into the Great Conversation.

The pedagogical corollary of the Great Conversation model is that students learn most profoundly when curricula and courses are themselves "great conversations in miniature". Literature professor Gerald Graff, who called this method "teaching the controversy" or "teaching the conflicts", explained the rationale this way: "[W]hen truth is disputed", Graff wrote, "we can seek it only by entering the debate — as Socrates knew when he taught the conflicts two millennia ago". Moreover, there really can be no other authentic method of education because "[o]pposing texts and theories need one another to become intelligible to students".[18]

Although often associated in recent years with "old white conservative males", the great books approach to liberal education was conceived as a progressive project and is understood by many to still be one — even today. In *The Dream of a Democratic Culture: Mortimer J. Adler*

and the Great Books Idea (2013), Tim Lacy documented how the great books project, begun in the early twentieth century at Columbia University and by mid-century spearheaded at the University of Chicago, was driven by "an implicit, cosmopolitan dream of cultural democratization".[19] In *Riches for the Poor: The Clemente Course in the Humanities* (2000), Earl Shorris described a recently founded college-level adult liberal education program designed to empower those who self-identify as poor.[20] The Harlem Clemente Course notes that its classes are "all seminars, meaning they involve rigorous group discussion" in which "conflicting ideas are respected, considered, and responded to" — as one would expect from a program "[m]odeled on Columbia University's and University of Chicago's core curricula".[21] Some graduates of the Chicago Clemente Course (known as The Odyssey Project) continue their studies in the Basic Program.

The Great Conversation model of civilization and of the university is ultimately grounded on the one hand in a permanent posture of skepticism (the opposite of credulity), and on the other hand in a profound sense of intellectual humility (the opposite of intellectual arrogance). The Great Conversation model is thus incompatible both with truth assertions that require no evidence (and which therefore are essentially tautological) and with truth assertions that brook no opposition (and which therefore are essentially totalitarian).

Both skepticism and intellectual humility, in turn, are borne of a recognition that good thinking is hard. First, because mere thinking itself is hard — "the hardest work there is", Henry Ford observed.[22] And second, because it is quite possible for a thing and its opposite to both be true — or least to both contain significant elements of truth. As Niels Bohr put it: "The opposite of a fact is a falsehood, but the opposite of one profound truth may very well be another profound truth".[23] Therefore, "[t]he test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function", as F. Scott Fitzgerald put it.[24]

But perhaps the biggest impediment to good thinking is the necessary, irksome, and empirically-almost-impossible pre-condition to authentic thinking at all: a genuine admission of one's own ignorance. In the classical tradition this insight is most famously articulated by, and modeled in, the person of Socrates in Plato's *Apology* (and is one of the key themes of Plato's

dialogue *Meno*). As Socrates explains: after the priestess of Delphi had made the ridiculous-sounding assertion that no one in Athens was wiser than Socrates, Socrates made it his business to see if the assertion was actually true. After interviewing the reputedly wise men of Athens and finding them all wanting, Socrates was forced to accept the truth of the priestess's statement. But, says Socrates, walking away from his last interlocutor:

> It is only too likely that neither of us has any knowledge to boast of, but he thinks he knows something which he does not know, whereas I am quite conscious of my ignorance. At any rate it seems that I am wiser than he is to this small extent, that I do not think that I know what I do not know.[25]

Socrates was put to death for his troubles.

In an essay titled "Dialogue and Dialectic: The Limitations on Human Wisdom", longtime UChicago College professor and onetime Basic Program instructor Herman Sinaiko developed this theme. Sinaiko wrote, "The greatest block to learning is our ignorance of our own ignorance, our failure to realize, or to admit that we do not understand or even perceive, the problems we face". Fortunately, a remedy is at hand. As Socrates discovered long ago, Sinaiko pointed out, "The block can be removed most effectively in a free, intimate conversation in which any participant can raise objections, demand clarification, or request further information." In other words, "One can learn without being taught [in the traditional sense]. This possibility makes conversation — dialogue — the human activity most suited to the growth of wisdom in the soul." (Sinaiko developed these ideas further in another essay called "Socrates and Freud: Talk and Truth".)[26]

In short: A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. And the first step to good thinking, the price of admission to the Great Conversation, is an honest, Socratic admission of ignorance. Thereafter, the rest of the journey is Socratic dialogue — with the books and with each other — accompanied by a perennial openness to being wrong. "Intercourse is, after all, man's best teacher", William Mathews, a professor of rhetoric and English literature at the "old" University of Chicago (predecessor to the current one), wrote in 1874.

> Solitary reading will enable a man to stuff himself with information; but without conversation his mind will become like a

> pond without an outlet — a mass of unhealthy stagnature. It is
> not enough to harvest knowledge by study; the wind of talk must
> winnow it, and blow away the chaff; then will the clear, bright
> grains of wisdom be garnered for our own use or that of others.[27]

The "clear, bright grains of wisdom" that emerge from dialogue do so even when it turns out that one is perfectly correct on the matter at hand. After all, "[h]e who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that", wrote John Stuart Mill in *On Liberty* (1859). Mill continued:

> His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to
> refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on
> the opposite side; if he does not so much as know what they are,
> he has no ground for preferring either opinion.[28]

"As iron sharpens iron", says the Good Book, "so one person sharpens another".[29]

These then are the principles central to the Great Conversation model of the university and therefore to the design and the conduct of the courses and other programs offered by the Basic Program, including its four-year "core curriculum". And they are thus perforce the principles central to the design and conduct of the courses that I personally design and teach. For example, over the past academic year I taught:

- "A Matter of White and Black: 20th-Century Perspectives on Race" which incorporated both racist and antiracist works;

- "Hannah and Hitler" which juxtaposed Adolph Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (1926) with Hannah Arendt's *On Totalitarianism* (1951) and *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1964); and,

- "21st-Century African-American Perspectives on Race" structured around a contemporary "great conversation in miniature" that the course description put this way:

> Through close reading and discussion of a number of modern
> classics this course will seek to better understand two lines of
> African-American thinking about racism today. The more
> mainstream, "liberal" school of thought contends that America
> has always been — and is still today — a fundamentally racist
> nation. The less known, "conservative" school of thought
> contends not only that America has made great racial progress,
> but that the greatest obstacle to further progress is the "liberal"
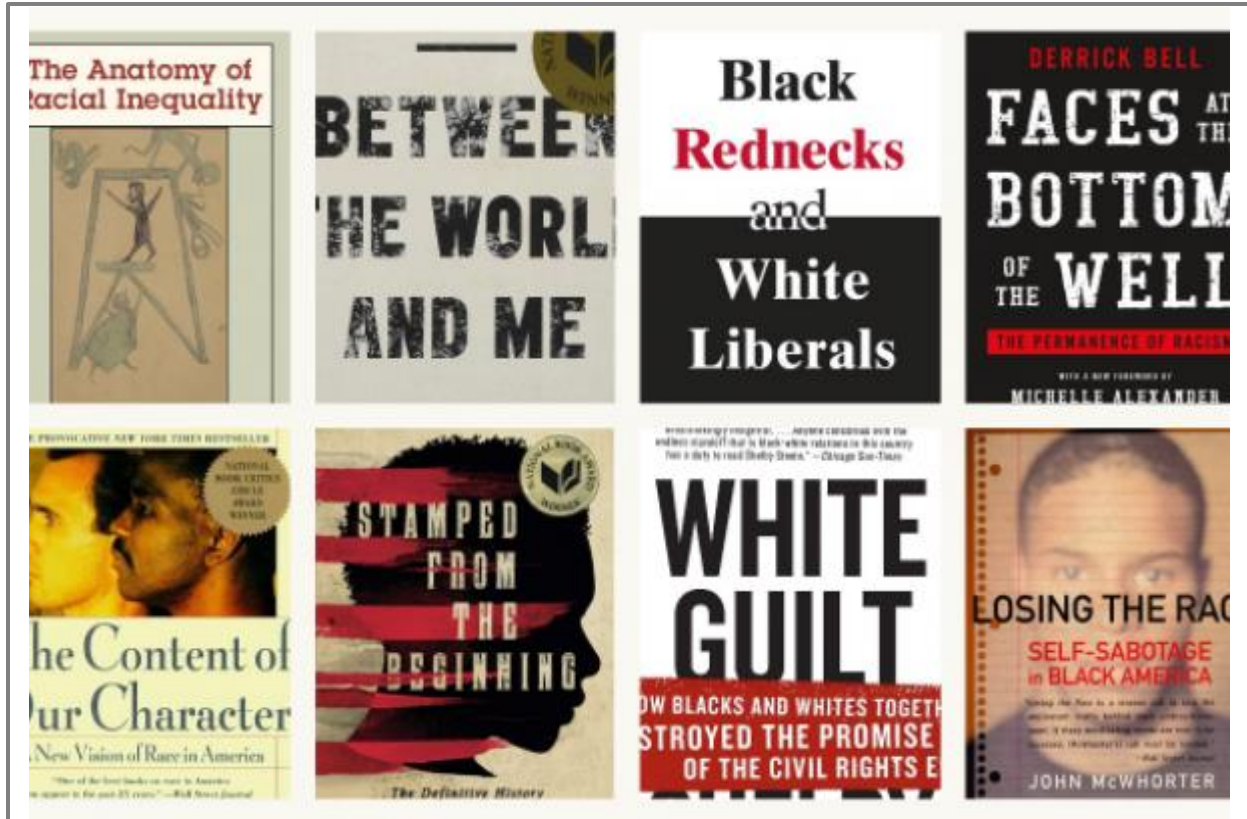> narrative itself.[30]

