

EQUITY AND INCLUSION FINDINGS REPORT

Harvard Dance Center

May, 2021

I. Summary and Methods

In the summer of 2020, EBDI was contracted by the Harvard Dance Center (HDC) to conduct a preliminary assessment of the extent to which its community members feel that they are treated equitably, and experience feelings of inclusion at HDC. This report, based on data collected in September and October of 2020, details the methods, analyses, and findings associated with this assessment.

We designed and conducted a data collection process that both assessed the extent to which common equity and inclusion pain points are present at HDC, and allowed for open-ended reporting of experiences with HDC. To achieve the first goal, we distributed a survey that drew on existing survey instruments that assess inclusion, belonging and organizational climate in higher education and organizational settings (see Appendix 1 for the survey instruments). The survey was released to 957 HDC community members, including 925 people who engaged HDC across all programming in the 2019-20 academic year, as well as 32 alumni who graduated in the past three years and participated in multiple HDC offerings. To achieve the second goal, we included an open-ended question in the survey asking if respondents would like to share anything about their experience at HDC, and invited faculty, staff and alumni to participate in focus groups to share their perspectives on how HDC can further work toward equitable and inclusive excellence (see Appendix 2 for the focus group and interview guide).

We were conservative in our expectations for participation in this assessment for two reasons. First, several of the 957 people invited to participate in the survey were Cambridge-Boston area community members who attended an event or performance (as opposed to Harvard University students involved in HDC programming, or people who have taken credit or not-for-credit courses at HDC). In soliciting survey participation, several people responded to our initial email stating their only affiliation with HDC was through attendance of a single event or performance.¹ In turn, they did not believe their participation in the survey would be appropriate. We believe that other invited participants from whom we did not receive direct feedback may have shared this sentiment.

Second, the survey was released in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and at the beginning of remote learning in the fall 2020 semester. We believe that assessment participation suffered from the challenges associated with this situation.

In total, 58 HDC community members completed the survey, accounting for an overall response rate of roughly 6%. Forty-eight people who have taken a course (either for-credit or not-for-credit), and 10 Harvard College students who have participated in student dance groups, but have not taken a course at HDC, took the survey. Additionally, a total of seven faculty, staff and alumni participated in a focus group session or interview. While the survey response rate limits the representativeness of the data we

¹ HDC maintains a database of people who have shared their contact information, including students at Harvard, students at other institutions of higher education, and community members unaffiliated with Harvard or another local institution of higher education. Because the database does not consistently include data on institutional affiliation or mode of engagement with HDC, we are unable to provide the precise number of people who received the survey and have engaged the HDC community only through event or performance attendance.

collected, taken in concert with insights derived from the qualitative data we collected, we were able to make preliminary inferences about the experiences of people who take courses at HDC, including current Harvard College students, Harvard graduate students, Harvard faculty and staff, and non-Harvard affiliated HDC community members.²

Analysis and triangulation of the survey, focus group and interview data revealed two important takeaways that can inform HDC's equity and inclusion efforts going forward. First, HDC has fostered a climate that is generally experienced as welcoming and inclusive by assessment participants. Several survey respondents and focus group participants identified HDC as a particularly welcoming and safe space within the broader Harvard community.

Second, and despite the positive experiences of HDC that were reported by respondents across racial and ethnic backgrounds, there are gaps in the *extent* to which survey respondents who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) perceive the HDC climate positively when compared with respondents who identify as White (76% of BIPOC respondents perceive the HDC climate positively compared to 95% of White respondents). This finding is not unexpected. Even in contexts in which equity and inclusion efforts have been well-conceived and implemented effectively, race-based gaps in how members of organizations experience organizational climates are often reflected in assessment data.³ Thus, we present this finding to highlight an opportunity for HDC to continue on its current path toward equitable and inclusive excellence.

The balance of this report proceeds as follows. Parts II and III focus on the 48 survey respondents who have taken at least one course at HDC, with Part II focusing on their experiences of belonging at HDC, and Part III focusing on their perceptions of HDC's climate. Part IV details qualitative data that were collected from survey respondents who identified as students, including responses from Harvard College students who have not taken a course at HDC and have participated in student dance groups. Part V details key themes that emerged in focus groups with HDC faculty, staff and alumni. Finally, Part VI provides concluding thoughts.

² Four of the 48 respondents who have taken a for-credit or not-for-credit course at HDC explicitly identified themselves as non-Harvard College students (Harvard faculty, Harvard staff, Harvard graduate students, or non-Harvard affiliated HDC community members). We do not have complete data, however, on the nature of respondents' affiliations with Harvard University.

