



BROWN UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

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CES Alumni Association
c/o Colin Cheney
122 East 38th Street
New York, NY 10016

Dear Brown CES Alumni Association,

Thank you very much for your very thoughtful letter regarding the development of environmental studies at Brown. President Simmons has asked me to respond.

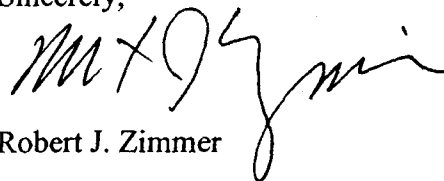
Let me begin by saying that I very much appreciate your comments. The articulation of the singular quality of education that CES has provided reaffirms everything that I have heard about this program, and speaks forcefully for ensuring that this program and the education it offers to our students is enhanced. Simultaneously, you recognize the new opportunities for Brown in the environmental studies area. I can reassure you, both in this letter and in a subsequent meeting which I hope we can have together, that we are in complete agreement about these matters, and that the faculty and the administration have given considerable thought to how to achieve both of these goals.

The discussion with the faculty about environmental studies at Brown last fall demonstrated a set of common beliefs. First, the understanding of environmental issues is a fundamental problem facing society and it is important for Brown to understand how it can best contribute. Second, we have an undergraduate education program in CES that is extremely successful, and in fact a signature program for the College. Third, we have an opportunity to bring together scientists and social scientists from multiple disciplines to create new research programs of national distinction in the environmental sciences area, building on the culture of collaborative work that is so pronounced at Brown. Fourth, as part of the traditional interweaving of education and research at Brown, any expansion of our research programs would incorporate expanded research and learning opportunities for our students, and in fact that such expansion was necessary to present students with the opportunities for engaging the most challenging and important questions we face as a society. And finally, a potential new relationship with the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole offers a powerful new component to all of efforts in education and research in the environmental sciences area.

With all of this in mind, the faculty set out to consider the best way to incorporate these features within the structure of the university, and then to make a proposal to the Academic Priorities Committee (a committee of faculty from around the university together with the senior academic deans) to follow up. After much discussion about the way to proceed, it was decided that an expansion of the role of CES in fact provided the best route. This was based precisely on the notion that the educational issues in which CES has so long excelled should not be separated from new research endeavors. To do the latter would be to detract from what is so positive about the education/research interface at Brown. It followed that the new director of CES, who would also be directing more broadly our initiatives in the environment area, would have responsibilities that entailed an expanded research agenda, the enhancement of our undergraduate teaching program in environmental studies, and the close interweaving of the two. This is the goal we have, and the type of leader we are seeking. It is essential that this in fact leads to a true enhancement of the educational experiences and opportunities offered to our students, building on the wonderful tradition that CES currently represents.

I will be more than happy to meet with you to discuss these matters, and will ask my office to be in touch with you to set up a time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. J. Zimmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Robert J. Zimmer

cc: President Ruth Simmons
Professor Harold Ward
Professor Annie Schmitt