

THE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL OF STUDENTS



FALL
REPORT
2020

Introduction

Dear Brown Undergraduate Community,

As this report is released, we mark the exact midpoint of the abbreviated Spring 2021 semester. While we all reckon with midterms, I am happy to take a moment to reflect and share the Undergraduate Council of Students (UCS) Fall 2020 report.

While not formally required by our code, the UCS semesterly report, issued by the President, (and endearingly termed the 'State of the UCS') is a longstanding tradition on the Council to maintain active communication and transparency with the student body in our advocacy.

Typically, UCS Boards are inactive and take a (well-needed) recess during the summer months in preparation for a busy school year. However, for the first time in our organization's history, the 2020-2021 Executive Board remained engaged in advocacy throughout the summer months due to the coronavirus pandemic, national anti-Black racism, and other pressing issues. Accomplishments from summer 2020 are included in this document.

I thank the members of my board for their months of tireless work and for stepping up during a turbulent time in our University's history as well as the members of our General Body who have driven and supported our advocacy.

I additionally express my appreciation to the members of the University administration, faculty, and staff that have collaborated with us and supported our work this year.

My gratitude goes out to UCS secretary Samra Beyene '22, communications chair Fabiana Sarkis '22, and Ethan Epstein '24 for their support in preparing and designing this report.

Last of all, I would like to recognize the thousands of students who are working every day to keep our community and Providence safe and healthy, maintain the Brown community in a virtual environment, and support our peers throughout this time.

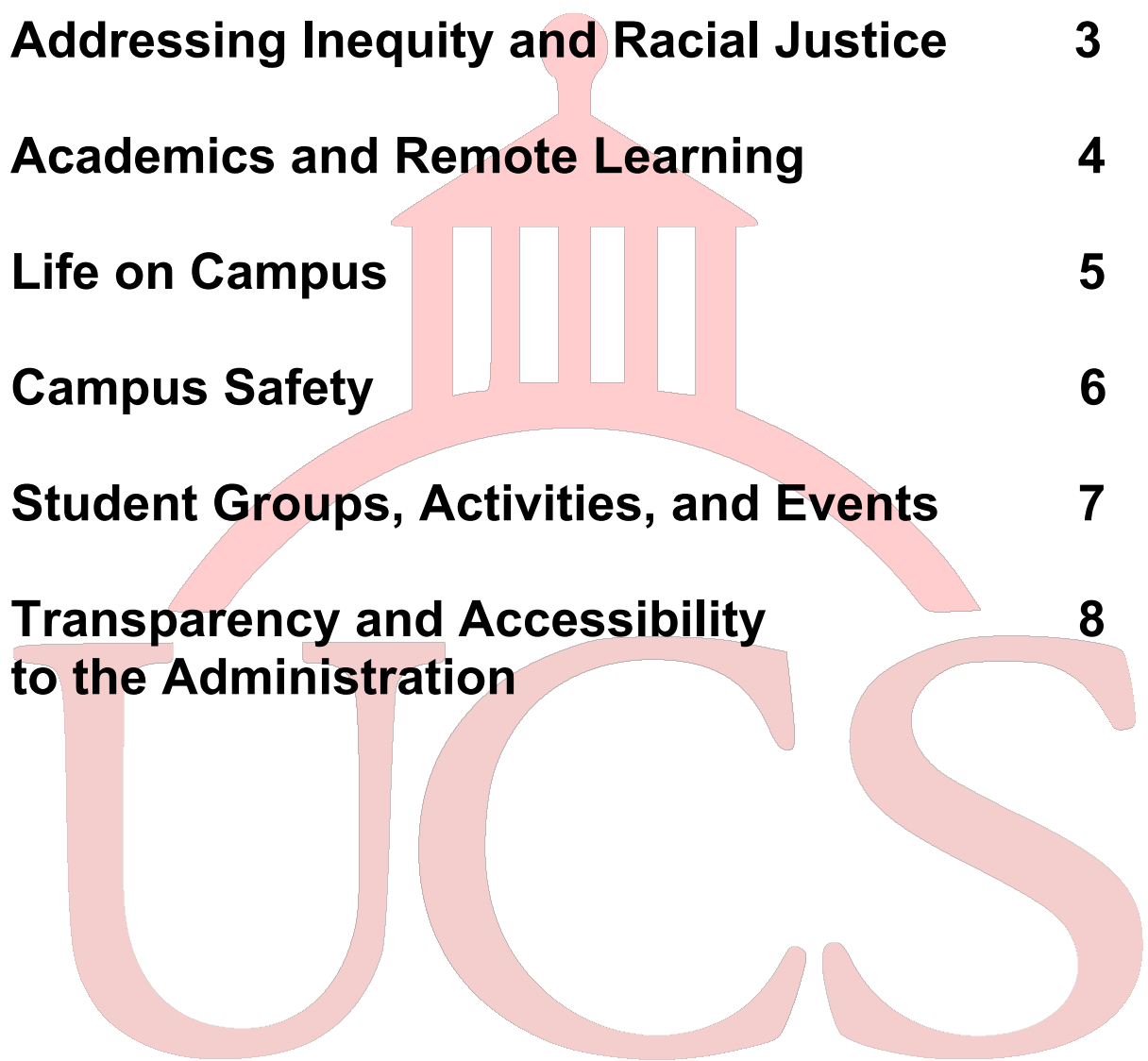
Please feel free to follow our [social media](#) to stay updated on our work throughout the semester and to learn more.