³ We collected quantitative data on students' experiences of HDC in two ways: 1) feelings of belonging and inclusion at HDC, and 2) perceptions of the HDC climate. Because organizations are embedded in broader societal and institutional structures in which BIPOC communities have been historically marginalized, race-based gaps in these measures are not unexpected. Notably, in our sample, BIPOC students reported slightly *greater* feelings of belonging than their White peers; the expected race-based gap was reflected only in students' perceptions of the HDC climate. That feelings of belonging and experiences of HDC climate were high across racial backgrounds is noteworthy and reflects positively on the HDC culture and environment.

II. Feelings of Belonging among Survey Respondents who have taken HDC Courses

Belonging, defined as a psychological sense of connectedness to a social group or community, has long been documented as a core antecedent to feelings of well-being and success in institutions of higher education.⁴ To assess the state of belonging among HDC community members who have taken courses at HDC we adapted five belongingness items frequently used in scholarly work on belonging and inclusion in educational and organizational settings:⁵

- I am treated as a valued member of Harvard Dance Center
- I belong in the Harvard Dance Center
- I am connected to the Harvard Dance Center
- When I am at the Dance Center, I believe that the Harvard Dance Center is where I am meant to be
- I feel that people really care about me in the Harvard Dance Center

The 48 respondents who have taken for-credit or not-for-credit courses at HDC rated their agreement with the above items on a five-point Likert scale (“Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”). In the analysis phase, responses were coded on a 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly agree”) numerical scale, and averaged across the five items to create a Belonging Score for each respondent. Belonging Scores can be interpreted as:

- 1 to 1.99. On average selected “Strongly disagree” or “Disagree” across the five items
- 2 to 2.99. On average selected “Disagree” or “Neither agree nor disagree” across the five items
- 3 to 3.99. On average selected “Neither agree nor disagree” or “Agree” across the five items
- 4 to 5. On average selected “Agree” or “Strongly agree” across the five items

Respondents consistently reported positive levels of belonging across racial and sexual orientation categories, with an average Belonging Score of 4.05 for all respondents.⁶ Table 1 details descriptive statistics for feelings of belonging among students who have taken HDC courses.

Additionally, across racial and sexual orientation categories, no fewer than 60% of respondents had a Belonging Score between 4 and 5. Diagram 1 details the number of respondents across racial and sexual orientation categories.

⁴ Hurtado, Sylvia, and Deborah Faye Carter. "Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging." *Sociology of education* (1997): 324-345.

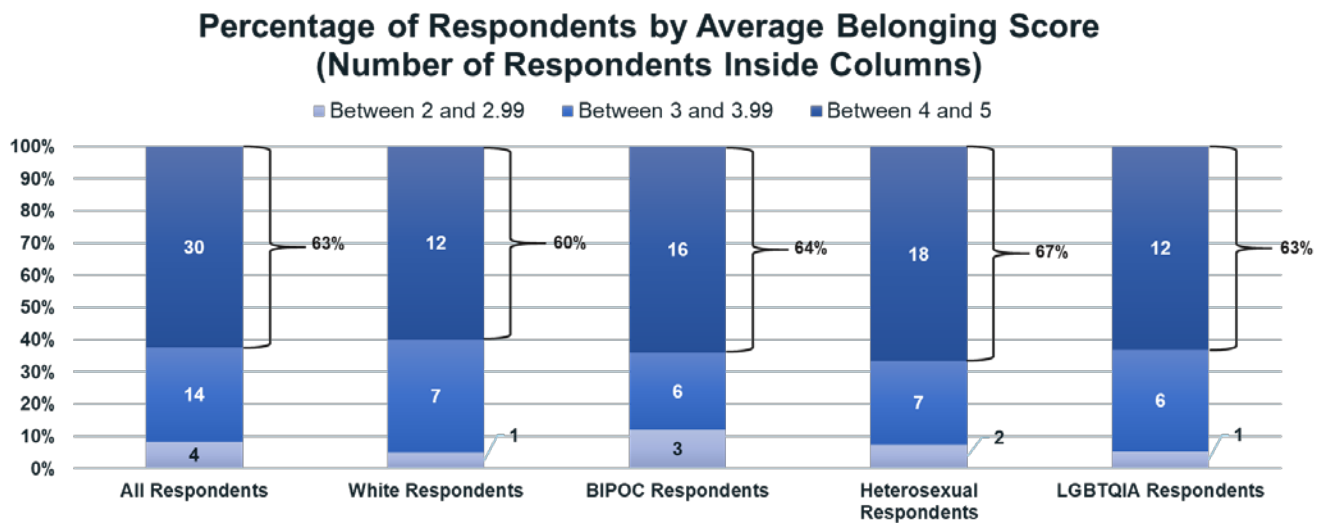
⁵ Ibid; Chung, Beth G., et al. "Work group inclusion: Test of a scale and model." *Group & Organization Management* 45.1 (2020): 75-102.