Figure 1: Promotional graphic for Basic Program Spring 2022 course "21st-Century African-American Perspectives on Race".

Whatever the course and whatever the controversy, though, the primary pedagogical goal ("job 1") in every encounter with a book — even when that book is *Mein Kampf* or a white supremacist novel — remains the same: comprehension. And this is achieved in part by approaching each book with the greatest possible respect and "critical empathy" in an attempt to understand it from its own point of view — <u>before</u> agreeing, disagreeing, praising, condemning or otherwise evaluating it. After all, how can one fairly evaluate a work that one does not actually understand?

As a part-time, non-credit liberal education program for adults, the Basic Program is in many ways engaged in a project different from those undertaken in other units of the University of Chicago — an elite "R1" university devoted to research and the training of researchers on the one hand and to the rigorous education of undergraduates and professionals on the other. Nonetheless, the core values of the Basic Program and the University of Chicago are one and the same. And thus, although I am a figure of little consequence at UChicago, I am nonetheless thoroughly infused with its spirit, having spent

more than thirty years talking its core talk and walking its core walk — and little else. What Richard Shweder once called "maroon-colored blood" courses through my veins.[31]

My Recent UChicago DEI Training

In the last few years I have voluntarily participated in several DEI trainings for academics, as well as in the Basic Program's own DEI initiatives. Recently (11 April 2022), I participated in a UChicago DEI training workshop called "Engaging with Students Around Race and Racism" that in many ways reminded me of the others, including in the palpably good intentions of those who organized, hosted, and participated in it. The training was sponsored by the Office of the Provost and attracted participants from around the university, including from the Graham School whose Chief of Staff had encouraged all Graham instructors to attend.[32] The training was organized around the premise that "many" "undergraduate and graduate students" "are frustrated by a perceived slow progress and want a higher level of accountability" on "[i]ssues involving race and racism". Two deliverables were advertised:

1. "Suggestions for effectively initiating and leading these conversations with students"; and,

2. "[S]uggestions of short- and long-term strategies to help drive positive and sustainable change in your unit".[33]

Given that instructors were being encouraged to attend, I assumed (wrongly as it turned out) that there would a pedagogical aspect to the training.

After registering I received an email thanking me for my interest in the workshop, now referred to by the title of an attached short case study to be discussed during the event: "Let's Talk: Facilitating Constructive Conversations with Students About Race and Racism".[34] The case study (see Appendix) was about a hypothetical "academic unit at the University of Chicago" — "Department X" — whose students have issued a "written list of demands calling for racial justice and equity" that was "sent to several department leaders via email and was also posted publicly online". These demands were prompted by the "frustration" that "colleagues, students, and alumni" were feeling about the "slow progress" of Department X's "diversity and inclusion committee, chaired by a faculty member and committed to advancing student and faculty diversity".

Figure 2: Zoom Meeting Registration for "Engaging Students Around Race and Racism" Training Workshop.

The case study implicitly suggested that this "slow progress" was due to viewpoint diversity within the department. "Some individuals" in Department X, it turns out, believe that "focusing on enhancing academic excellence" should be Department X's "main priority" and that "students' complaints are overblown". This view had apparently gained traction after an "op-ed criticizing student activism" was published "last month" by a "prominent scholar" in the same discipline "from another institution".

The case study provided no independent evidence regarding possible DEI deficiencies in Department X and did not include the prominent scholar's op-ed. Nor did the case study provide a summary of main points of the op-ed or of the reasons why some Department X faculty agreed with the op-ed and believed that the students' concerns were overblown. The only thing that the case study did include was the students' demand letter alleging unspecified "ongoing practices of racial injustice" in Department X as part of an alleged larger pattern of racial injustice in America generally — allegations that the students apparently thought were self-evidently true because they also provided no evidence to support them. Then, without having provided any actual data and without having presented both sides of the argument, the case study asked training participants:

> As a member of Department X, how do you engage with and
> respond to these students and how do you bring faculty, staff,
> and others on board? What are some of the challenges you will
> face and how will you work to address them?[35]

Despite its formal hypotheticality, the case study notes that the mock students' letter "uses language drawn from a public letter written by students/alumni of Princeton's School of Public and International Affairs as well as other similar letters".[36] The case study does not note, however, that the "prominent scholar" appears to be based on UChicago's own Dorian Abbot, an associate professor of geophysical science who has in recent years taken what he considers a principled stand against certain DEI initiatives in his department as well as in the academy generally. As Abbot puts it in a "Statement of Values" posted on his official UChicago web page:

> I practice fair admissions: I select students and postdocs on the
> basis of scientific ability and promise, and I do not discriminate
> against any applicant based on anything else. I encourage
> freedom of expression and the creative exploration of ideas in my
> group.[37]

The vigor with which Abbot has advocated his position and the backlashes that that advocacy has produced have made Abbot a rather (in)famous figure, both locally and nationally. In November 2020, for example, Abbot was in the news when students in his own department presented a letter to the department objecting to Abbot's ongoing advocacy of his views on DEI and demanding that Abbot be sanctioned for it. In particular, according to the *Chicago Maroon*, the letter claimed that videos Abbot had made explaining his views "constitute an aggressive action toward underrepresented groups in the department and undercut the efforts of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Coordination Team (EDICT)." The *Maroon*'s account continued:

> Among other demands, the letter's signatories ask that Abbot's
> Teaching and Research Assistants be allowed to opt out of their
> responsibilities, and that students in Abbot's classes be given the
> option to complete the quarter with another instructor.
> The letter also urges the Department of Geophysical
> Sciences [to] publish a public statement denouncing Abbot's
> videos, increase funding for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
> initiatives, and ensure that the department's "hiring committee
> have a vested interest in improving equity, diversity, and
> inclusion".[38]

In response to this controversy (though not explicitly referencing it or explicitly naming Abbot), then-UChicago-President Robert Zimmer issued a "Statement on Faculty, Free Expression, and Diversity" in which he reiterated the unfettered right of UChicago faculty to freely express their views about "<u>any</u> policy or approach of the University, its departments, schools or divisions without being subject to discipline, reprimand or other form of punishment" [emphasis added].[39]

In October 2021, Abbot was in the spotlight again when MIT withdrew an invitation for Abbot to speak about his research following protests over a 12 August 2021 *Newsweek* opinion piece that Abbot had co-authored with Iván Marinovic, an associate professor of accounting at Stanford.[40] (Abbot subsequently delivered his lecture for Princeton University.[41]) The essay, "The Diversity Problem on Campus", began:

> American universities are undergoing a profound transformation that threatens to derail their primary mission: the production and dissemination of knowledge. The new regime is titled "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" or DEI, and is enforced by a large bureaucracy of administrators. Nearly every decision taken on campus, from admissions, to faculty hiring, to course content, to teaching methods, is made through the lens of DEI. This regime was imposed from the top and has never been adequately debated. In the current climate it cannot be openly debated: the emotions around DEI are so strong that self-censorship among dissenting faculty is nearly universal.[42]

The DEI training itself was held on Zoom and lasted a little over an hour. I was connected via my cell phone while out in public and so listened carefully but did not speak. The session began with a presentation by an African-American professor from an outside university about the challenges black men face in America today, followed by breakout sessions. Based on notes collected from my Graham colleagues, it seems that each of the breakout sessions was different, with some focusing more on the case study than others. (I was not asked to contribute notes and so did not.) The training ended with another plenary session in which participants reflected on the two prior segments.

My Critique of the DEI Training

The day after the training I wrote a short critique of the event as I had been requested to do by the Graham School Chief of Staff and emailed it to the Chief of Staff and to my Basic Program colleagues. (In this essay I have refined and elaborated aspects of that original critique.) "Here are my thoughts", I wrote:

> Although they may seem largely "critical", I'd like to say that I support efforts to improve the quality of the academic environment and of the academic work (teaching and research) done at UChicago in general and Graham in particular. Based on my experience at this and other trainings, however, I don't think the current DEI/DEIB model for achieving these important goals is necessarily the right one or the best one.

I then articulated my impression that the training appeared to proceed from

> a premise of a "crisis in the academy" that is never and has never (as far I know) been actually proven. Of course, I realize that many people feel there is such a crisis. But there are also those who do not. This training assumed — without evidence — that the former perspective is right and the latter perspective is wrong.

Moreover, as I saw it, the latter perspective was not meaningfully represented at any point during the training and thus "there was an unfortunate lack of viewpoint diversity [in Shweder's modern sense] throughout the training".[43]

The case study in particular seemed to me to border on being intellectually dishonest in its one-sided presentation. The omission of the views of those who believe as the hypothetical "prominent scholar", the real-world Dorian Abbot, and some of the faculty of "Department X" do, can only be understood as an implicit judgment that such a perspective is simply "beyond the pale" and therefore unworthy of consideration. This implicit "de-platforming" or "cancellation" is a form of censorship that carries with it an implicit denigration of those who hold such views. In the words of one training participant who "said the quiet part loud":

> Yes, the younger generation is already "there", waiting for us in older generations. DEI is a bottom-line issue with a self-interest or self-preservation angle for those dubious faculty members to consider whose hearts have not led them to the right place.[44]

In other words, the purpose of the DEI training was not really the advertised one of learning how to "<u>engage with and respond to</u> these students" through "ongoing conversations"

and learning "strategies to help drive positive and sustainable change in your unit". Rather, the real purpose of the training was to <u>express agreement</u> with the complaining students and to develop strategies to get recalcitrant "faculty, staff, and others" "whose hearts have not led them to the right place" to <u>also agree</u> with the complaining students. That, and only that, would constitute "positive and sustainable change". That, and only that, would constitute "conversation". As a University of Chicago educator experiencing other University of Chicago educators (whom I thus implicitly regarded as colleagues at one or two removes), I was not only surprised, but disappointed and even a bit shocked. Rather than being a "great conversation in miniature", the training was something of a "great monologue in miniature".

Moreover, when I subsequently reviewed the University of Chicago's extensive official "Diversity and Inclusion" website, I was surprised a second time when I found that the website had characteristics similar to the training and thus that the training appeared representative of a larger "Great Monologue". For example, the UChicago DEI website does not present "alternative views" such as those held by the hypothetical "prominent scholar", the real-world Dorian Abbot, and others. Nor does the website provide much evidence of a problem in need of fixing or much in the way of methods for determining if the university's efforts are working. Indeed, both the primary evidence that a problem exists and the primary measure of progress appear to be located in something of an analog to the case study's student demand letter: a "Spring 2016 Campus Climate Survey" that attempted to "capture some of the experiences and perceptions of students, staff, and academics […] on a broad range of issues related to diversity and inclusion".[45] Despite the fact that the response rate to the survey was less than 30%,[46] that the respondents were all self-selected,[47] and that there was no attempt to validate the responses in any way, the UChicago DEI initiative "was created in response to the results" of this survey and this survey "continues to serve as a baseline to measure our progress toward improving campus climate".[48] Yet when the "Diversity and Inclusion Update" for Summer Quarter 2019 (the most recent one I could find) summarized UChicago's DEI "impact by the numbers", it did <u>not</u> do so in terms of improved "experiences and perceptions" (or any other performance metric) but rather in terms of the number of DEI activities conducted.[49] In practice, it seems, there is no way to tell whether the University of Chicago is in fact moving

closer to, or farther from, its DEI goals and thus no way of knowing when DEI as a distinct remedial initiative can be terminated. The implicit position therefore seems to be that UChicago DEI can be terminated only when self-selected survey respondents say that it can.

After summarizing my impressions of the training, my critique outlined my own initial, tentative, Great-Conversation-style answer to the case study's question, "[H]ow do you engage with and respond to these students and how do you bring faculty, staff, and others on board?" Rather than attempt an end-run around one of the positions held by Department X stakeholders, I suggested a number of steps designed to foster dialogue and possible compromise among the various parties by engaging <u>all</u> of them in a "great conversation in miniature". I wrote:[50]

1. The students who submitted the letter are told that their "concerns" (not "demands") will be heard, respected, and taken seriously as part of a comprehensive process that hears, respects, and takes seriously other student perspectives (if any) as well as the full range of faculty perspectives with a goal of aggressively implementing whatever reforms are deemed appropriate at the end of the process.

2. Department X conducts one or more oral and/or written public debates or conversations according to traditional academic rules of civility, logic, and evidence. Ideally, these events should include the "prominent scholar" as well as Department X faculty and students representing the fullest range of views on the matters at hand. Mere assertions or demands unsupported by evidence and anything not presented logically and civilly would not be permitted. A (partial) model for this might be the famous debate between James Baldwin and William Buckley at the Cambridge Union in 1965.[51]

3. Using the principles articulated by Roger Fisher and William Ury of the Harvard Negotiating Project in the classic *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (1981, 1991, 2011) Department X's diversity and inclusion committee works to devise as much of a win-win program as possible for advancing the traditional mission of academic excellence in the pursuit and dissemination of truth at the University and Department X.

4. To some degree, I would expect the results of this process to vary a bit among departments — for example, the "right" solution for the Anthropology Department may well not be the "right" solution for the Math Department (or indeed, the Geophysical Sciences Department). To the extent that some or all of the parties are not fully satisfied with the "common ground results", the next step would be to try to partially satisfy the entire set of outstanding concerns in a way that results in what Henry Kissinger once called "balanced dissatisfaction".[52]

5. Anyone — whether student, faculty, staff, or administrator — unwilling or unable to comport themselves with this process (or one substantially like it) does not belong at the University of Chicago and should be asked to leave and/or terminated.

The Chicago Principles and DEI

To my mind, only a Great-Conversation-style process such as this is genuinely in keeping with the spirit and the letter of President Zimmer's 2020 statement during "the Abbot affair", as well as with the 2015 "Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression" enunciating the Chicago Principles upon which that statement is based. As the report put it:

> [T]he University's fundamental commitment is to the principle that debate or deliberation may not be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most members of the University community to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed. It is for the individual members of the University community, not for the University as an institution, to make those judgments for themselves, and to act on those judgments not by seeking to suppress speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas that they oppose. Indeed, fostering the ability of members of the University community to engage in such debate and deliberation in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the University's educational mission.

Moreover, "as a corollary" of the University of Chicago's fundamental commitment:

> [T]he University has a solemn responsibility not only to promote a lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation, but also to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.[53]

Although enunciated in 2015, the Chicago Principles rest upon a longstanding conception of "the university", as indicated above. According to the 1967 "Report on the University's Role in Political and Social Action" (popularly known as the "Kalven Committee Report" or simply the "Kalven Report"):

> The mission of the university is the discovery, improvement, and dissemination of knowledge. Its domain of inquiry and scrutiny includes all aspects and all values of society. [...]
> The instrument of dissent and criticism is the individual faculty member or the individual student. The university is the home and sponsor of critics; it is not itself the critic. [...]
> The neutrality of the university as an institution arises then not from a lack of courage nor out of indifference and

insensitivity. It arises out of respect for free inquiry and the
obligation to cherish a diversity of viewpoints.[54]

The importance of the Chicago Principles and their practical implications were conveyed to the incoming UChicago college class of 2020 in a widely reported 2016 welcome letter. As College Dean of Students John (Jay) Ellison put it:

[W]e do not support so-called "trigger warnings", we do not cancel invited speakers because their topics might prove controversial, and we do not condone the creation of intellectual "safe spaces" where individuals can retreat from ideas and perspectives at odds with their own.[55]

In a 2020 statement titled "Reinforcing the Chicago Principles and the Kalven Report", then-President Zimmer reaffirmed the University of Chicago's institutional commitment to these principles. Moreover, Zimmer again reminded the University community that, "The principles of the Kalven Report apply not only to the University as a whole, but to the departments, schools, centers, and divisions as well, and for exactly the same reasons".[56] At every level, therefore, the University of Chicago — and all of its officers *qua* officers — are prohibited from having any position on any intellectual matter before the University community. On the contrary, the University and its officers *qua* officers are permitted to act only as fair "holders of the ring" and as fair umpires, as facilitators and not as partisans.

