I am a taskforce member because... inclusive excellence is a prerequisite for academic excellence because learning happens best when people are challenged in a supportive environment. Learning is our business.

My contribution to the task force... is my knowledge of the ISU community, my persistence in seeing that the recommendations and actions are address, and my ability to empathize with the diverse campus community.

I am a taskforce member because... diversity is a strength and we must stay vigilant in our goal to include all students, faculty, and staff in our definition of success.

I am a task force member because... I am responsible for the wellbeing of my students and peers.

My contribution to the task force... is to listen understand, speak up, join hands and push forward.

I am a task force member because... I believe in a fair, just, equitable society.

My contribution to the task force... is to be an open thinker and willingness to pose and ask questions that seem difficult to hear.

2016-2017 Illinois State University Climate Assessment Task Force
FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS
Submitted: May 22, 2017

Submitted by:

2016-2017 Climate Task Force Steering Committee:
Doris M. Houston (Chair), Guadalupe Montalvo (Co-Chair), Dave Bentlin, Rick Lewis, and Ryan Powers

Executive Summary

This document represents PART II of a two-part report and recommendations on behalf of the 2016-2017 Climate Assessment Task Force. Part I of the report (see: Climate Assessment Task Force: Short Term Recommendations) consisted of recommendations for immediate action (within 30-60 days) and recommendations to expand and/or increase awareness of initiatives currently in existence.

Within the current report (Part II), the steering committee submits its recommendations for intermediate implementation (12 months or less) and long-term implementation (more than one year). Additionally, this report seeks to address a smaller, focused set of institutional outcomes, which if achieved, will result in sustained, structural change within the campus community.

The 2016-2017 Climate Task Force was convened by President Larry Dietz in response to the 2016 Climate Assessment conducted by the Center for the Study of Race & Equity in Education at the University of Pennsylvania (see: Illinois State University Campus Climate Assessment Final Report). The Climate Assessment uncovered several core findings that suggested the need for more focused efforts to create an inclusive environment for diverse students, staff, and faculty. Those findings included the need for Illinois State University to address the following areas of concern as expressed by climate assessment participants:

- A sense of marginalization, isolation, and exclusion expressed by students of color
- A sense of marginalization expressed by women professionals and faculty/staff of color
- Institutional barriers that impede inclusive recruitment and hiring
- Lack of an adequate institutional response to discrimination and harassment

These areas of concern, as uncovered within the 2016 Illinois State climate assessment, are congruent with the concerns expressed across the spectrum of higher education settings nationwide. For example, the American Council on Education (ACE) and the U.S. Department of Education convened a nationwide group of stakeholders within academia in the spring of 2016 to examine disparity data and share innovations aimed at increasing diversity and inclusion. Ironically, while institutions of higher learning continue to face challenges related to diversity and access, evidence suggests that inclusive academic communities add value to the institution in the form of increased academic excellence and innovation, improved student enrollment and retention, and enhanced global workforce development¹.

The remainder of this report will focus on three recommended core outcomes that if adopted, will place Illinois State University at the forefront of inclusive excellence across the equity and inclusion spectrum (i.e. gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, language, faith, country of origin, levels of ability). These outcomes include: 1) Create an inclusive classroom and campus experience; 2) Recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff across the Inclusion Spectrum; and 3) Create and invest in affirming spaces for diverse students.

Each recommended outcome is linked to one or more of the following institutional impact priorities:

- Increase student admissions among underrepresented groups.
- Increase student retention and completion among underrepresented groups.
- Increase faculty/staff recruitment and hiring among underrepresented groups.
- Increase faculty/staff retention among underrepresented groups.
- Promote an inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive campus environment for students, faculty, and staff.
**Outcome 1: Create an Inclusive Classroom**

**Institutional Impact:**
- Increase student retention and completion among underrepresented groups
- Increase faculty/staff retention among underrepresented groups.
- Promote an inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive campus environment for students, faculty, and staff.

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<th>Activities/Strategies</th>
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| Add a standard diversity statement to all syllabi including resources for seeking information, reporting discrimination or harassment, and establishing ISU as an inclusive campus community. | • Legal Counsel  
• Provost Office (leads the initiative)  
• Appointed workgroup  
• Benchmarking – looking at other institutions who have a similar statement.  
• Marketing |
| Diversify the classroom experience and curriculum through bringing in diverse speakers, activities, and books/writers while ensuring that material is accessible to the student body at large. In addition, utilize diverse and inclusive examples, photos, images and best practices. | • Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT)  
• Provost Office  
• Academic Senate |
| Diversify the Curriculum  
• Implement a curriculum and program review to ensure diversity and inclusion is embedded into all elements of academic and non-academic programs.  
• Create a diversity requirement for graduation. | • CTLT  
• Academic Senate  
• Provost Office |
| Incentivize faculty and staff to participate in training that promotes diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and cultural competency in the classroom. | • CTLT  
• Department Chairs  
• Deans |
OUTCOME 2: Recruit and Retain Diverse Faculty and Staff Across the Inclusion Spectrum