⁶ To preserve the anonymity of survey participants, EBDI does not report survey data from groups in which five or fewer respondents self-identify in a given category. In these data, fewer than five respondents self-identified as male or non-binary (the remaining respondents identified as female). Accordingly, we do not include analyses by gender. Likewise, Asian, Asian-American, and Pacific Islander respondents were the only racial or ethnic group aside from White that had greater than five respondents. Accordingly, we aggregated all BIPOC responses, and do not report responses by individual racial or ethnic groups. We discuss the analytic and inferential limitations of this choice in Part VI of this report.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics: Belonging among Students who have taken HDC Courses

	All Respondents	White Respondents	BIPOC Respondents	Heterosexual Respondents	LGBTQIA Respondents
Count	48	20	25	27	19
Mean	4.05	4.03	4.06	4.12	4.07
Min	2.00	2.80	2.00	2.20	2.00
Median	4.10	4.20	4.00	4.00	4.40
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Diagram 1. Percentage of Respondents by Average Belonging Score



The Belonging Score data can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, that six of 10 respondents had Belonging Scores in the highest range (average scores between 4 and 5) and that the mean Belonging Score is 4.05 suggests that the majority of respondents feel that they belong at HDC and in the HDC community.

On the other hand, these data also suggest that four of 10 respondents do not experience the highest levels of belonging in the HDC community. This is a number that we hope would decrease as HDC implements and executes its diversity, equity, inclusion and justice (DEIJ) strategic priorities in the coming academic year and beyond.⁷

⁷ HDC’s DEIJ strategic priorities can be found on the HDC homepage.

While both interpretations are important to consider, we emphasize the former given HDC's unique context at Harvard. Rather than operating as a department that primarily or exclusively serves Harvard College students, HDC serves multiple populations whose affiliations with Harvard vary. Accordingly, the way and extent to which people in each of these populations conceive a sense of belonging as something that is important in their engagement with HDC will also likely vary. For example, a Cambridge community member who is taking one course a year at HDC will likely conceive belonging to the HDC community in a different way than a full-time Harvard College undergraduate student who takes multiple courses and is involved in a student-led dance group.

In future assessments, we encourage HDC to investigate and examine the ways that the different populations it serves conceive belonging at HDC, and assess the extent to which it is fostering belonging per the needs of each of its sub-communities. In the interim, while our preliminary data suggest there is room for improvement, there is little evidence to suggest that there are significant areas for concern in relation to belonging among respondents. Rather, we emphasize that despite the likely heterogeneity in the way and extent to which respondents identify with the HDC community, the majority of respondents have high Belonging Scores. This interpretation is further supported by qualitative data we collected that is detailed in Parts IV and V of this report.

III. PERCEPTIONS OF HDC CLIMATE AMONG SURVEY RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE TAKEN HDC COURSES

In addition to assessing the extent to which community members feel a sense of belonging at HDC, we drew on the Campus Climate Instrument from the academic literature to assess the extent to which respondents perceive prejudice or discrimination in their interactions with HDC faculty, staff and peers.⁸ The instrument includes eight questions in two categories—Racial and Ethnic Climate, and In-Class Experience—as detailed below.

Racial and Ethnic Climate

- I have observed discriminatory words, behaviors or gestures from students directed at minority students at the Harvard Dance Center
- I feel there is a general atmosphere of prejudice among students at the Harvard Dance Center
- I feel there is a general atmosphere of prejudice among teachers at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have encountered racism while engaging the Harvard Dance Center
- I have heard negative words about people of my own race or ethnicity while attending classes at the Harvard Dance Center

In-Class Experience

- I have been discouraged by teachers from participating in class discussions at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have been discouraged by students from participating in class discussions at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have been singled out by a teacher in class and treated differently than other students at the Harvard Dance Center

As with analysis of the Belonging Instrument, responses were recorded on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (“Strongly agree”) to 5 (“Strongly disagree”), and were averaged across the eight items to create a Climate Perception Score for each respondent. Because question items in the Campus Climate Instrument are framed negatively, agreement with an item indicates a negative experience. Accordingly, responses to the Campus Climate Instrument were reverse scored such that disagreement with an item is associated with a higher (and more positive) score. The Climate Perception Scores can be interpreted as follows.