With respect to DEI, therefore, it seems to me that the upshot of all this is fourfold:

1. To the greatest extent possible, DEI initiatives officially sponsored by the University of Chicago should not be "'safe spaces' where individuals can retreat from ideas and perspectives at odds with their own". Rather, following the Great Conversation model, DEI initiatives should be dedicated to helping participants learn how to think about DEI, rather than what to think about it. Organizers should act solely as neutral initiators and facilitators of events that "teach the conflicts" in ways that fairly respect and incorporate all perspectives and that foster civil engagement among the widest possible spectrum of participants.

2. To the greatest extent possible, DEI initiatives officially sponsored by the University of Chicago should explicitly include content regarding the university's "intellectual,

not moral" mission of "improving the stock of ordered knowledge and rational judgment" and the academic freedom that that mission requires.

3. The most significant DEI initiatives at the University of Chicago cannot really be "trainings" in the technical sense at all, but rather must be genuine intellectual "conversations" that always include both social justice and university mission components. Indeed, they should really be conceptualized along the lines of DEIM: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Mission.

4. The University of Chicago should adopt one or more reasonably-widely agreed DEIM metrics against which UChicago's DEIM performance is periodically measured, as well as clear criteria for DEIM success that would result in the termination of DEIM as a distinct remedial initiative.

Adherence to such principles, I believe, would greatly strengthen UChicago DEI initiatives and make them more likely to achieve the "positive and sustainable change" they seek. After all, the University of Chicago in an intense intellectual incubator where nothing that is not subject to ordinary questioning and debate will — or should — be genuinely respected.

Basic Program Sequelae

After I shared my short critique of the DEI training with my Basic Program colleagues, one of them — who self-identifies as trebly marginalized on the basis of disability and two demographic characteristics — shared with the Basic Program instructional staff his critique of my critique. My colleague wrote:

> [T]here is undue pressure on marginalized people to make "suitable" claims about phenomena that we have unique insight into, despite repeated claims that our opinions are sought and valued. As a [trebly marginalized] man I might carry double-consciousness on a three-fold level, but it is highly unlikely that my doubled insight will be respected enough for my ideas to be transformed into action. And an emphasis on free discussion or "debate" only serves to subvert the legitimacy of my doubled insight, by erasing that qualification by presuming all actors in that discussion carry the same level of knowledge on the matter. If I were to debate one of my [academic department] colleagues on Ancient Philosophy or Heidegger, any claims I made would carry little merit because I know very little about those topics.

> But, fascinatingly, my opinions on [each of my marginalizations] seem to be equal to all members of the UChicago community despite me carrying phenomenological/experiential, academic, and what Baldwin termed "sensual" knowledge of the topics. Any discussion that might come on these topics must take these factors into account.

My colleague then offered to meet with any of us

> interested in hearing the perspective of a person who has been educated and trained in the dynamics of DEI and has a particular experience with the difficulties of being both a marginalized student <u>and</u> teacher in a space that deprioritizes identity [emphasis original].[57]

While my colleague may not have intended it, I don't think there is any way to understand his stated position as other than as an expression of some form of "standpoint epistemology" granting him "epistemic privilege" when it comes to DEI. That is: my colleague was claiming that, on certain subjects, his perspective is to be accepted as necessarily true — at least by those who do not self-identify as members of historically marginalized groups (which I do not). Thus, while my colleague was graciously offering opportunities for the Basic Program instructional staff to "hear" his perspective, he was not, apparently, offering to "hear" anyone else's perspective (unless, perhaps, if it conforms with his). In short, my colleague seemed to be making explicit the assumptions that the DEI trainers had implicitly embedded in the training case study.

While I will be the first to admit that personal lived experience can be, and often is, a source of <u>unparalleled</u> insight — and thus, as my colleague correctly noted, "[a]ny discussion that might come on these topics must take these factors into account" — it is also undeniable that personal lived experience is not an <u>infallible</u> source of insight. For, as Mark Twain once put it, "You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus".[58]

On the contrary, as Socrates, Freud, and many others have taught us, the human condition is permeated with what may be generically called "false consciousness" — that is, "a distorted and limited form of experience" borne of any number of causes.[59] Indeed, most (if not all) of the humanities and social sciences — including, among others, practically the entire disciplines of philosophy, psychology, sociology, intellectual history, history of science, cultural

anthropology, Marxist political economy, and everything post-modern — are explicitly devoted to: (1) documenting the ubiquity of human false consciousness; (2) analyzing the processes that produce and maintain various types and instances of false consciousness; and, (3) developing various "consciousness raising" correctives, such as educational programs, psychotherapeutic techniques, and the like.

Precisely because they are human beings, then, members of historically marginalized or subordinated groups are prone to false consciousness. Indeed, it is at least theoretically possible that they may even be more prone to it than members of dominant groups. In any case, over the course of history more than a few reformers and revolutionaries have believed that raising the consciousness of the oppressed was an essential precondition for progress. In the case of African-Americans, for example, works ranging from David Walker's *Appeal [...] to the Colored Citizens of the World, but in Particular, and Very Expressly, to Those of the United States of America [...]* (1829) to John McWhorter's *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* (2000) and beyond are designed to expose particular (alleged) false consciousnesses among African-Americans in order to help members of that community improve their lot in life. In other words, each work is an attempt at transmuting an (allegedly) widespread, false African-American personal lived experience into a (putatively) truer one. Indeed, one of the most famous of such works, *The Autobiography of Malcom X* (1965), chronicles and models a veritable "pilgrim's progress" through a sequence of false-consciousnesses and consciousness-raisings that transform Malcolm Little into Malcolm X and finally into El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. As the mature Malcolm/Malik scribbled in a note to himself while being interviewed by Alex Haley, "Only persons really changed history those who changed men's thinking about themselves".[60]

Nor is false consciousness a thing of the past, consigned to the dustbin of history. "Antiracist" scholar and activist Ibram X. Kendi reports, for example, that as recently as 2012 he himself "held quite a few racist views". Kendi claims, however, that in the course of writing his widely-acclaimed *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (2016) his "mind was liberated" — his consciousness was raised, his personal lived experience was transmuted — as he was "able to self-critique, discover, and shed the racist ideas [he] had

consumed over [his] lifetime" — a feat that he hopes his readers will recapitulate.[61] Who is to say, however, whether the consciousness Kendi attained at age 34 will be the one he dies with, or whether another, (putatively) truer consciousness yet awaits an older Kendi as it did the older Malcolm?

Moreover, not only is false consciousness <u>not</u> a thing of the past, but Jonathan Haidt (quoted above) and his collaborator, academic freedom advocate Greg Lukianoff, contend that false consciousness of a sort has actually been <u>rising</u> among American students since about 2013 (that is, since the time Kendi began writing *Stamped*). In their book, *The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting Up a Generation for Failure* (2018), Lukianoff and Haidt document, analyze, and offer remedies for what they perceive as "three Great Untruths that seem to have spread widely in recent years":

1. The Untruth of Fragility: *What doesn't kill you makes you weaker*.

2. The Untruth of Emotional Reasoning: *Always trust your feelings*.

3. The Untruth of Us Versus Them: *Life is a battle between good people and evil people*. [emphasis original]

The net effect of these Great Untruths, Lukianoff and Haidt argue, is that "*[m]any university students are learning to think in distorted ways, and this increases their likelihood of becoming fragile, anxious, and easily hurt*" [emphasis original]. Thus:

[E]ven when students are reacting to real problems, they are more likely than previous generations to engage in thought patterns that make those problems seem more threatening, which makes them harder to solve.