Institutional Impact:
- Increase faculty/staff recruitment and hiring among underrepresented groups.
- Increase faculty/staff retention among underrepresented groups.
- Promote an inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive campus environment for students, faculty, and staff

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| Re-formulate the underrepresented faculty incentives program and spousal hire to ensure transparency, clear guidelines, and accessibility to all underrepresented faculty groups and include AP Professionals and Civil Service staff. | • Provost’s office  
• College Deans  
• Departmental Chairs  
• External diversity experts  
• Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (OEOA) |
| Develop a 12-month equity-training plan for administrators, faculty, staff, and search committees on best practices in minority recruitment and retention that moves beyond current programs and would have a more focused curriculum. | • Provost’s Office  
• CTLT  
• OEOA  
• College Deans  
• Departmental Chairs  
• External diversity experts  
• Human Resources |
| Implement a University wide and College Level Equity Review for faculty and staff salaries, advancement, retention, and cultural taxation through ongoing assessment, focus groups, and exit interviews. | • Provost’s office  
• College Deans  
• Departmental Chairs  
• SFSC/DFSC/CFSC Committees  
• External diversity experts  
• OEOA  
• Human Resources |
| Review the process of creating search committees to ensure diverse groups are represented. | • Human Resources  
• VPs Offices |
| Develop a Diversity Executive Council with the governing equity of other governing associations (i.e.: AP Council, Civil Service Council, Academic Senate) and include members from varying affinity groups, campus partners, governing associations, and other identified groups. Council would be responsible for maintaining an inventory of diversity and inclusion efforts and activities as well as identifying the gaps and opportunities. | • President’s Office  
• VPs Offices  
• Board of Trustees |
| During hiring and recruitment, include information regarding campus resources such as affinity groups, health promotions and wellness, campus recreation, and other special interest organizations. | • Human Resources |
| Reduce cultural taxation of minority faculty/staff aiding in retention  
  - Validate/formalize mentoring in “service” (ASPT).  
  - Recognize mentoring through acknowledgement and compensation.  
  - Reduce taxation by training all faculty/staff (and support systems) about mentoring all students (look to Safe Zone model).  
  - Official recognition that all staff are here for students.  
  - “Mentor release time” (similar to Health; 90 minutes). | • VPs Offices  
• Department Chairs  
• Deans  
• Department Directors |
OUTCOME 3: Create and invest in affirming spaces for diverse students

Institutional Impact:

- Increase student admissions among underrepresented groups.
- Increase student retention and completion among underrepresented groups.
- Promote an inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive campus environment for students, faculty, and staff.

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| Develop a long-term plan with students, pertinent campus partners and faculty/staff to establish a cultural center in the next 5 years, while identifying an existing space on campus in a central location to house diverse student groups within the next 12 months. | • Facilities Planning  
• VP of Advancement  
• VP of student affairs  
• Educating Illinois |
| Brand “what it means to be a Redbird” to students during Preview and Welcome Week to be inclusive:  
- Collaborate with faculty and staff across campus to ensure that the message is reinforced in 1st year general education courses, alumni mentorship, and university programs.  
- Consider the expansion of programs, like Walk of Champions and Welcome Week convocation, to include messages and populations that address diverse students in our Redbird family. | • University College  
• Welcome Week  
• Preview  
• Department Chairs  
• University Marketing |
| Restructure deadlines for student commitment decisions to Illinois State ensuring equity of fees and eliminate disadvantage to students who cannot pay by deadlines. Restructuring commitment decision deadlines will promote equitable access to course, orientation, and housing selections. | • University Housing Services  
• Admissions  
• Welcome Week  
• Preview  
• University College  
• University Marketing |
| Overall review of multiple communication avenues:  
- Conduct an overall review of diversity in publications and outgoing messages via web and social media.  
- Conduct an internal scan of language (i.e. pronouns), messaging, images to make an intentional effort to include people from diverse backgrounds and diverse perspectives. | • University Marketing  
• Media relations |
| Assess the physical accessibility of the campus, and immediate community, to ensure we meet the safety needs of our students with disabilities. In addition, review curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities to ensure that classroom and program materials are inclusive and accessible to students with varying levels of abilities. | • Facilities Planning  
• Parking and Transportation  
• Student Access and Accommodation Services  
• Community Leaders  
• Provost Office |
| Maintain active recruitment of diverse students, staff, and faculty in elected leadership roles on campus such as Student Government, Academic Senate, and Association of Residence Halls. | • Dean of Students Office  
• Academic Senate  
• Civil Service Senate  
• Board of Trustees  
• Civil Service Council |

Forbes (2011). Fostering Innovation Through a Diverse Workforce. URL: