

## UVA Spokesman Comments/ OpenTheBooks Answers

Adam Andrzejewski [REDACTED] >

Thu 3/21/2024 4:15 PM

To: [REDACTED] >

Cc: Adam Andrzejewski [REDACTED]

**READ:** Our OpenTheBooks responses are interfiled within the university spokesman comments regarding our DEI reporting at UVA. Please see below...

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**From:** Coy, Brian T. (btc6r) [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 2:16 PM

**To:** Rachel O'Brien [REDACTED] >

**Subject:** Re: Request for comment

Hi, Rachel,

Thanks for reaching out. In case it's useful, I've included some additional information about concerns with the report.

The question regarding how to consider Martin Davidson has a much smaller impact on your report's findings than what I've provided below, but I don't see anything in your notes that disputes the point that a) his primary role at the University is that of a tenured professor and the Director of a center and b) your original analysis ignores that point completely.

**OUR ANSWER: Our analysis used his exact title as provided by the University. Adding Davidson's position as a tenured professor – as you now admit – does not make a material difference. As a professor, he teaches DEI classes. The sum of his activities earned him the UVA's 2014 "DEI Leadership of the Year Award."**

I think it's useful to note the definition your report uses for DEI positions, which is to "assist and monitor all units of the University in their efforts to recruit and retain faculty, staff, and student from historically underrepresented groups and to provide affirmative and supportive environments for work and life..."

**OUR ANSWER: It is not our definition. It is the University's stated DEI mission.**

Regardless of the issues you may take with the nature of his scholarship or the skills he brings to his work, the work of a full-time professor or center director is different in nature than what is described above.

**OUR ANSWER: The University's Racial Equity Task Force report, as approved September 11, 2020, by the Board of Visitors, embeds DEI in every aspect of the school. Professor Davidson is a good example. The Board adopted the policy. The school implemented the policy. Taxpayer support is indivisible. Now at least they**

## know what they are supporting.

Beyond that point, here are a couple of notes about omissions/misclassifications that have a much greater impact on the findings you reached. I'm sorry we didn't have the opportunity to discuss these before you published your findings, but I'd be happy to discuss further going forward if it's useful.

**OUR ANSWER: The University has not replied to our comment requests until now. The University has represented 55 DEI staffers for \$5.8 million in student and taxpayer cost. Please forward its database of those employees, positions, and titles. It was never provided. Thank you.**

**After a decade of oversight work and literally hundreds of thousands of FOIAs, it will come as no surprise that our antennae go up when public entities fail to engage, throw stones at our reporting, and then practice opacity.**

- *More than 100 of the positions identified by this faulty report are for student workers, the majority of whom serve as tutors in primarily K-12 educational settings as part of a broadly available educational opportunity program.*

***OUR RESPONSE: We identified 82 students in the database the University provided. These students work in the 'diversity, equity, and inclusion departments' at UVA. Thank you for the clarity on their job function. Now, stakeholders can debate the merits.***

- *More than 20 of the positions identified are community counselors for a college/career readiness program that is supporting educational opportunity to a broad range of individuals.*

***OUR RESPONSE: Again, the University identifies these staffers as employed in its diversity, equity, and inclusion departments. You have provided clarity on their job function. Now, stakeholders can debate the merits.***

- *While those positions should not be classified as DEI positions at all under the definition you use above, the report also takes hourly, part-time, often seasonal workers and treats them as full-time, year-round employees. This results in a dramatic overstatement of how much these students are actually paid for their work.*

### ***OUR REPOSES:***

***1. The University lists these employees in diversity, equity, and inclusion departments. We count them as employees of those departments.***

***2. The University itself produced the annual pay figures for the hourly, part-time, etc., employees we used. The pay figures are not estimates. UVA produced the amounts listed as "what was actually paid." How could such be "inflated"?***

*The database assembled by OTB includes many positions that exist to oversee*

University compliance with federal law (Ex: the Equal Opportunity and Civil rights office), as well as practicing healthcare providers, licensed counselors, an finance professionals that perform work as part of a state mandated/regulated program of supplier diversity.

**OUR RESPONSE:** Allow us to note the question-begging. To the Virginia taxpayer, DEI is DEI whether it comes from U.S. DoE or Richmond or by your Board of Visitors. Our point is to make the entire activity visible as a constituent part of your \$1 billion program. Now, all stakeholders can debate the merits of each program within the context of your billion-dollar DEI appropriation. We seek to provide a complete – and contextual -- picture.

—  
Brian Coy

University Spokesperson

E [REDACTED]  
P [REDACTED]

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**From:** Rachel O'Brien [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 10:06 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Coy, Brian T. (btc6r) <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Request for comment

Hello Mr. Davidson - I'm reaching out because we're doing an article about the 2023 UVA payroll showing 235 DEI-related positions and UVA stating there are only 55 such positions.

The article will appear on our website [OpenTheBooks.com](https://OpenTheBooks.com), and our Substack page.

This section pertains specifically to you as the highest paid and top DEI official at UVA:

*In the national media, Brian Coy said that some positions we highlighted at UVA are somehow not entirely DEI, so their salary shouldn't be included.*

*'The study seems to count individuals who have full-time positions in non-DEI posts and counts them as full time DEI staffers.'*

*-Brian Coy spokesman for UVA [to the DailyMail.com](https://www.dailymail.com).*

*Martin Davidson, senior associate dean & global chief diversity officer, for example, leads DEI efforts but is*

*also a regular professor, Coy said.*

*However, Davidson is a perfect example of just how deeply imbedded DEI is in every facet of the university and how it's impossible to separate the man from his pay.*

*The top paid Davidson (\$452,000, estimated \$580,000 with benefits) titularly holds three positions: senior associate dean and global chief diversity officer at the prestigious Darden School of Business, a tenured professor, and acting executive director of the Contemplative Sciences Center at UVA.*

- *As Senior Associate Dean and Global Chief Diversity Officer at the Darden School of Business, Davidson leads the effort across every facet of the business school.*
- *As the Johnson & Higgins Professor of Business Administration, his “thought leadership has changed how many executives approach inclusion, diversity and equity in their organizations.” Davidson [even teaches a class](#) (GBUS8706) titled after his book – a book on using DEI to leverage differences in organizations.*
- *As interim executive director of the Contemplative Sciences Center at UVA, Davidson [admits the position utilizes](#) his skills in “cultural diversity,” “culture change,” and “organizational design.”*
- *Despite making more than the U.S. president, the university excepted Davidson from ethics policies and allowed him to keep a second job – that of a DEI-premised consultant at his own firm. His [clients include](#) the World Health Organization (WHO), Walt Disney and others.*
- *UVA sells Davidson’s book(s) on DEI in the university bookstore and has provided many platforms for Davidson to speak about his book(s) and promote them. His next book, also promoted on UVA websites, is titled, “Embrace the Weird.”*
- *Davidson [advocated on behalf of the fired Harvard president](#), Claudine Gay, and supported her on his social media pages while battling detractors.*

*Davidson is not accused of any wrongdoing. UVA has promoted him in large part because of his DEI scholarship. First hired nearly 26 years ago, he is a prestigious professor at UVA having won the ‘DEI Leadership of the Year Award’ at UVA in 2014 – as a professor.*

Please let us know if anything in the italicized section is incorrect and if you have any additional comment.

We're posting the article at 3 pm ET.

If you miss our deadline, we will do our best to update the piece when you respond.

Any context, feedback, or comment would be important to our readers.

Best,  
Rachel

**Rachel O'Brien**  
Deputy Public Policy Editor  
[OpenTheBooks.com](http://OpenTheBooks.com)

