

April 30, 2023

To the Huskey Health and Well Being Seed Grant Selection Committee:

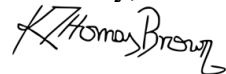
I am writing this letter to support the College of Engineering's application for a Huskey Health and Well Being Seed Grant to support the college's commitment to shifting the culture to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. By creating the Office of Inclusive Excellence (OIE), the college piloted the departmental Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer role (DEIO). The first department to sign on to this DEIO model is Mechanical Engineering (ME). During the first year on the job, the DEIO for ME hosted monthly Community Conversations on diversity-related topics to educate faculty, staff, and students on issues and open dialogue at a local level. This activity is meant to grow a psychologically safe educational environment in the college that will foster diverse voices and perspectives. Operating under the principle that engineering for social and public good means recognizing problems in the world with both engineering causes and solutions and that diverse teams amplify innovation.

I support the proposal by the team, which is attempting to expand the community conversations across the college by cataloging and recording them for use in local forums with discussion questions that other DEIOs could facilitate as the model is adopted in more departments in the college. Finally, this project is data-driven as there is an evaluation system set up to analyze the impact of the conversations of members of the college's perceptions and actions around inclusion. This is based on the college climate survey conducted in 2021 that used the Intercultural Development Inventory approach's psychometric measure to track DEI mindsets and actions around inclusion in an institutional setting.

This body of work aligns with several of the objectives of the Resilience and Compassion Seed Grant. These include:

1. foster connectedness, belonging, and community.
2. embrace both commonalities and diversity within the human experience.
3. cultivate kindness, compassion, and gratitude toward each other and ourselves.
4. spark dialogue about environmental and social issues that have a disproportionately negative impact on communities of color.
5. provide opportunities for project-based and applied learning for the UW community.

Sincerely,



Karen Thomas-Brown, PHD
Associate Dean, Diversity Equity and Inclusion
Affiliate Professor of Human-Centered Design & Engineering
College of Engineering