# Harvard renames diversity office amid political pressure to emphasise community and dialogue



Harvard University announced a significant change to its diversity-focused office on Monday, April 28, 2025, renaming the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEDIB) to the Office of Community and Campus Life. The decision was revealed in an email from Sherri A. Charleston, formerly Harvard’s chief diversity officer and now titled the University’s chief Community and Campus Life officer.

This restructuring comes amid ongoing political pressure from the Trump administration, which has been actively seeking to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programmes across American universities. In two separate letters sent to Harvard in April, federal agencies demanded the removal of DEI initiatives or threatened to withhold billions of dollars in federal funding. Harvard has publicly opposed these demands and pursued legal action against the administration over a $2.2 billion funding freeze imposed in response.

Charleston’s email acknowledged that while a recent campus-wide Pulse Survey found a strong sense of belonging among students, faculty, and staff, many reported discomfort in expressing differing viewpoints or engaging across ideological divides. She stated that this demonstrated the urgency in "reimagining how Harvard fosters community," placing a greater emphasis on supporting free expression. Under the new office directives, the focus will shift toward expanding cross-cultural engagement programmes, bolstering support for first-generation and low-income students, and creating greater opportunities for dialogue across differences.

Although other universities, including Ivy League peers, have gradually distanced themselves from DEI language and restructured their offices, this announcement represents the most substantial modification to Harvard’s DEI efforts to date. Earlier in the year, during the University’s annual Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Forum in February, President Alan M. Garber ’76 defended the importance of diversity, describing it as a “critical enabler of learning” that promotes “intellectual and personal growth” through exposure to varied perspectives.

Despite the name change, specific details about how the office’s mission and programmes will be reshaped remain forthcoming. Charleston noted that “in the weeks and months ahead,” steps would be taken to implement these objectives across Harvard’s various schools and units.

As of Monday afternoon, the OEDIB website had not yet reflected the new office name or revised objectives.

This development signals Harvard’s willingness to adjust its approach to community building in the face of political challenges, while striving to maintain a commitment to fostering inclusivity and dialogue among its campus community.

The Harvard Crimson is reporting on this evolving story and will provide updates as more information becomes available.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/4/29/harvard-oedib-renamed/> - Corroborates the renaming of Harvard's OEDIB to 'Community and Campus Life' announced via Sherri A. Charleston's email and the lack of immediate website updates.
2. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/4/29/affinity-funding-cut/> - Supports the broader restructuring context by detailing Harvard's discontinuation of affinity group graduation funding.
3. <https://cvindependent.com/newsletter/the-costs-of-standing-up-to-tyranny-a-federal-attorney-targets-medical-journals-coachella-valley-independents-indy-digest-april-28-2025/> - Confirms the political pressure from the Trump administration and Harvard's legal response to the $2.2 billion funding freeze.
4. <https://edib.harvard.edu> - Documents the pre-existing OEDIB mission and website, which had not yet reflected the name change as of the announcement.
5. <https://www.harvard.edu/president/news/2025/the-promise-of-american-higher-education/> - Contextualizes Harvard's broader commitment to diversity (per February 2025 forum) through the president's recent public statements.
6. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/4/29/harvard-oedib-renamed/> - Reiterates the shift toward cross-cultural engagement and free expression goals stated in Charleston's email.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMidkFVX3lxTE5sM3JqUmpzbDNEcVQ0VC05RU4yU1NDM01Xd21uMndIcWtndC16OTQ1S3ZHZ2s0U2ZWNzU5c1VjaHpLRXhuLXhhMFNWdWVIakoteUFCSDFxQjRPRHNCZlc2Rjczd054dk83VjJwSTBRX3ZZZnE0WVE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data