- 1 to 1.99. On average selected “Strongly agree” or “Agree” across the eight items
- 2 to 2.99. On average selected “Agree” or “Neither agree nor disagree” across the eight items
- 3 to 3.99. On average selected “Neither agree nor disagree” or “Disagree” across the eight items
- 4 to 5. On average selected “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree” across the eight items

⁸ Cabrera, Alberto F., and Amaury Nora. "College students' perceptions of prejudice and discrimination and their feelings of alienation: A construct validation approach." *The Review of Education/Pedagogy/Cultural Studies* 16.3-4 (1994): 387-409.

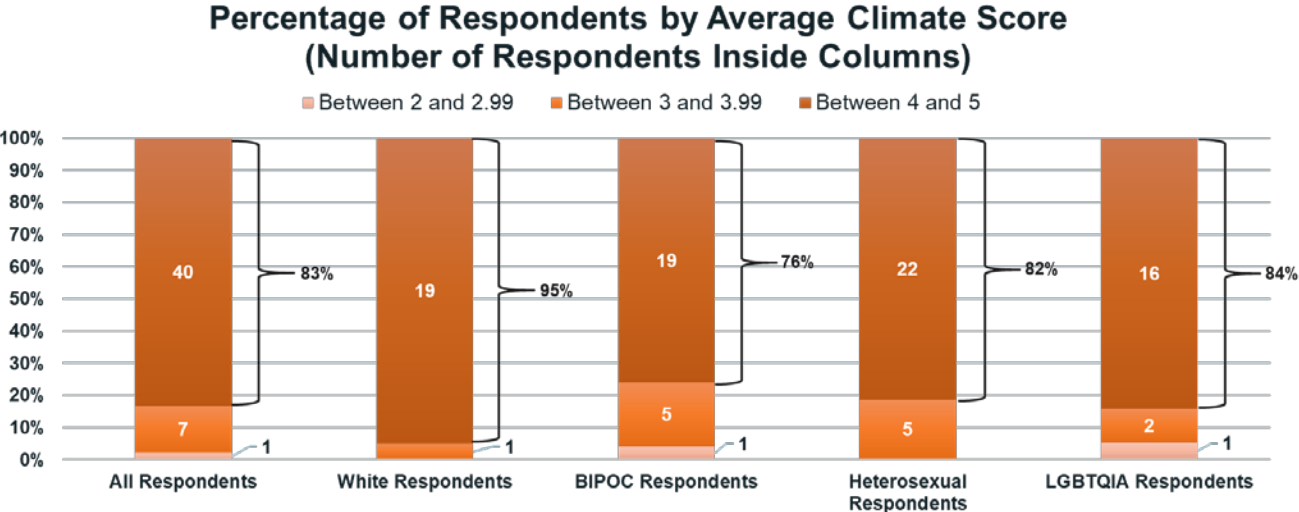
Table 2 details descriptive statistics on the Climate Perception Scores across respondents. As with the belonging assessment, respondents generally perceived a positive climate at HDC, with greater than 80% of all respondents reporting highly positive perceptions of HDC’s campus climate, or Climate Scores between 4 and 5. See Diagram 2 for the percentage and number of respondents by Climate Perception Score range.

While respondents of all backgrounds on average reported that they perceive HDC’s climate positively, there was a gap between White and BIPOC respondents, with 95% of White respondents perceiving HDC’s climate very positively (Climate Perception Scores between 4 and 5) as compared to 76% of BIPOC respondents. This gap is not unexpected given the race-specific nature of several of the items, and the fact that HDC, like many other high-status organizations, is embedded in broader societal and institutional structures in which BIPOC communities have historically been marginalized. Accordingly, we present this finding to highlight that there is opportunity for HDC to close the gap in climate perceptions between White and BIPOC community members in the years to come.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics: Perceptions of the HDC Climate

	All Respondents	White Respondents	BIPOC Respondents	Heterosexual Respondents	LGBTQIA Respondents
Count	48	20	25	27	19
Mean	4.43	4.56	4.35	4.45	4.42
Min	2.63	3.63	2.63	3.63	2.63
Median	4.56	4.69	4.50	4.50	4.63
Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Diagram 2. Percentage and Number of Respondents by Perceptions of HDC Climate



Analysis of mean scores by the two instrument sub-categories—Racial and Ethnic Climate, and In-Class Experience—revealed that respondents across groups perceive the classroom experience slightly more positively than the racial and ethnic climate, with mean scores from each group being higher for In-Class Experience items than Racial and Ethnic Climate items. See Table 3 for mean climate scores by instrument sub-categories.