(This thesis was more clearly captured in the original title for Lukianoff and Haidt's earlier, 2015 article for *The Atlantic*: "Arguing Towards Misery: How Campuses Teach Cognitive Distortions". An *Atlantic* editor, however, gave the article the "more succinct and provocative title" that went on to become the title of their book.[62])

Beyond not being an <u>infallible</u> source of insight, personal lived experience is often the <u>greatest obstacle</u> to insight. Sometimes this is because one can be so "invested" in a particular consciousness that one will absolutely refuse to let it go, regardless of the evidence adduced. As Upton Sinclair famously put it from a slightly different angle: "It is difficult to get a man to

understand something, when his salary" — or more broadly: his identity — "depends upon his not understanding it".[63] Indeed, it appears that in some circumstances it is now impossible even to challenge a person's consciousness. As reproductive justice activist Pamela Merritt recently said, "I have been in this movement space long enough to respect how people choose to describe their personal experience and <u>validate that experience, even if I don't necessarily agree that that's what they experienced</u>" [emphasis added].[64]

At other times, one can be simply too close to oneself to have the perspective necessary for profound insight. In his dedicatory letter to Lorenzo de' Medici at the beginning of *The Prince* (1532), for example, Machiavelli argues that:

> Just as those who sketch the countryside place themselves below
> in the plain to consider the nature of mountains and high places,
> and in order to consider the low places they put themselves high
> on the mountains, similarly, to come to know well the nature of
> the people one needs to be a prince and to know well that of
> princes one needs to be of the people.

Thus, Machiavelli maintains, Lorenzo should not think it "presumptuous if a man of low and mean state dares to discuss and to regulate the government of princes".[65] In other words: it is only to be expected that one who does not possess personal lived experience might nonetheless know more than, and even properly give advice to, one who does. In a similar vein, it is widely thought that Alexis de Tocqueville, author of the classic *Democracy in America* (1835), was able to develop a profound understanding of America precisely because he was not an American and thus did not have the personal lived experience of one.

Because I agreed with my colleague that personal lived experience can be an invaluable source of profound insight, I was extremely interested in hearing and taking seriously my colleague's perspective. Because I believe that personal lived experience is not an infallible source of profound insight, I could see no reason why I was not entitled — indeed, obligated — to evaluate my colleague's views as part of the (re-)evaluation of my own. Or why my colleague should not be willing — indeed, eager — to hear my views as part of a civil, rational, evidence-based, two-way conversation devoted to jointly establishing as best we could the truth of things. This, after all, is the life of the mind that I thought everyone at the University of Chicago had signed up for.

I expressed my desire for such a meeting to the Basic Program instructional staff Chair, whom I thought was facilitating the proposed meetings (and who does not, as far as I know, self-identify as a member of an historically marginalized group but does seem to self-identify as an "ally"). Given my colleague's disability, I also sought guidance about how to proceed in a way that would not harm my colleague. On the other hand, given the tenor of the times as well as my colleague's stated position, I wanted to make it clear that I did not think that my colleague's demographic marginalizations required any special consideration on my part. I wrote:

> For the record, I'm very eager to respect and take into account whatever medical needs [my colleague] has. However, it is quite possible that if we get into a conversation (even an extremely calm and polite one), some or all of my perspective may seem an attempt to "subvert the legitimacy" of [my colleague's] perspective … and in a certain way will be if I am disagreeing with his perspective. I don't see any way around that unless (every)one is simply to concede the argument to [my colleague] in advance. But perhaps you and/or others can show me a method in which one can attempt to demonstrate the error of another's way without them feeling "subverted". (On the other hand, of course, it will perhaps turn out that [my colleague] and I agree on many things. Who knows?)
>
> My only objective, now as always, is to try to arrive at the best understanding of things in an open-minded process in which each participant can freely and fearlessly speak their mind in an effort to arrive at a shared understanding of the truth. Chicago Principles all the way down. Or "frankness undeterred by deference" as you put it.[66]

In his response, the instructional staff Chair did not provide the guidance I had requested but merely informed me that he was not in fact personally coordinating meetings among members of the instructional staff.[67] "OK," I wrote in reply. "Just to be clear, though, you're saying I should contact [my colleague] directly. Right?"[68] The response I received shocked me:

> No, my words did not make that suggestion.
> Your "for the record" paragraph of April 13 does not indemnify you from the consequences of your actions. The paragraph makes it sound like you're planning to harass the poor guy aforethought. Since you confess in that paragraph to lacking the skill of maintaining "even an extremely calm and polite"

conversation, my suggestion is the opposite of the inference you drew.[69]

Not only was the instructional staff Chair mischaracterizing what I had written, but he was using this mischaracterization to malign me as allegedly "planning to harass the poor guy aforethought". As anyone familiar with the modern academy knows, an allegation of harassment is extremely serious, opening the alleged harasser to investigation as well as to a range of serious sanctions if the allegation is substantiated.

It is certainly true that, based on the emails each of us had sent to the Basic Program instructional staff, I did in fact anticipate that my colleague and I would not see eye-to-eye about some things — perhaps about many or even most things. But I carry that expectation into almost every conversation I have on almost every substantive topic with almost every intellectual interlocutor. Indeed, differences of opinion among intellectuals are both banal and profound: banal because they happen literally all day every day; and profound because they are one of the raw materials out of which intellectual progress is made. Among intellectuals, therefore, differences of opinion are keenly to be sought, not keenly to be shunned.

Alas, the conversation between my colleague and me is apparently not to happen unless I choose to ignore the instructional staff Chair's suggestion that I not reach out to my colleague. Some things apparently can no longer be thought, or said, or discussed — at least not among, or to, or with certain people. And it is apparently nowadays acceptable for those who march to the beat of a different DEI drum to be denigrated as dubious would-be harassers whose hearts are in the wrong place.

(As it turns out, professional courtesy obliged me to violate the instructional staff Chair's suggestion in order to share a draft of this essay with my colleague for his comment. Happily, my colleague responded by suggesting possible improvements to my essay and offering to meet with me "to hear, respond to, and consider all points on the matter" after he finishes his upcoming summer research. Moreover, my colleague asked that I not anonymize him as he would be "honored" to be associated with his remarks.[70] I have chosen to maintain his anonymity along with everyone else's, however, as a matter of policy. The instructional staff Chair's response to my request that he fact-check a draft of this essay was quite different, however. As if to further confirm my unfortunate conclusion that DEI initiatives not grounded in

a Great Conversation model often serve as a de facto license to censor and denigrate, the Chair claimed, "I do not believe you attended the [DEI] event". After thus effectively calling me a liar, the Chair went on to suggest that I stop trying to address an "imaginary" problem.[71])

Conclusion

To my mind, so much of this is unfortunate on so many levels. Both the moral task of achieving social justice and the "intellectual, not moral" task of "improving the stock of ordered knowledge and rational judgment" are real and important and pressing. Neither task is imaginary. Nor is the need to keep the work of the university centered on the Great Conversation. As I wrote at the end of my critique of the recent DEI training:

> I realize — as does everyone — that these issues are important, that the world as it is and has been is not just, and that all persons of good will are called upon to share the burden of "healing the world", especially when it comes to race in America. Indeed, I have tried, and continue to try, to use my own teaching in the Basic Program to make my own tiny contribution in this regard. However, I suppose I have drunk the Socratic Kool-Aid and firmly believe that there is no substitute — especially at a university and doubly-especially at the University of Chicago — for the slow, sometimes tedious, often frustrating process of reasoning, reasoning, and yet more reasoning. Indeed, this is precisely why universities exist in the first place. Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts to the truth or to truth-based activism.[72]

The careful reader will have noticed that at no point have I taken a position on the merit of any allegation that the University of Chicago has had or still has shortcomings on matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Nor have I taken any position on any proposed remedy to any alleged shortcoming. My focus has been strictly procedural. Of course, there are those who believe that it is precisely the Great Conversation process itself that has been, and still is, the heart of problem. And to some extent they are right.

Both the Great Conversation model of civilization and of the university and the modern sense of viewpoint diversity where "the authority of a voice has very little to do with the social identity of who speaks" have been, and sometimes still are, abused as instruments of marginalization. And thus, those who self-identify with marginalized groups are naturally and

rightly suspicious of a system that has and/or does sometimes enforce and tolerate their marginalization.

