

STANFORD
UNIVERSITY



JOHN L. HENNESSY
President

March 28, 2016

Dear Members of the Who's Teaching Us Coalition:

Thank you for your letter of March 14. The concerns you have raised are important, and I want to express my support for the process we are establishing to address them.

Diversity and inclusion are priorities for Stanford. Moreover, racial and socioeconomic justice in our society should be important issues for all of us. The academic excellence of our university and the vitality of our broader society both depend upon the empowerment and full participation of people richly diverse in backgrounds, cultures, talents, and interests.

Stanford has worked with serious commitment over a period of many years to advance diversity and inclusion on our campus. Many of our efforts are described on our Diversity Works website at <https://diversityworks.stanford.edu/initiatives>. They include major institutional investments in recruiting faculty and students who bring diversity to Stanford.

We agree that more progress is needed. These are difficult, longstanding issues, and we must never become complacent in our efforts to create a campus environment that is truly inclusive and a society that recognizes and addresses the concerns of marginalized communities. Student voices about their experiences at Stanford, and student ideas for improving those experiences, are critical to making progress together as a university community.

Many of the issues you have identified are complex in nature and must be addressed through detailed analysis and thoughtful discussion. As you know, we have agreed to proceed with a set of structured conversations around each of the six issue areas identified in your letter. While a range of university leaders will be involved in these discussions, I am pleased that key roles will be played by members of the group you recently met with: Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Harry Elam; Vice Provost for Graduate Education Patti Gumpert; Matt Snipp, senior associate vice provost for faculty development and diversity; and Nicole Taylor, associate vice provost and dean of community engagement and diversity. I believe this process will facilitate a useful and constructive dialogue leading to action. It also will reveal realistic timeframes for addressing the issues under discussion.

These discussions will also need to be informed by input from our incoming president, Marc Tessier-Lavigne, when he arrives this fall. I am certain he will be actively engaged in these issues.

Thank you again for your commitment to Stanford and for initiating this conversation. We look forward to working together on our next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John L. Hennessy", written over a white background.

John L. Hennessy

Office of the President