Table 3. Perceptions of the HDC Climate: Means by Instrument Sub-Categories

	All Respondents	White Respondents	BIPOC Respondents	Heterosexual Respondents	LGBTQIA Respondents
Count	48	20	25	27	19
Racial and Ethnic Climate Mean Score	4.40	4.51	4.31	4.42	4.40
In-Class Experience Mean Score	4.49	4.65	4.41	4.49	4.46

IV. QUALITATIVE DATA ASSESSMENT

Twenty of the 58 total survey respondents provided comments via an open-ended response question. Each comment presented in Tables 4 (positive feedback for HDC) and 5 (constructive feedback for HDC) fits into a broader theme that was inductively identified by EBDI.

Some comments provided by respondents are not included in Tables 4 and 5 for one of two reasons. First, several respondents used the comment section to acknowledge that they hold one or more dominant social identities (e.g., White racial identity) and that they have not experienced or noticed biased, prejudiced or discriminatory behavior at HDC potentially because of these identities. These comments were appreciated and provided ancillary data for us to consider, but did not provide additional insight about potential challenges or pain points about which HDC should be aware in its efforts to foster an equitable and inclusive environment. Accordingly, these comments are not included in this report.

Second, two comments included potentially identifiable information about the respondents, and could not be redacted without removing the core meaning of the comments. These particular comments were constructive, and we shared relevant themes from them privately with HDC staff to preserve the anonymity of the survey respondents.

Table 4 details quotations that are illustrative of two areas of positive feedback respondents had for HDC:

1. Experiences of inclusion and safety at HDC
2. Expressions of appreciation for HDC's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts

Table 5 details three areas of constructive feedback that respondents had for HDC:

1. Perceptions that non-Harvard College community members are not fully included in the HDC community
2. Comments about age as a dimension of diversity that deserves attention
3. Concerns about the extent to which the HDC community is inclusive

The comments presented in Tables 4 and 5 do not necessarily reflect broader themes for how people generally experience HDC. Rather, they should be considered in the context of the quantitative indicators relating to belonging, inclusion, and campus climate at HDC that are presented in the preceding sections. Accordingly, survey respondents' comments—particularly those that are constructive—should be taken as indicators for areas on which HDC can further explore and potentially address as it works to further cultivate equitable and inclusive excellence.

In their totality, the constructive feedback suggests that HDC should focus its efforts on two areas. First, HDC should clarify the programs and opportunities to which different communities—be they Harvard students, Harvard graduate students, Harvard faculty and staff, or non-Harvard affiliated communities—have access. Second, given the range of age groups that HDC serves, additional attention should be paid to age diversity as HDC continues its equity and inclusion efforts.

Table 4. Positive Feedback from Respondents

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
<p>Experiences of inclusion and safety at HDC</p>	<p>I feel the Dance Center makes a concerted effort to make sure everyone feels safe and knows what to do if they don't feel safe.</p> <hr/> <p>I appreciated my time at the Dance Center as a member of a recreational dance group in College. Thank you for making it a space where all students are welcome.</p> <hr/> <p>I am [in my forties] ...I am greatly appreciative of the fact that these classes are made available to staff, and that faculty and instructors have treated me as a full-fledged member of this community, worthy of feedback and coaching, even though I am usually twice the age of many members of the class.</p> <hr/> <p>As a man taking ballet classes, I was concerned that people might question why I was there. I never ran into any issues with that, and I always felt that I was treated like any other student. I appreciated that, and I hope to continue taking classes at the Harvard Dance Center once it is safe to do so.</p>
<p>Expressions of appreciation for HDC's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts</p>	<p>I appreciate the way [FACULTY MEMBER] seeks to acknowledge systemic racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and homophobia. I really see [THEIR] effort in trying to have the Dance Center be a home for all.</p> <hr/> <p>I've appreciated the HDC for its many workshops led by Black teachers - my faves: [NAME] and [NAME].</p> <hr/> <p>I am an MIT community member that leverages the Harvard Dance Center. I know I am likely not the target audience for most things at the Center, but I think the experience(s) of non-Harvard students who utilize the Center should also be noted. Thank you for continuing to extend classes to the community! They remain one of the most affordable and high-quality opportunities for dance in the area!</p> <hr/> <p>I've had such beautifully positive experiences at that HDC!</p> <hr/> <p>I have only taken non-credit classes through the center for the last 3 years, and master-classes. My experience with both the exquisite teachers and staff has been an oasis and a gift. Thank you.</p> <hr/> <p>I love HDC.</p>

So happy I found the Harvard Dance Center.

[STAFF MEMBER] has been a really fantastic staff member for me and so many others, to make us feel included. I want to give [THEM] some praise!

Table 5. Constructive Feedback from Respondents

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
<p>Perceptions that non-Harvard College community members are not fully included in the HDC community</p>	<p>I get the impression that HDC sees itself as a center of dance in the broader Cambridge community. However non-student dancers are often treated as second-class citizens, despite the "open invitation" that they've been extended (e.g., non-credit courses, open master classes). It seems like the number of non-students in the dance center has greatly decreased in the past two to three years, and my attempts at trying to get folks to return is usually met with variations of "aren't the classes only for [Harvard] students?").</p> <p>I had a friend who I dance with at other Cambridge studios, who worked [at Harvard], and she was always upset at her inability to access [HDC] classes. Because [some Harvard employees] are not direct employees of Harvard, she was told she was not eligible to register for these classes and was essentially not defined as part of the "Harvard Community." I know these classes are open even to students and faculty of other universities around the city, so I was very disappointed that she was not allowed to access these classes.</p>
<p>Comments about age as a dimension of diversity that deserves attention</p>	<p>I recommend to include age in the category of who to include. Unfortunately, people define others (including perceived ability) by how old they think others are and treat them accordingly. Inclusion should be based on more than race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender. It should include all people regardless of anything and any way people are categorized.</p>
<p>Concerns about the extent to which the HDC community is inclusive</p>	<p>I have no sense of ownership at Harvard Dance Center at all. I have never been treated in a way I would view as racist or prejudiced, but I also feel like if I were absent or missing, no one would notice or care. It's a very come-and-go kind of space for me. (Not a dance major, a grad student taking occasional classes).</p> <p>Most of the problematic things that happen at the Dance Center are entirely attributable to the students and are often beyond the control/purview [of] Dance Center teachers and staff.</p>

V. FACULTY, STAFF, ALUMNI AND DANCE EDUCATOR PERSPECTIVES

In addition to understanding how HDC community members who take for-credit and not-for-credit courses experience HDC, we wanted to understand how HDC faculty and staff, as well as non-Harvard based dance educators in the HDC community currently experience HDC, and how alumni previously experienced the HDC community.⁹ We put participants from these groups in conversation with one another to foster constructive dialogue about pain points that students and members of the HDC community might be experiencing, with the expectation that alumni would be less encumbered than current students to provide constructive feedback or criticism in conversation given student-faculty and student-staff power dynamics. Participants in the focus groups and interview included five women and two men. Five of the seven participants identified as BIPOC.

We spoke with six of the seven participants in focus group format (one group of four, and one group of two), and spoke with the seventh via individual interview. Each of the conversations was recorded via Zoom, and the audio was later transcribed for analysis by EBDI. Appendix 3 details the questions that we asked participants in the focus group and interview. Focus groups and interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner; rather than following the order of the prepared questions, we probed for deeper insights and richer data by asking unscripted follow-up questions and asking questions based on the flow of conversation, rather than the pre-prescribed order of our question guide.

Table 6 details the three themes that EBDI inductively identified from the focus group and interview data. The themes represent insights that were consistently shared across the focus groups and interview:

1. Participants believe that outreach and communication to groups who may not perceive themselves as being core to HDC—Cambridge-Boston community members, and students of color—could be improved
2. Participants perceive that there are some divisions in the HDC community that can create inequitable access to HDC resources and space
3. Participants perceive HDC as a safe space that values diversity, equity and inclusion

⁹ One of the faculty members with whom we spoke is a faculty member at another school of performing arts in the Boston area who regularly participates in HDC programming.