But the fact that the Great Conversation has been, is — and perhaps always will be — flawed in practice is not, in and of itself, evidence that the Great Conversation model is flawed in principle. It is simply evidence that the implementation of a particular moment is imperfect and that eternal vigilance is required. Proof that the Great Conversation model is flawed in principle would require an argument of an entirely different order. Of course, some have and do mount such arguments. But I do not think they have made their case. Indeed, the very fact that they can make their case and that I and others can dispute it is nothing less than the Great Conversation in action upon itself. And that is good and proper. Indeed, it is the necessary means by which the Great Conversation becomes an ever better, ever more inclusive, ever richer realization of itself with more participants and more perspectives. But the process itself remains — and must remain — the Great Conversation, with the same rules that apply as much to the previously marginalized as to anyone else.

Robert Maynard Hutchins's declaration that, "[n]othing is to remain undiscussed", "[e]verybody is to speak his mind", "[n]o proposition is to be left unexamined" must be understood, then, in the same way that Abraham Lincoln understood the Declaration of Independence. Despite America's deeply flawed implementation in practice, Lincoln argued in the Gettysburg Address (1863) that the proposition — that is, the principle — that all men are created equal is one to which Americans have been, are, and must be "dedicated" if "government of the people, by the people, for the people" is not to "perish from the earth".[73] There is simply no alternative for a people that strives to be free. Likewise, for a people that strives to be rational, there is simply no alternative to a dedication to the Great Conversation model of civilization and of the university.

"The function of the university is not simply to teach breadwinning, or to furnish teachers for the public schools, or to be a centre of polite society", wrote W.E.B. DuBois. "[I]t is, above all, to be the organ of that fine adjustment between real life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment which forms the secret of civilization".[74] And this adjustment — this "improving the stock of ordered knowledge and rational judgment" which forms the secret of

civilization and which is the mission of the modern university — this Great Conversation that neither censors nor denigrates because it is grounded in intellectual humility and a skeptical rejection of all claims of epistemic privilege — simply cannot take place without discussion, dissension, and, yes, even distress. For, it is unfortunately but unavoidably true — for <u>all</u> concerned — that, as the University of Chicago's Kalven Report put it in 1967, "a good university, like Socrates, will be upsetting".[75]

And it is also true, as Richard Shweder put it in 2005 and recently reiterated (4 May 2022), that "the spirit of our great university", the University of Chicago — and thus also the spirit of the modern university generally — will not endure, "unless all of us (faculty, students, alumni, and academic administrators) honor it, defend it, and guard its gates".[76]

Notes

[1] Thanks to all those who assisted in the preparation of this essay. As always, the final responsibility for work bearing my name rests with me alone. These are my personal views and do not necessarily reflect the views of any other person or of any organization — including most particularly the Basic Program, the Graham School, and the University of Chicago.

[2] W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Chapter V, "Of the Wings of Atalanta", https://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm#chap05.

[3] Isaac Newton, *Certain Philosophical* Questions (c. 1661), 88r. The quote appears in Latin: "amicus Plato amicus Aristoteles magis amica veritas". https://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00092.

[4] Richard Shweder, "The End of the Modern Academy: At the University of Chicago, for Example". *Social Research* 84, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 695-719. See also: Jonathan Haidt, "Richard Shweder on the End of the Modern Academy", *Heterodox: The Blog* (17 December 2017), https://heterodoxacademy.org/blog/shweder-on-the-end-of-the-modern-academy/.

[5] Ibid., 696. In his article, Shweder sourced both phrases to a widely-referenced 1967 address by then-President of the University of Chicago Edward Levi. In his address, Levi notes that the characterization of the mission of the university as "intellectual, not moral" comes from Cardinal John Henry Newman and was approvingly repeated by prior University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins. See: Edward Levi, "The University and the Modern Condition", delivered 16 November 1967 at a University of Chicago Citizen's Board luncheon (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1967). Quote at 6 and 12. Reprinted in: Edward Levi, *Point of View: Talks on Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 1-19. Quote at 7 and 15. See also: John Henry Newman, *The Idea of the University: Defined and Illustrated* (1873), "Preface". https://www.newmanreader.org/works/idea/preface.html.
  The phrase "improving the stock of ordered knowledge and rational judgment" does not appear in Levi's address, however. The phrase was the coinage of UChicago sociologist Edward Shils and was perhaps known to Levi. See: Edward Shils, "Universities: Since 1900", in *Encyclopedia of Higher Education*, vol. 2, eds. Burton Clark and Guy Neave (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992), 1259-1275. Quote at 1274. Reprinted as: Edward Shils, "Universities Since 1900: A Historical Perspective", in Edward Shils, *The Order of Learning: Essays on the Contemporary University*, ed. Philip Altbach (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 39-70. Quote at 68. Shweder appears to have inadvertently omitted a key phrase from his article. In another article on a similar theme, Shweder wrote:

> Embracing something like a view expressed by Edward Shils that the primary aim of a great University is "improving the stock of ordered knowledge and rational judgment" [… then President Levi] told the citizen's board that it is not the role of the University to serve the community in which it is embedded or to directly respond to the needs of the broader world of politics and commerce or to be popular with the general public. [emphasis added]

Richard Shweder, "To Follow the Argument Where It Leads: An Antiquarian View of the Aim of Academic Freedom at the University of Chicago", in *Who's Afraid of Academic Freedom*, Akeel Bilgrami and Jonathan Cole eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 190-238. Quote at 198.

[6] Shweder, "The End of the Modern Academy", 708. The other two core values Shweder identified are: (1) "[r]esearch done primarily in anticipation of profit is incompatible with the aims of the university" (698); and (2) "complete freedom of research and the unrestricted dissemination of information" (701).

[7] Ibid., 705-706.

[8] Ibid., 695.

9 Richard Shweder, "The Last Great University of [Fill in the Blank]", delivered 18 March 2005 at the 480th Convocation of the University of Chicago. Reprinted in: Richard Shweder, "The Last Great University of [Fill in the Blank]: A Prescient Convocation Address at the University of Chicago", *Heterodox: The Blog* (4 May 2022), https://heterodoxacademy.org/blog/the-late-great-university-of-fill-in-the-blank-a-prescient-convocation-address-at-the-university-of-chicago/.

10 Richard Shweder, "Fundamentalism for High Brows", The 1993 University of Chicago Aims of Education Address (1993), https://college.uchicago.edu/student-life/aims-education-address-1993-richard-shweder.

11 Jonathan Haidt, "Richard Shweder on the End of the Modern Academy", *Heterodox: The Blog* (17 December 2017), https://heterodoxacademy.org/blog/shweder-on-the-end-of-the-modern-academy/.

12 "FIRE Launches Campaign in Support of University of Chicago Free Speech Statement" (n.d.), https://www.thefire.org/cases/fire-launches-campaign-in-support-of-university-of-chicago-free-speech-statement/.

13 Sergiu Klainerman, "At Princeton, One Small Step for Free Speech, One Giant Leap for Censorship", *Tablet* (5 May 2022), https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/princeton-small-step-free-speech-giant-leap-censorship.

14 "Basic Program of Liberal Education for Adults", https://graham.uchicago.edu/programs-courses/basic-program. Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren, *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*, revised and updated ed. (New York: Touchstone, 1972 [1940]).

15 A recording of a talk on the history of the Basic Program titled "Only in Chicago, Only at the University of Chicago: The Basic Program at 70" that I delivered 17 November 2016 as part of the celebration of the program's 70th anniversary is available on the University of Chicago YouTube channel. See: The University of Chicago, "The Basic Program of Liberal Education for Adults 70th Anniversary Celebration" (19 December 2016), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuistFHbPW0.

16 Robert Maynard Hutchins, *The Great Conversation*, vol. 1, *Great Books of the Western World* (Chicago, Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), 1. See also: https://archive.org/details/greatconversatio030336mbp.

17 College of the University of Chicago (ed.), *The People Shall Judge: Readings in the Formation of American Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976 [1949]), vol. 1, part 1, v.

18 "Gerald Graff, *Beyond the Culture Wars: How Teaching the Conflicts Can Revitalize American Education* (New York: Norton, 1992), 15.

19 Tim Lacy, *The Dream of a Democratic Culture: Mortimer J. Adler and the Great Books Idea* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 6.

