

## Student Recruitment Subcommittee Proposal

### Subcommittee Members:

- Airian Williams
- Brent Parrish
- Cecilia Yudin
- Faetitia Desamours
- Jasmine Mijares
- Jean-Claude Joseph
- Jeff Allen
- Josué Pedroza
- Maya Howe

**Overview and Theory of Change:** In an effort to attract and retain a more diverse student body, the student experience is an essential element to target. The more valued students feel over the course of their Questrom journey, the more likely they are to excel academically, socially and emotionally, graduate, and ultimately serve as informal ambassadors for Questrom within their peer groups. To create a community in which students feel valued, the work of showing care, building trust, and demonstrating investment begins before applications are submitted and continues beyond graduation. Furthermore, this is not the responsibility of one person, but the responsibility of an entire Office, Team, and the School. Allyship is a verb - not a noun - and the work to attract and retain a more diverse student body requires the involvement of non-BIPOC members of Questrom to contribute to the work.

Our proposals fall into 2 major categories: *external*, which targets prospective students and external organizations, as well as *internal*, which targets the experience of enrolled students. We've included a high-level overview of our proposals in the table below. Each proposal is then outlined in more detail in the remainder of the document. We've chosen to utilize the term underrepresented minority (URM) to describe the students this work should target. URMs, according to our operating definition, are students whose identities are contextualized within some system of oppression and make up a disproportionately small percentage of the student body when compared to the general population. Each recommendation may identify more specific target groups within the URM umbrella, but we believe establishing a shared understanding of the communities this work must support is key to its success.

<b>External:</b> Eliminate barriers to entry, cultivate meaningful relationships, and build an enriching and supportive ecosystem through partnerships	<b>Internal:</b> Equip students with relatable mentors, make space to honor & celebrate their unique journeys, and empower them to make change
<u><i>Adapt Outreach &amp; Application:</i></u> Make marketing materials more accessible and eliminate other deterrents for URM applicants.	<u><i>Evolve Mentorship Program:</i></u> Provide informal support and unlock potential by pairing students with mentors they identify with
<u><i>Intentional Recruitment:</i></u> Engage with URM candidates early and often to show investment and connect them with community	<u><i>Legacy Events:</i></u> Invest in events and traditions that validate the URM experience and extend linkages among its many communities
<u><i>Partnerships:</i></u> Increase involvement at national conferences	<u><i>Town Halls:</i></u> Elevate URM voices and empower them to shape their experience with BU support

**External: SY 21-22 Goals**

**Diverse & Inclusive Recruitment Materials & Virtual Events**

**Recommendation:** *Developing culturally sensitive, diverse marketing and recruitment materials are needed to attract and retain a more diverse student body. Currently we are in dire need of Spanish and Chinese materials. We must also ensure that appropriate levels of accessibility are offered at all events, including, but not limited to, closed captioning.*

- These materials must also be culturally sensitive and professionally translated to give the proper cultural context to the audience it is trying to attract.
- While developing and printing marketing for recruitment, lots should be allocated to be printed in multiple languages. The cost, if done correctly, is minimal as it should only be a translation and black plate change.

**Integration & Utilization of myQuestrom Orgs in Grad Admissions Efforts**

**Recommendation:** *Ensure myQuestrom student organizations are invited to collaborate on and participate in admissions events. Doing so can introduce prospective students to supportive communities early in their Questrom journey while marketing each club’s efforts as well.*

- The admissions team and myQuestrom orgs (GSAD, ABC, LAMBA, WMBAA, Cohort Q) can work together to decide on the best timing and frequency of student engagement considering program admissions cycles among other factors.
- Grad admissions is the best entity to drive this work forward and should perform the initial outreach to student groups with support from Grad Assistants in the Center for DEI who can facilitate relationships.

