Brown University Departmental Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) Fall 2016 Update Report Summary

Please respond to the following questions below and submit the document via email to the Vice President for Academic Development, Diversity and Inclusion, Liza Cariaga-Lo at liza_cariaga-lo@brown.edu by **Friday, December 16, 2016**.

Name of Department/Unit: **Computer Science**

Name/title of Person Submitting Update Report: **Laura Dobler / Financial & Outreach Coordinator**

1. What Departmental DIAP **priorities** have you focused on during the Fall 2016 period?

Data Collection and Community Input - In September, Lynn Hernandez in the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion reviewed the results of our Spring 2016 CS Climate Survey and identified four high-level themes presented by the students.

We held our third Diversity Town Hall on November 16, 2016 to share the Diversity Committee's progress and elicit feedback from the community on how we can improve our programs. The Town Hall also included an informational session about the role of the Diversity Student Advocates, as applications for the 2017-2018 position were open. We continue to hold daily Student Advocate & Staff office hours, for all members of the community to confidentially discuss questions or concerns related to diversity and inclusion. We've also continued to support the Women in Computer Science (WiCS) anonymous course inclusivity feedback program, with 9 CS courses opting into the program for Fall 2016. The program allows students, of their own initiative, to submit anonymous feedback on behaviors experienced in their CS classes that they felt made the environment more or less inclusive.

Education and Training - We continued the integration of diversity and inclusion training into the UTA training program. For the second semester, two Diversity Student Advocates provided 4 hours of mandatory training for new TAs, and 1 hour of mandatory training for all TAs. Following community feedback, the amount of mandatory TA training was reduced; however, all TAs were highly encouraged to attend all training sessions. CS faculty were encouraged to provide a diversity and inclusion policy statement in their course syllabi. For Fall 2016, 10 of CS courses included a diversity and inclusion statement in their syllabi. Laura Dobler, staff member on the committee, has been selected to participate in the Administrative Fellows program, a 12-month fellowship starting January 2017, designed for advanced professional development and networking as it pertains to supporting diversity and inclusion in our respective department.

Community Support - Our newest faculty member, Seny Kamara has volunteered to serve as faculty adviser for Mosaic+, a student-run organization which advocates for diversity in computer science. The department continues to provide financial and administrative resources

to diversity-focused student groups Mosaic+ and WiCS. Members of the diversity committee and the CS department also provided financial, administrative/logistical, and faculty/curriculum design support for the Mosaic+ Transition Program, a 1-week pre-orientation program in collaboration with the Science Center's New Scientist Catalyst Pre Orientation program. We hosted a Diversity Committee Alum Panel in October 2016 to showcase a variety of career-paths and perspectives on life after Brown. In addition to the Alum Panel, the committee is researching alum-student mentorship/networking models to determine the most appropriate approach for the CS undergraduate community. We are also organizing a "Coffee and Conversations" series in the Bay Area, and possibly NYC and Boston, for the summer 2017, which connects 1 alum with a small group of students at or near their place of work. Finally, a dedicated gender-inclusive restroom has been established on the 5th floor of the CIT.

Recruitment, Hiring and Retention - We offered 12 scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students to attend the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing and the ACM Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Inclusion conferences. We also sent staff members to the conferences to run Brown University booths with the aim to encourage undergraduate students to apply to the PhD and Master's programs, and graduate students and faculty to apply to faculty positions. We provided application fee waivers for select female and HUGs undergraduates interested in applying to the PhD program. We participated in IMSD STEM Preview Day in conjunction with the BioMed Department and Graduate School which invited, among others, 3 CS students from MSI's (minority-serving institutions) to learn more about STEM PhDs at Brown University. We plan to submit an application by the end of December 2016 to BRAID: Building, Recruiting and Inclusion for Diversity, an initiative with the Anita Borg Institute to increase the percentage of women and students of color majoring in CS. The program provides funding, educational materials and guidance on proven approaches to increase diversity, and data collection for a research study.