Table 6. Focus Group Themes

Theme	Illustrative Quotes
<p>Participants believe that outreach and communication to groups who may not perceive themselves as being core to HDC—Cambridge-Boston community members, and students of color—could be improved</p>	<p>“When I first got there, the Dance Center to me was for just Harvard College people. You know what I mean? It was just, if you weren't Harvard College, then you weren't allowed in the Dance Center. Obviously, once I got familiar with the space, I realized that that was not the case, but from the outside looking in, it felt like that's who it was for.” <p style="text-align: right;">-Dance Faculty (non-HDC)</p> <p>“I think [students of color] may look at the Dance Center as something as, ‘Oh, well, this is for trained dancers,’ or [think] it's the <i>Harvard</i> Dance Center. And, you know, obviously the dancers at Harvard <i>have</i> to be good...So, I think that kind of mindset may prevent students from actually [using] the Dance Center because some of them haven't even stepped foot in the Advanced Center because they don't know that they are welcome.” <p style="text-align: right;">—HDC Faculty/Staff</p> </p></p>
<p>Participants perceive that there are some divisions in the HDC community that can create inequitable access to HDC resources and space</p>	<p>“If you're doing Dance Center official programming, the scheduling and logistics and booking is all arranged for you. Whereas the student groups are kind of left to see what's available, and sometimes even my friends have expressed [that they] almost compete against each other for studio availability.” <p style="text-align: right;">—HDC Alumnus</p> <p>“I think there are a couple potential divisions or different groups of people [in] the Dance Center community...whether it's taking a for- credit course or a not- for-credit course, or whether you are physically dancing at the Dance Center with Dance Center programming, or whether you were physically dancing at the Dance Center location because you're in a student group, such as Expressions or the Modern Dance Company...Whether you're dancing in one of [the Dance Director's] programs, or whether you're in a group like Expressions or the Asian American Dance Troupe...[it varies if you] feel that HDC [is] the right place to be.” <p style="text-align: right;">—HDC Alumnus</p> </p></p>

Participants perceive HDC as a safe space that values diversity, equity and inclusion

“My experience at Harvard was that the Dance Center was a safe space for me. Leaving there and not feeling that connection felt kind of like a loss... [HDC] was a safe space for being. I literally would go to just, you know, sit in the office or come to a class. And even if I wasn't in class, I was always in the building.”

-HDC Alumnus

“When I first came to Harvard, it was a culture shock for me...when I came here, I felt very isolated. I don't think that I would have survived my time at Harvard without the Dance Center... I felt like when I picked up to move to Boston, I felt like I didn't have a sense of belonging. I didn't know where I would fit. And it was the Dance Center that said you are welcome here.”

-HDC Alumnus

“It's very warm and inviting here. [STAFF MEMBER'S] mannerisms and the way [they] treat people is generally nice...you don't get that type of person generally in institutions.”

—HDC Faculty/Staff

“I really appreciated the opportunity to study with teachers who weren't White. ...It was really important to me to be in a space that was not so much White.”

—Dance Faculty (non-HDC)

VI. CONCLUSION

Our preliminary assessment suggests that HDC has fostered a community in which people generally feel welcomed and included. While there are race-based gaps in the *extent* to which survey respondents perceive the HDC community positively, the totality of the data indicates the work before HDC is around fine-tuning existing structures and processes that support equity and inclusion and build on an already strong foundation.

To gain further clarity on community members' experiences and track the impact and efficacy of the DEIJ strategic priorities HDC has identified for the 2021-22 academic year, we recommend that HDC routinely conduct assessments via the annual distribution of an equity and inclusion survey, and the provision of meeting spaces to receive feedback from members of the HDC community throughout the academic year. To the extent that HDC proceeds in this manner, this report can serve as a baseline to assess HDC's progress as it continues its efforts to foster an equitable and inclusive community in the years to come.

In future assessments, it will be important to bolster participation to gain a more representative and comprehensive picture of community members' experiences, and to allow for the development of more precise conclusions that speak to the diversity of identities and experiences represented in the HDC community. The primary shortcoming of this assessment is the survey sample size is not large enough to disaggregate BIPOC community members' experiences into specific racial and ethnic identity groups, or in relation to other salient identity categories. Greater survey participation in the future will allow for disaggregation of data across racial and ethnic categories, as well as analyses that center community members' experiences at the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability and other forms of categorical difference. It is our hope that HDC's broader commitment to this work through the execution of the DEIJ strategic priorities identified for the 2021-22 academic year will shine light on HDC's equity and inclusion work, and inspire greater participation in data collection efforts in the future.