## **Intentional Yield and Recruitment Events for Accepted URM Students**

**Recommendation:** *Students who are underrepresented at Questrom have unique needs and questions about the support and community available to them. Questrom can offer intentional yield and recruitment events to provide accepted URM students multiple touchpoints with current Questrom community members to ask those questions, get to know the Questrom community, and reaffirm Questrom is a place which will care for and value diverse identities.*

- Already launched in SP21, the following events have successfully provided multiple opportunities for prospective URM students to speak with current URM members of the Questrom community:
  - Undergraduate
    - Zoom Session for URM EDs
    - MCW Ascend Event
    - MCW Faculty Open Office Hours
    - Welcome URM Reception from Dean during Open House
  - Graduate
    - MyQuestrom Organizations Kickback for URM Accepted Students
- Necessary stakeholders to be involved include Office of the Dean, Graduate Admissions Office, MBA Center, Undergraduate Development Center, BU Central Office of Admissions, and Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

## **Undergraduate “Business School for a Day”**

**Recommendation:** *Develop a pipeline program for high school students to explore what business school entails and Questrom as a potential fit through a “Business School for a Day” program. Held annually late September – early October, this program would target high school sophomores and juniors, and provide an overview of introductory business topics, the various concentrations and tracks available in a business degree, and opportunity for engagement with current students, faculty, and staff at Questrom.*

- URM Fly-In programs traditionally have the highest yield at BU for acceptance and matriculation. Many peer institutions - including USC and Wharton - currently offer a similar event.
- Necessary stakeholders include the Center for DEI in collaboration with BU Central Admissions, UDC, and Feld Center for Industry Relations
- Next-step efforts can be made to attract graduate students, as Harvard, Ross (Michigan) host MBA for a Day programs.
- Long-Term goal can be the development of an introductory program for undergraduate students to learn about business research at the doctoral level, similar to Wharton’s [IDDEAS](#) initiative which “seeks to attract a diverse group of promising undergraduate students and introduce them to business research at the doctoral level” with the goal of supporting and encouraging student and faculty diversity.

### **Non-BIPOC Faculty and Staff Participate in the Admissions Process**

**Recommendation:** *The encouragement and development of non-BIPOC faculty and staff who understand the importance of DEI within admissions and are willing to help should be recruited. In the past, this work has been carried forward by only a few people for various reasons. To alleviate the workload on current advocates doing the work, we must involve more non-BIPOC faculty and staff who approach this work through a DEI lens through volunteering and/or formal appointments.*

- These advocates should be trained to understand the admissions process as it pertains to URMs. This training or structure will allow for continuity which will not be disrupted by turnover of faculty and staff. The results of the Faculty & Staff Training Subcommittee can inform how to move forward with this recommendation.

### **Expand Inclusive Admissions Criteria**

**Recommendation:** *Formally implement test-optional policy for all graduate admissions to expand access for prospective students. This gives us the opportunity to bring people to Questrom who will add value to our community that we may not have had the opportunity to meet otherwise.*

- We believe Grad Admissions with Specialized Masters, MBA, and PhD Faculty Directors would be involved in this work.
- Long-term goal could be to unpack the profile of the “ideal” Questrom candidate and modify aspects that undercut diversity, inclusion, or equity.

### **Pipeline for Questrom BBSA to Questrom Graduate Degrees**

**Recommendation:** *Create a streamlined process for undergraduate BBSA students to pursue an MBA, specialty Masters, or PhD. Targeting Questrom undergraduate students gives us the opportunity to build a more diverse applicant pipeline for the graduate programs and possibly convert students at a higher rate given their familiarity with Questrom.*

- The initiative would focus on students in their junior and senior year although programming can be open to all Questrom undergrads.
- Grad Admissions and the UDC are well-positioned to carry this work forward.