20 Earl Shorris, *Riches for the Poor: The Clemente Course in the Humanities*, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 2000).

21 Harlem Clemente Course in the Humanities, "About Our Course", https://harlemclemente.org/about-our-course/.

22 Henry Ford, "My Philosophy of Industry", Interview by Fay Leone Faurote, *The Forum* 79, no. 4 (April 1928), 481-489. Quote at 481. https://www.unz.com/print/Forum-1928apr-00481/.

23 This particular formulation of Bohr's notion has no written source. Bohr's son Hans remembered that "[o]ne of the favorite maxims of my father was the distinction between the two sort of truths [sic], profound truths recognized by the fact that the opposite is also a profound truth, in contrast to trivialities where the opposites are obviously absurd". Hans Bohr, "My Father" in *Niels Bohr: His Life and Work as Seen by His Friends and Colleagues*, ed. Stefan Rozental (New York: Wiley, 1967), 325-339. Quote at 328. According to biophysicist Max Delbrück,

"Niels Bohr said that it is the hallmark of any deep truth that its negation is also a deep truth. Some truths may be unambiguous, in that their negations are false, but they tend to be trivial.". Max Delbrück, *Mind from Matter? An Essay on Evolutionary Epistemology* (Palo Alto: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1986), 167. See also: "Niels Bohr", *Wikiquote*, https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Niels_Bohr.

[24]F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Crack-Up". *Esquire* 5, no. 2 (February 1936), 41-46, https://www.esquire.com/lifestyle/a4310/the-crack-up/. Quote at 41. Continued in March and April. Reprinted in: F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Crack-Up*, ed. Edmund Wilson (New York: New Directions, 1945), 69-84. Quote at 69.

[25] Plato, *Socrates' Defense (Apology)*, trans. Hugh Tredennick, in *The Last Days of Socrates*, ed. Hugh Tredennick (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1954), 20e-21d.

[26] Herman Sinaiko, "Dialogue and Dialectic: The Limitations of Human Wisdom", in *Reclaiming the Canon: Essays on Philosophy, Poetry, and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 323-336. Quote at 330. "Socrates and Freud: Talk and Truth" is at 3-18.

[27] William Mathews, "Literary Clubs", in *The Great Conversers, And Other Essays*, 6th ed. (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Co., 1876 [1874]), 44-52. Quote at 52.

[28] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859), Chapter II, "Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion", https://www.gutenberg.org/files/34901/34901-h/34901-h.htm.

[29] Proverbs 27:17 (NIV).

[30] Adam Rose, "21st-Century African-American Perspectives on Race" Syllabus, Spring 2022. My original proposed course title, "Still Victims? Two African-American Perspectives on Racism Today", was deemed too provocative and the name of the course — but not its content — was changed.

[31] Richard Shweder, "The Last Great University of [Fill in the Blank]".

[32] GS Chief of Staff to GS Instructors, Thu 4/7/2022 5:20 PM.

[33] Zoom Meeting Registration for "Engaging Students Around Race and Racism" Training Workshop. See Figure 2.

[34] Director of Provost Communications to DEI Training Workshop Registrants, Fri 4/8/2022 11:05 AM.

[35] "CASE STUDY: Let's Talk: Facilitating Constructive Conversations with Students About Race and Racism" attached to: Director of Provost Communications to DEI Training Workshop Registrants, Fri 4/8/2022 11:05 AM.

[36] Footnote 1 of the Case Study. See Appendix. For the Princeton student letter see: "Against Anti-Black Racism in the Woodrow Wilson School", *The Daily Princetonian* (22 June 2020), https://www.dailyprincetonian.com/article/2020/06/against-anti-black-racism-in-the-woodrow-wilson-school. For a related letter by Princeton faculty that made similar demands of Princeton as a whole and became the subject of considerable controversy, see: "Faculty Letter" (4 July 2020), https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfPmfeDKBi25_7rUTKkhZ3cyMICQicp05ReVaeBpEdYUCkyIA/viewform. A counter statement was subsequently published by Princeton Classics professor Joshua Katz that see resulted in Katz being disciplined and ultimately fired. See: Joshua Katz, "A Declaration of Independence by a Princeton Professor", *Quillette* (8 July 2020), https://quillette.com/2020/07/08/a-declaration-of-independence-by-a-princeton-professor/; and, Anemona Hartocollis, "Princeton Fires Tenured Professor in Campus Controversy", *The New York Times* (23 May 2022), https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/us/princeton-fires-joshua-katz.html.

[37] Dorian Abbot, "Dorian Abbot" (n.d.), https://geosci.uchicago.edu/people/dorian-abbot/.

[38] Caroline Kubzansky and Matthew Lee, "Geophysical Sciences Grad Students Call on Faculty to Denounce Videos by Department Member", *The Chicago Maroon* (2 December 2020), https://chicagomaroon.com/article/2020/12/2/geophysical-sciences-grad-students-call-faculty-de/.

[39] Robert Zimmer, "Statement on Faculty, Free Expression, and Diversity" (29 November 2020), https://president.uchicago.edu/from-the-president/announcements/112920-free-expression.

[40] Colleen Flaherty, "A Canceled Talk, and Questions About Just Who Is Politicizing Science", *Inside Higher Ed* (6 October 2021), https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/10/06/mit-controversy-over-canceled-lecture. Colleen Flaherty, "A Canceled Lecture, Revived", *Inside Higher Ed* (19 October 2021), https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/10/19/mit-deals-fallout-canceled-lecture.

[41] Carly Mayberry, "Geophysicist 'Canceled' by MIT Honored With Award While Thousands Register for His Lecture", *Newsweek* (12 October 2021), https://www.newsweek.com/geophysicist-canceled-mit-honored-award-while-thousands-register-his-lecture-1637820.

[42] Dorian Abbot and Iván Marinovic, "The Diversity Problem on Campus", *Newsweek* (12 August 2021), https://www.newsweek.com/diversity-problem-campus-opinion-1618419.

[43] Adam Rose to GS Chief of Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:34 PM; Adam Rose to BP Instructional Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:42 PM; lightly edited for clarity.

[44] BP Chair, "Notes from DEIB Event 4.11.22" attached to: BP Chair to BP Instructional Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:16 PM. It is possible that the notetaker who captured this statement did not record it verbatim.

[45] Campus Climate Committee, "Spring 2016 Campus Climate Survey: Diversity and Inclusion Survey Results", https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/Spring2016ClimateSurveyReport.pdf. Quote at 2.

[46] Ibid., 4.

[47] The introduction to the survey report notes that:
> It is important for the reader to recognize that the percentages contained in this report are percentages of those participating in the survey, and they may not be representative of the rest of the University population that was eligible but elected not to participate. The survey was neither a census nor a probability sample of groups in the University community. It is best described as having used voluntary sampling for which all members of the target population were recruited. Because all members of the community were invited to participate, but not all did, individuals with certain experiences or beliefs may have been more likely than others to participate as a result of those experiences or beliefs. Consequently, those who responded to the survey may differ in systematic ways from the University population as a whole. [Ibid., 3-4, emphasis added]

[48] Office of the Provost, "About" (n.d.), https://diversityandinclusion.uchicago.edu/about/. Office of the Provost, "Climate Survey" (n.d.), https://diversityandinclusion.uchicago.edu/commitment/climate-survey/.

[49] Office of the Provost, "Diversity & Inclusion Update: Summer Quarter 2019"(2019), https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/voices.uchicago.edu/dist/1/709/files/2019/07/Diversity_and_Inclusion_Update_Summer_2019.pdf, 4-5.

[50] Adam Rose to GS Chief of Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:34 PM; Adam Rose to BP Instructional Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:42 PM; lightly edited for clarity.

[51] See, for example: Aeon Video, "James Baldwin vs William F Buckley: A legendary debate from 1965" (1965), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Tek9h3a5wQ; Gabrielle Bellot, "The Famous Baldwin-Buckley Debate Still Matters Today", *The Atlantic* (2 December 2019), https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment /archive/2019/12/james-baldwin-william-f-buckley-debate/602695/; James Boubek, "Reimagining the James Baldwin and William F. Buckley Debate", *All Things Considered* (20 September 2020), https://www.npr.org/2020 /09/20/914548619/reimagining-the-james-baldwin-and-william-f-buckley-debate.