As HDC moves forward on its DEIJ journey, we also encourage continuation of the transparency that was exhibited in the development and finalization of this report. That HDC sought to hear the voices and perspectives of all of its community members, and approved the transparent reporting of data that were collected—even in cases in which the data were not flattering—is an indication that HDC is well on its way to achieving its DEIJ goals.

Lastly, the audacity with which HDC has engaged this work is commendable. It is our hope that this project be taken as a positive step not only for the HDC community, but the Harvard community at large as it works toward equitable and inclusive excellence.

APPENDIX 1. SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Belonging at the Harvard Dance Center¹⁰

Respondents answered the following questions on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale

- I am treated as a valued member of the Harvard Dance Center
- I belong in the Harvard Dance Center
- I am connected to the Harvard Dance Center
- When I am at the Dance Center, I believe that the Harvard Dance Center is where I am meant to be
- I feel that people really care about me in the Harvard Dance Center

Climate Perceptions at the Harvard Dance Center¹¹

Respondents answered the following questions on a 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) scale (reverse scored)

- I have observed discriminatory words, behaviors or gestures from students directed at minority students at the Harvard Dance Center
- I feel there is a general atmosphere of prejudice among students at the Harvard Dance Center
- I feel there is a general atmosphere of prejudice among teachers at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have encountered racism while engaging the Harvard Dance Center
- I have heard negative words about people of my own race or ethnicity while attending classes at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have been discouraged by teachers from participating in class discussions at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have been discouraged by students from participating in class discussions at the Harvard Dance Center
- I have been singled out by a teacher in class and treated differently than other students at the Harvard Dance Center

¹⁰ Adapted from Chung, Beth G., et al. "Work group inclusion: Test of a scale and model." *Group & Organization Management* 45.1 (2020): 75-102; and Hurtado, Sylvia, and Deborah Faye Carter. "Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging." *Sociology of education* (1997): 324-345.

¹¹ Adapted from Cabrera, Alberto F., and Amaury Nora. "College students' perceptions of prejudice and discrimination and their feelings of alienation: A construct validation approach." *The Review of Education/Pedagogy/Cultural Studies* 16.3-4 (1994): 387-409.

APPENDIX 2. FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- How do / did you experience your time at the Harvard Dance Center?
- What is / was your experience in relation to equity and inclusion at the Dance Center?
- How would you describe the Dance Center's culture? How would you describe your overall experience as a part of this culture?
- What specific elements of the Dance Center's culture make it a welcoming environment?
- Are there elements of the Dance Center's culture that make it unwelcoming? What are these elements?
- What would you do to make the Dance Center's culture (even) more equitable and inclusive?

APPENDIX 3. CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHIES

Ahmmad Brown

EBDI Consulting, Executive Director and Co-Founder



Ahmmad Brown is a diversity, equity, inclusion and justice (DEIJ) practitioner with a background in social sector consulting and higher education administration. Ahmmad's accomplishments in the DEIJ space include leading a team of senior administrators and faculty at a private college to develop a sociocultural pre-orientation program for Black students, and serving as the Diversity Recruitment Director at Williams College, where he led institutional efforts for the recruitment of first-generation, low-income and student of color populations.

In addition to his work at EBDI, Ahmmad is a Senior Advisor at Working IDEAL, a nationally-recognized DEIJ consultancy. Ahmmad is also currently completing his doctoral studies in Organizational Behavior at Harvard University. Ahmmad holds an M.B.A. and M.A in Education from Stanford University, an M.A. in Sociology from Harvard University, and a B.A. in Sociology & Anthropology and Japanese from Swarthmore College.

Jéssica Oliveira

EBDI Consulting, Director of Dialogues and Co-Founder



Jéssica Oliveira is a queer mixed-race writer, community organizer, and educator. In addition to her work at EBDI, she is an Education and Empowerment Organizer at the Matahari Women's Worker's Center in Boston, MA. Jéssica is also a 2019 Gish Jen Fellow at the Writers' Room of Boston and a 2018 Grub Street Emerging Writer Fellow, whose work has been published in *GRLSQUASH* and *Boston Indicators*. Currently, she sits on the board of the Boston Immigrant Writers' Salon.

Previously, Jéssica worked at the Bridgespan Group, where she provided administrative support to three top-level executives, oversaw special projects, and served as the Boston lead of the Black and Latinx employee resource group. Jéssica began her career as a Teach for America corps member, and received a BA in International Relations from Brigham Young University in Idaho.