### **Intentional URM Scholarships**

**Recommendation:** *The high cost of attending Boston University and living in Greater Boston continues to be a barrier to attracting and retaining URM students. Understanding that equitable practices are necessary to advance diversity and inclusion at Questrom, the School can begin to offer intentional scholarships to recruit and retain students whose gender, race, ethnic, cultural, and/or national background contribute to the diversity of the student body and who have a demonstrated financial need.*

- Peer institutions that currently offer intentional scholarships for URM candidates include:

- NYU Stern
  - [Lenore Stern Memorial Educational Equity Scholarship](#): “...to students... whose gender, ethnic, cultural, and/or national background contribute to the diversity of the College’s student body.”
- Indiana University Kelley School of Business
  - [William R. Fry Scholars Program](#) – offered by the Kelley Office of Diversity
  - [Conrad Prebys Scholars](#) - “Preference [is] given to students who are traditionally underrepresented in the field of business.”
- [UC Berkeley Hass School of Business](#)
  - Galloway MBA Fellowship - “...for children of immigrants.”
  - Torres Family Fellowship - “...for MBA students with demonstrated leadership and commitment to diversity.”
  - Tirado Fellowship - “...for students who have proven their ability to promote diversity.”
  - Song Feiqing Fellowship: “For high-achieving, full-time MBA students who represent the international community, preferably China, and who intend to pursue business opportunities either in China, or in other parts of Southeast Asia, after graduation.”
  - Center for Equity, Gender & Leadership Fellowship: “Two-year fellowship for students who best demonstrate their commitment to diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces...”
- [UPenn Wharton School of Business](#)
  - [Howard E. Mitchell Fellowship](#): “Specifically designed to attract the best MBA candidates to Wharton [...] with a preference for underrepresented groups (African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics and women.”
  - Forte Fellowships: “... awarded each year to outstanding female students who demonstrate exemplary leadership...”
  - Prism Fellowship: “... awarded to one student who is a member of and demonstrates leadership in support of the LGBTQIA community.”
- [Michigan Ross School of Business](#)
  - Forte Fellowships: “... for women MBA applicants who demonstrate exemplary leadership...”
  - Toigo Fellowship: “... to MBA students from underrepresented backgrounds who are interested in pursuing a career in finance.”

### **Increase Questrom’s Involvement with Existing Partnerships in National Conferences**

**Recommendation:** *Expand Questrom’s current engagement in existing national conference partnerships - National Black MBA Association, ROMBA, PROSPANICA - as conference sponsors, tabling during expos, and hosting social events for alumni/current students in attendance. These annual efforts will not only increase visibility of Questrom on a larger platform, but provide intentional networking opportunities for current students, alumni engagement, and corporate partnerships.*

- Recommended stakeholders include Grad Admissions and Feld Center for Industry Relations, in collaboration with Center for DEI to identify appropriate staffing.

- Expected costs for increased engagement in a national conference, as based on previous ROMBA efforts:
  - Staff Attending event \$700-\$1000
  - Social Event held after an event \$500-\$1000
  - Branding at Event \$500-\$1000

## **Internal: SY 21-22 Goals**

### **Town Hall**

**Recommendation:** *Questrom Student Government, in partnership with representatives from each myQuestrom affinity group, will host town hall events to serve as opportunities for students from all backgrounds to voice concerns around DEI issues.*

- All students within Questrom are welcome to attend, but it will be focused primarily on DEI aspects of Questrom. Consideration would be given to best honor each identity in the room while reinforcing the myQuestrom mantra of being connected by difference by having representatives from each myQuestrom group involved as Town Hall Moderators.
- Faculty and staff are welcome to attend these town hall meetings with the understanding that their presence at these events is simply to listen to the concerns of the students. Our observations from previous town hall events that have been held by the greater BU community (i.e. the UMOJA Town Hall) are that students perceive faculty and staff speaking at these events as diminishing and minimizing the concerns of the students.
- This event can take place, regardless of format, once a month at most and at minimum twice a semester. Regardless of in person or virtual, the event can take place on the second Thursday of each month as an example.
- If the event is held in person, then it would be held in the Questrom Auditorium. If held remotely, then the Zoom Webinar format would be used.