Ever True,

Student Body President
Jason Carroll '21

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Addressing Inequity & Racial Justice

In response to anti-Black racism nationally, UCS hosted **Black Community Care and Dialogue: Black Care, Mutual Aid, and Visions of the Future** featuring prominent members of Brown's Black community to discuss self care and racial justice.

Collected over **\$500** in independent donations for the **Equal Justice Initiative**.

Successfully advocated for the Student Activities Office to reform **online fundraising** which facilitated student group donations to Black mutual aid networks.

Created a **Steering Committee** on the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), which brought together key stakeholders and convinced the university to establish a **College Curriculum Council (CCC) Working Group** on Diversity in the Curriculum.

Passed the **Student Activity anti-discrimination clause** which requires all UCS-recognized groups to include anti-racist language in their constitutions.

Passed a Resolution calling for Brown to **rename the Thomas J. Watson Sr. Center for Information Technology (CIT)** due to Thomas J. Watson Sr.'s connections to Nazi Germany.

UCS **appointed two undergraduate students** to the newly created **Public Education Committee**. These undergraduates will focus on ensuring that this money helps improve the current English as a Second Language **(ESL) program**, the **Providence Public School (PPS) infrastructure**, and community engagement with PPS.

Collaborated with the Brown U app developers to **consolidate identity center newsletters** on the **Brown U app**.

Set up **liaisons** between UCS and the **Sarah Doyle Center for Women and Gender**, the **LGBTQ+ Center**, the **Global World Center**, the **UFLi center**, the **Brown Center for Students of Color**, and **Disability Justice at Brown**.

Collaborated with the UFLi Center and Disability Justice at Brown to support both their **initiatives of getting new centers** by helping these two organizations find **donors**.

Academics & Remote Learning

Successfully **advocated for the removal of the readmission** fee (leave taking fee) for students return from a leave of absence due to the pandemic or otherwise.

Created a **UCS Study Groups program** to ensure students can connect during remote learning.

Collaborated with Dean of the College to **promote general best practices for remote learning** based on the results from the **UCS Pre-Reopening Decision Poll**.

Worked with the administration to communicate and review **changes to the pre-registration process**.

Conducted **the pre-reopening decision poll** during the summer to better address the needs of undergraduate students and shared findings with the University and general public.

Communicated updated guidelines and advice regarding the **new policies related to pre-registration** and the adding and dropping of classes.

Designed a **feedback survey** with the administration to provide information to professors regarding **student concerns with remote learning**.

Worked with the **Transfer and Resumed Undergraduate Education (RUE) Orientation team** to schedule **workshops focused on topics in academic life**, such as exploring concentrations, managing stress, and shopping period.

Life on Campus

Successfully advocated for the **removal of the non-resident fee** for students.

Collaborated with **Facilities Management** to produce **signage on mask care and trash disposal processes** to promote a safe living environment.

Secured **sanitizing wipes in every laundry room** in residence dorms.

Ensured the **installation of hand sanitizer dispensers** at the entrance of residence halls.

Created a **Paid Student Communications Position** in Brown Dining.

Successfully encouraged the **reconsideration of assigned dining times with BUDS** to allow students to pick up their meals at their convenience.

Collaborated with Dining Services to release a **Dining FAQ**.

Collaborated with Brown Dining Services during Quiet Period to provide students fun **microwaveable mug-cupcakes** to cook in their dorms.

Gained commitment from the University of the **return of compost bins** starting in the **fall of 2021**.

Campus Safety

Successfully advocated for **higher quality adjustable masks** with nose wires to be provided free of charge to students.

Successfully advocated for the University to **increase the number of masks** available to returning students.

Ran **social media public health information campaigns** both independently and in partnership with University administration.

Student Groups, Student Activities, & Events

Successfully advocated to change University policy to **allow students on a leave of absence to participate in Student Activities**.

Worked with the University to **remove the Student Activity Fee** for the Fall semester.

Organized and hosted a **Virtual Fall 2020 Activities Fair** with over 300 student groups participating and over 2,300 attendees over the course of three days.

Alongside UFB, transformed the New Initiative Fund into the Startup Funding Program so that all **Category 1 student groups now have access to 50% more funding**.

*Passed the **Student Activity anti-discrimination clause** which requires all UCS-recognized groups to include anti-racist language in their constitutions.

Partnered with the Student Activities Office and the Office of Student Conduct to formulate clear **Student Group Accountability and Conduct guidelines for COVID-19**.

Recognized **20 new student groups**.

Recategorized 15 student groups.

*In response to anti-Black racism nationally, UCS hosted the **'Black Community Care' Event** featuring prominent members of Brown's Black community to discuss self care and racial justice.

*Successfully advocated for the Student Activities Office to **reform online fundraising** which facilitated student group donations to Black mutual aid networks.

Created the **UCS Community Bulletin Account** for student groups to publicize their events on..

Transparency & Accessibility to the Administration

Co-hosted the **first Undergraduate Town Hall with the Office of the President**, where all students were invited to ask questions to Brown's top administrators.

Allowed the entire **student body to participate** in **Brown's monthly Faculty Meetings** through social media outlets.

Collaborated with **University Human Resources (UHR)** and **20+ departments at Brown** in organizing the **Student Jobs@Brown Virtual Student Employment Fair**.

Gave seniors a voice in choosing their commencement speakers by running the **first Commencement Speaker Committee elections**.

Connected interested students with the University leadership through hosting our **fall 2020 biannual undergraduate-Corporation policy meeting**.

Established **closer relationships with the University Resources Committee** to ensure better student feedback and input on university budgeting decisions.