[52] Henry Kissinger, "Henry Kissinger: To Settle the Ukraine Crisis, Start at the End", *The Washington Post* (5 March 2014), https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.

[53] "Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression" (n.d. [2015]), https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites /default/files/documents/reports/FOECommitteeReport.pdf. Quotes at 2, 3.

[54] "Kalven Committee: Report on the University's Role in Political and Social Action" (11 November 1967), https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/KalvenRprt_0.pdf, 1-2.

[55] College Dean of Students John (Jay) Ellison to Class of 2020 (n.d. [2016]), https://news.uchicago.edu /sites/default/files/attachments/Dear_Class_of_2020_Students.pdf. See also: Eugene Volokh, "University of Chicago Tells Freshman: Don't Expect 'Trigger Warnings', 'Safe Spaces', or Disinvitations of Controversial Speakers", *Washington Post* (26 August 2016), https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp /2016/08/26/university-of-chicago-tells-freshmen-dont-expect-trigger-warnings-safe-spaces-or-disinvitations-of-controversial-speakers/.

[56] Robert Zimmer, "Reinforcing the Chicago Principles and the Kalven Report" (5 October 2020), https:// president.uchicago.edu/from-the-president/announcements/100520-kalven-report.

[57] BP Colleague to BP Instructional Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 7:30 PM.

[58] Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), Chapter XLIII, https:// www.gutenberg.org/files/86/86-h/86-h.htm#c43.

[59] Ron Eyerman, "False Consciousness and Ideology in Marxist Theory", *Acta Sociologica* 24, no. 1-2 (1981), 43-56, https://www.jstor.org/stable/4194332. Quote at 43. The phrase "false consciousness" was originally coined by Friedrich Engels to express the Marxist conception that bourgeois intellectuals were deluded about their own thought processes. The term was thus synonymous with "ideology". Later theoreticians distinguished between "false consciousness" and "ideology". See also: Friedrich Engels, "Letter to Franz Mehring" (14 July 1893), https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1893/letters/93_07_14.htm.

[60] Alex Haley, "Epilogue", in Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1965), 383-456. Quote at 389. Although generally known as "Malcolm X", the man assassinated on 21 February 1965 is properly known to history as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. See: Cedric D. Burrows, "El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz or Malcolm X: The Construction of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz's Religious Identity in Composition Readers", *Journal of Africana Religions* 3, no. 1 (2015), 31-43, https://doi.org/10.5325/jafrireli.3.1.0031. A similar naming issue attends the author of *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano; or, Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789). See: Paul E. Lovejoy, "Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa — What's in a Name?", *Atlantic Studies* 9, no. 2 (2012), 165-184, https://doi.org/10.1080/14788810.2012.664957.

[61] Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (New York: Bold Type Books, 2016). Quotes at 10, 11.

[62] Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt, *The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting Up a Generation for Failure* (New York: Penguin Press, 2018). Quotes at 4, 9, 8, 10. See also: Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt, "The Coddling of the American Mind", *The Atlantic* 316, no. 2 (September 2015), 42-52, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/the-coddling-of-the-american-mind/399356/.

[63] Upton Sinclair, *I, Candidate for Governor: And How I Got Licked* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994 [1935]), 109.

[64] Ryan Grim, "Elephant in the Zoom: Meltdowns Have Brought Progressive Advocacy Groups to a Standstill at a Critical Moment in World History", *The Intercept* (13 June 2022), https://theintercept.com/2022/06/13/progressive-organizing-infighting-callout-culture/.

[65] Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Leo Paul S. de Alvarez (Prospect Heights, Ill. Waveland Press, 1980), 2.

[66] Adam Rose to BP Chair, Wed 4/13/2022 8:32 AM, lightly edited for clarity. In his own reply to my colleague's critique of my critique, the Basic Program instructional staff Chair had said that his experience of the recent DEI training was different than mine. "I heard what the ancient Athenians called parrhesia," he said approvingly, "frankness undeterred by deference". BP Chair to BP Colleague and BP Instructional Staff, Wed 4/13/2022 7:49 AM.

[67] BP Chair to Adam Rose, Thu 4/14/2022 1:37 PM.

[68] Adam Rose to BP Chair, Thu 4/14/2022 1:39 PM.

[69] BP Chair to Adam Rose, Fri 4/15/2022 11:21 AM.

[70] BP Colleague to Adam Rose, Wed 5/18/2022 2:50 PM. BP Colleague to Adam Rose, Sat 5/28/2022 4:10 PM.

[71] BP Chair to Adam Rose (cc: GS Chief of Staff & GS Director of Academics), Fri 4/29/2022 9:43 AM.

[72] Adam Rose to GS Chief of Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:34 PM; Adam Rose to BP Instructional Staff, Tue 4/12/2022 4:42 PM; lightly edited for clarity.

[73] Abraham Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address [Bliss Copy], (1864 [1863]), https://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm.

[74] W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Chapter V, "Of the Wings of Atalanta", https://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm#chap05.

[75] "Kalven Committee: Report on the University's Role in Political and Social Action" (11 November 1967), https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/KalvenRprt_0.pdf. Quote at 1.

[76] Richard Shweder, "The Last Great University of [Fill in the Blank]".

Appendix

CASE STUDY: *Let's Talk: Facilitating Constructive Conversations with Students About Race and Racism*

You work in an academic unit at the University of Chicago as a faculty member, staff member, or administrator. Several years ago, your unit formed a diversity and inclusion committee, chaired by a faculty member and committed to advancing student and faculty diversity. Progress on the committee's objectives has been slow and colleagues, students, and alumni are frustrated.

A group of students recently submitted a written list of demands calling for racial justice and equity in your department (see their letter below[1]). The letter was sent to several department leaders via email and was also posted publicly online.

Last month, a prominent scholar in your discipline published an op-ed criticizing student activism. While this faculty member is from another institution, some individuals voiced their agreement with her and told you that the students' complaints are overblown and that focusing on enhancing academic excellence should be your unit's main priority.

As a member of Department X, how do you engage with and respond to these students and how do you bring faculty, staff, and others on board? What are some of the challenges you will face and how will you work to address them?

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[1] This is a mock letter drafted for this workshop and adapted from a case study created by the Faculty Advancement Network. It uses language drawn from a public letter written by students/alumni of Princeton's School of Public and International Affairs as well as other similar letters.

To Department X Leadership:

As students of Department X, we have been engaged in conversation with other students and alumni, as well as our peers from across all departments of the University, about ways to commit to anti-racist work within our fields of study.

The ongoing histories of police brutality and systemic violence against Black communities have ignited protests nationwide and around the world to demand justice for the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, George Floyd, Tony McDade, Rayshard Brooks, Oluwatoyin Salau, and many, many others. Institutions of power in this country have condoned the deaths of far too many people for far too long, at the hands of systemic violence and inaction. Justice is long overdue.

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students and allies have been left deeply troubled and angered by the Department's inaction regarding the ongoing practices of racial injustice. We stand in solidarity with campus-wide asks from students, alumni, and faculty, and as such propose the following action items that the Department can take to ensure a commitment to anti-racism amongst our community.

CORE CURRICULUM: We demand the establishment of a core requirement or a prerequisite for majors whose curriculum substantively examines power, race, and identity, domestically and/or globally. We urge the Department to make changes to the curriculum to facilitate engagement with anti-racist works and concepts, as well as to unpack the historical and social context for the theories we study and employ in our research.

FACULTY DIVERSITY: We demand the intentional hiring of more Black faculty and faculty of color in the Department.

PROGRAMMING: We demand that the Department leverage its funding towards an intentional and concerted increase in programming focused on topics of race, identity, and power. We demand more BIPOC professionals in the field for presentations and events, so that undergraduate and graduate students may engage with a more diverse set of voices.

TRAINING: We demand that the Department work with students to create anti-racist training at least once per quarter for all faculty (including tenured professors), staff, other academic appointees, and administrators.

DISCRIMINATION: We demand the Department develop a transparent process to examine cases of discrimination in the classroom. All students are to be made aware of this process and of other resources available and are to face no harmful repercussions for reporting.

We have made these calls from our position as students with a profound desire to learn and be taught more, to think and write more deeply and critically, and to leverage the privilege of our education to understand and change the world around us for the better.

We look forward to hearing your response and we expect, together, to begin implementing these demands prior to the start of the 2022-2023 academic year. We will make this letter public later today.

Sincerely,
<<student names>>