### **Build Toward Multi-Cultural Mentorship Program**

**Recommendation:** *Build on existing mentorship programs to provide a support network of leaders and allies - both external to and within the University environment - by bringing together students, faculty and administrators of color, because as it stands today BIPOC students don't know where to find and access mentors of color.*

- The goal will be to implement a multipronged approach that creates a resource of tools and feedback facilitators that are readily available to help students of color. These are the areas this program will address:
  - Increase professional networks: Form cohorts of students of color at the beginning of their career at the university. Each cohort will form a natural network of similar students who will be able to discuss their experiences and seek guidance from others at the institutions (this effort can be coordinated with other campus wide efforts).
  - Leadership skills: Pair each mentee with a mentor workgroup who they will be able to share their successes and challenges. Assist in issues around onboarding at new

organizations and how to be viewed as a team leader and/or contributor who is irreplaceable to the organization's leadership.

- Navigating Cultural Dynamics in the Workplace: From the unspoken rules to the subtle cultural cues, to understanding how to balance the tension between maintaining one's own cultural identity and pressure to conform to societal norms, there are a multitude of challenges unique to minorities that are not being met or addressed in traditional mentoring programs. We will explore these issues and the greater context of organizational/human behavioral science.
- Quarterly seminars: led by cultural and diversity experts that provide toolkits and real-world training skills about how to handle micro-aggressions, feedback on shaping your workspace for inclusion, networking, overcoming the Leaky Pipeline and succeeding in the institution will be provided. Additionally, a consequence of the heightened awareness of racism is increased discussion on what had previously been considered a "sensitive" topic. Students are placed in positions of discomfort in navigating these discussions and sometimes offensive perspectives. There is increased need for education on how to respond in the moment and have difficult conversations as they arise, both in the classrooms and the workplace.
- To be clear this is not about matching based on skin color. Rather, it's about pairing students with mentors who can offer relevant insights and support borne out of shared experience.
- MCMP is working towards a full launch Fall 2021. In the meantime, contingent on interest we will begin a summer pilot for a limited number of students. We will begin initial outreach through GSAD and LAMBA as the established infrastructure exists. Due to the lack of affinity groups for other diverse groups, the D.E.I office will need to assist with wider outreach communications. Furthermore, we would like to work with the UDC to integrate this initiative into existing structures and processes within the mentorship program.

### **Legacy Event**

**Recommendation:** *Launch a virtual diversity graduation ceremony in May 2021 and again in September 2021 to celebrate URM graduates from the Class of '20. In-person social event in addition to a scaled-up ceremony for May 2021 to create a lasting and impactful community celebration for Questrom's diverse students.*

- Significant milestones, rights-of-passage, and rituals play an outsized role in the memories of alumni when they reflect on their experiences at a university. In order to build a strong sense of community among our URM students, we recommend the creation of a "diversity" graduation event to be comprised of a staple, annual social event exclusively for students and a graduation ceremony and reception for students, their families, and diverse faculty and staff. The ceremony would include a meaningful tradition all diverse students that graduate from Questrom can share in, and later in their life, feel connected to and with other graduates. Whether it be a candle lighting ritual, or a gift given to graduates, a BU or Questrom-themed ceremony will honor students' journeys together in a meaningful way.
- Although the pandemic poses a challenge for implementation in 2021, we believe an opportunity still exists to highlight the positive experiences and accomplishments of diverse

students at Questrom by piloting the event in a virtual format. Over Zoom, Questrom administration, and with the support of student leaders, can affordably convene the ceremony for 2021 graduates this May and again in September for the Class of 2020 (as President Brown noted recently that a graduation event will be held), invite a notable alum or external speaker for each event, gather photos and accomplishments from students to show on a slideshow, and surprise graduates with a mailed gift that they can unbox together on the call (note: School of Law graduates are currently doing this this year), then allow students to stay on and socialize post-ceremony.

- URM graduating students and affinity groups that Questrom's Center for DEI supports will be invited to attend. For this initial pilot, we suggest exploring whether graduate and undergraduate communities should be hosted separately or all together, and consideration throughout the ceremony should be given to the intersectionality and differentiation among students attending.
- For calendar year 2022, we recommend the event be scaled up to be in-person with the two separate events – social and ceremony – occurring on the official graduation weekend. The social event is suggested to be held on Friday and the ceremony on Saturday.