Outreach - We increased scholarship awards for students to attend Grace Hopper and Richard Tapia conferences, and staffed Brown University booths at the conference. In addition to recruitment, the booths also served to discuss diversity and inclusion topics, programs and initiatives with other university faculty and staff. The Bootstrap Program continues to expand to provide evidence-based curriculum for teaching CS in the Math classroom. We participated in Hour of Code Week, December 5-11, 2016, 20-30 CS students volunteered a total of 60 hours teaching code at 2 local elementary schools (William D'Abate & Frank Spaziano) and 1 local high school (360). An after-school CS program in collaboration with the all-girls, Lincoln School is in the beginning stages of implementation for the Spring 2016 semester. We also participated in the CS4RI Summit at URI, with two booths -- an interactive robotics exhibit and a general exhibit about Brown CS -- hosted by two CS faculty, two staff members, and three students.

Communication and Dissemination - We created dedicated pages on the CS website, https://cs.brown.edu/about/diversity to share diversity-related events and news, resources, the department's action plan, diversity committee members info and office hours, and data and demographics.

2. Please describe the **process** by which you have continued to engage your department's faculty, students and staff in discussions in order to seek feedback and in the implementation of your Departmental DIAP. If you have a DIAP Committee,

please describe the work of this committee to date. How inclusive has the process been?

We have continued the community feedback processes we implemented in the Spring 2016, which includes: semesterly Diversity Town Hall meetings, daily/weekly student advocate and staff office hours, and the course-inclusivity feedback program. The committee has and continues to actively listen to and value the input of all members of the community. The CS Diversity Committee, which was originally comprised of 3 faculty members, 1 staff member and 1 graduate student, has been expanded over this past year. The committee is now comprised of 5 faculty members, 2 staff members, 2 PhD students, 2 master's students, and 7 undergraduate student advocates. In the spring 2016, the diversity committee was responsible for drafting and finalizing the department's action plan. To date, the diversity committee is responsible for all action plan initiatives and programs outlined in this report (with the exception of the Bootstrap Program, which is run by another CS faculty member).

3. What **best practices** would you like to share regarding your approach to your Departmental DIAP implementation to date?

Provide multiple opportunities for community feedback, actively listen to the feedback, and make adjustments to approaches and programs accordingly. Be as transparent as possible about DIAP progress, and clearly communicate any barriers to success. Provide multiple opportunities to students to be meaningfully and actively engaged in the implementation of the DIAP. If possible, ensure that all members of the community are represented on the diversity committee. And, if possible, assign a staff-member to a dedicated role on the committee to provide logistical support for implementation and to track and document progress of implementation.

4. What are the **challenges** you have faced in your DIAP implementation to date?

One of the primary challenges the diversity committee faces is community awareness and visibility. The committee and the roles of the student advocates are not yet widely known among the larger CS community. As such, community attendance at the daily office hours is low, and submissions to the anonymous WiCS feedback program has also been low. While attendance at the Diversity Town Hall was moderate, the committee's work and purpose has not yet garnered broader attention from the community. We were unable to secure a lecturer for our Diversity Lecture Series for Fall 2016, but we have secured a lecturer for early February 2017.

Another primary challenge we have faced is finding an appropriate person to review and formally analyze our Spring 2016 Climate Survey. We received preliminary support from the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, however there was a desire from members of the committee to pursue a deeper analysis of the data. We are still pursuing options and are considering hiring an independent contractor from the Computing Research Association, or a Brown University graduate student, likely outside of the CS department. This issue also addresses a larger concern the committee has about program evaluation. We are still

developing accurate and reliable measures of success to help inform progress on our work and realign our goals as needed.

5. Please share an **example of a positive outcome** generated by the DIAP implementation work you have done to date.

There is now an established direct line of communication between students, staff and faculty to discuss issues and initiatives related to diversity and inclusion. The creation of the undergraduate diversity student advocate position provides an opportunity for students to help enact meaningful cultural changes to the department. Diversity and Inclusion TA Training is now fully incorporated into the TA training program, offering a broader student population with the opportunity to learn about inclusive pedagogy and broader trends and impacts of diversity and inclusion professional development on the culture of the department. Diversity and inclusion-focused Town Halls, panels, workshops, and roundtables offer opportunities for continued discussion and engagement among members of the community.