Introduction: (Not part of Legislation)

Bernadette Brooten led a team in Spring 2019 to create handbook legislation to help Brandeis critically support its historical mission and future aspirations. This proposal has been vetted by the Faculty Senate and is being submitted for approval to the Faculty Handbook.

Priorities of strong institutions align with their core mission and values. Brandeis University is facing an array of challenges related to honoring its historical and recently reaffirmed commitments to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in all segments of its community, including students, staff, faculty, and contract employees. While Brandeis is not isolated from national trends, our founding mission of Social Justice adds a sense of urgency and responsibility to our responses to these challenges. Student populations in U.S. higher education are becoming increasingly diverse as our population undergoes a paradigmatic demographic shift. Coupled with the polarizing effect of modern political discourse and the anticipated economic and social upheaval brought about by climate change, changing demographics will present higher education with a sea change over the next generation. In addition, as the gap between rich and poor widens in the country as a whole, a Brandeis committed to Social Justice will ensure fair, safe, and accessible conditions for all who work or study on our campus.

A responsible and progressive University must act in accordance with its core values to our current challenges and in anticipation of those to come. The record growth in the numbers of students experiencing depression, stress, PTSD, and anxiety and health impacts disproportionately felt by marginalized and protected classes contributes an additional level of immediacy to our actions. Evidence-based research suggests that we need faculty, administration, and staff engaged meaningfully and empowered to make the changes necessary through the institutional measures outlined in this proposal.

Proposed Amendment for DEISJ Committee

[To be Added to HIP VI.D 2g]

g. Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

i. The Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI), and Social Justice will monitor the metrics on DEI at the University; solicit guidance from the Brandeis community on how to expand DEI and social justice initiatives; and engage, in coordination with the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, in strategic planning.

ii. The Committee will consist of one faculty member from each of the four divisions of Arts and Sciences, one from the Heller School, and one from the International Business School; it will also
include one staff member appointed by BUSAC, one undergraduate student member appointed by the Student Union Senate, and one graduate student appointed by the Graduate Student Council. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by the Office of DEI or the Faculty Senate. Faculty members will be appointed by the Senate under consultation with their division or school and ODEI.

1. The VP of DEI, the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO), and Title IX Coordinator or designee, and a representative from the Ombuds Office will serve ex officio on this committee along with the VP of HR or a delegate from the office of the EVP of Finance.

2. The Committee will elect its own chair annually.

3. Faculty members will serve 3-year terms. Staff and Student representatives will serve single year terms.

iii. The Committee will meet at least three times a semester.

iv. Committee Responsibilities

1. Receive training from ODEI regarding best practices;
2. Act as advisory board to the VP of DEI and the Provost’s office on DEI and Social Justice issues;
3. Provide guidelines for appropriate DEI training for faculty and staff; advise Schools regarding best practices for hiring in line with DEI initiatives;
4. Compile and publish data on diversity of faculty, staff and representation on committees and governing bodies outlined by the handbook;
5. Respond to recommendations and complaints from the community, which may mean referring them to other committees or offices;
6. Advocate for social justice in all contracts with external entities that impact an inclusive Brandeis community;
7. Schedule periodic town halls on Campus Climate; and,
8. Provide a semesterly report in writing or in person to the Strategic Planning Committee, the Provost, the EVP of Finance and Administration, the Senate, and the full Faculty, as well as annually to the Board of Trustees.