**University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign**

**External Review Report and Recommendations on Diversity and Inclusion**

Spring 2017 Semester

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# Introduction

**Institutional Context**

The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (Illinois) is a public, land-grant research university established in 1867. Illinois is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and holds memberships in the Association of American Universities, Big Ten athletic conference, Big Ten Academic Alliance, and numerous other associations and groups. The University is comprised of 15 colleges and instructional units, with more than 150 undergraduate and more than 100 graduate and professional degree programs. More than 47,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students are taught and supported by more than 11,000 faculty and staff.

Historically, Illinois has promoted diversity and inclusion as a core value that is reflected in its most current Inclusive Diversity Statement as recommended by the Academic Senate on November 17, 2015. The statement reads, in part:

*As the state’s premier public university, the University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign’s core mission is to serve the interests of the diverse people of the state of Illinois and beyond. The institution thus values inclusion and a pluralistic learning and research environment, one which we respect the varied perspectives and lived experiences of a diverse community and global workforce. We support diversity of worldviews, histories, and cultural knowledge across a range of social groups including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, economic class, religion, and their intersections.*

*Ensuring access to the Illinois experience and committing to recruiting a full representation of the state’s diverse populace in terms of students, faculty, staff, and administrators allows the University to respond to the needs of contemporary society. At the same time it demonstrates the importance of diversity to strengthen excellence and innovation. Diversity is strength, and with it comes excellence! Research indicates that people from diverse backgrounds working together identify more creative solutions to problems than people working in more homogenous groups. Thus, increased diversity encourages everyone on campus to think in more creative and innovative ways. This in turn enhances several important functions of the campus, including the production of ground-breaking research designed to address pressing societal needs and the train*[*i*](#_bookmark0)*ng of future leaders to effectively work within increasingly diverse and global settings.*[1](#_bookmark0)

On May 20, 2016, the Board of Trustees approved the University of Illinois System Strategic Framework, *The Public’s University: Optimizing Impact for the Public Good.* There are four strategic pillars which the system “pledges to organize our world-class resources for the

1. UIUC Senate. EQ.13.01 Resolution on Diversity Values Statement <http://diversity.illinois.edu/supportingdocs/diversity%20values%20statement.pdf>

next decade around…” including, *An Institution of and for Our Students.* As quoted below, diversity and inclusiveness are identified as a strategic priority for the system.

* *Enhance* ***the diversity and inclusiveness of the University community*** *We will make the System the standard bearer for campus communities that mirror, explore, and celebrate the vast range of human experience.*
* *Enhance university system by* ***normalizing the representation of historically underrepresented people*** *throughout the university system.*
* *Set and pursue* ***aggressive goals in both enrollment and hiring*** *to ensure our universities are fully representative of the diverse composition of contemporary society.*
* *Make investments in student affairs and in employee support and professional development resources* ***to ensure a welcoming atmosphere for historically marginalized and underrepresented populations*** *who join our community.*
* *Continue the System’s trailblazing legacy of* ***accessibility for people with disabilities****.*
* *Be an exemplar of effective and consistent efforts to* ***ensure that minority-owned firms are fairly represented in contractual University work****.*
* *Build* ***strong connections between our universities and the increasingly diverse cities*** *in which they are located.*

(Emphasis added)

During the two-day site visit, the review team inquired of those interviewed their perceptions about the progress of this effort to advance diversity and inclusiveness, consistent with UI System goals and campus goals.

# Advancing Diversity and Inclusion at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Through the years, there has been a proliferation of programs and initiatives intended to address the outreach, advancement, and retention of diverse populations of students, faculty or staff (See Appendix A, Organizational Chart with Diversity Efforts). The growth and development of units, committees, and programs and initiatives is reflective of the longstanding commitment to diversity by Illinois’ administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Upon assuming his responsibilities in September 2016, Chancellor Robert Jones acknowledged the breadth and scope devoted to diversity efforts inclusive of time, talent and resources at Illinois. In a letter to the “Internal Diversity Self-Study Workgroup” dated December 19, 2016, Chancellor Jones emphasized that diversity was of the highest priority and that the institution will “take stock of what we are doing and how we are organized with the goal of ensuring we are getting the highest impact possible from all of our programs, services and initiatives.” As part of this effort, units were to conduct a self-study and an external review was to be conducted in February 2017. A team of nationally recognized experts was appointed by Chancellor Jones in December 2016. The review

team was charged to review and determine if the optimum structure existed to permit, the University achieve its goals towards a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus community.

# Methodology

The process used by the review team included a thorough examination of more than 25 self-study reports pertaining to diversity projects and initiatives throughout the campus that were prepared for and presented to the review team (See Appendix B (1) and B (2), *Table of Contents, Documents for Meetings*). The team also reviewed additional materials from the Illinois website and other reports pertaining to diversity and inclusion. During a two-day site visit February 20-21, the team had 27 scheduled meetings inclusive of established diversity related committees, staff groups, faculty, and staff and faculty senate diversity committees. (See Appendix C (1) and C (2), *Schedule*). This provided the team an opportunity to interview a wide range of campus stakeholders that spanned academic and

administrative leadership ranks, and programmatic structures, including supplier diversity, that support equity, diversity, and inclusion at Illinois. D. Craig Taylor, a member of the review team, focused exclusively on procurement and supplier diversity due to his professional expertise and background on these efforts. He met separately with individuals responsible for procurement and vending efforts to enhance business opportunities and diversity. At the end of the second day, the review team also met with Chancellor Jones and John P. Wilkin, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

# External Review Questions

With the charge in mind, the following questions guided the review during the two-day interviews:

General Questions:

1. To whom do you (or your program) report to within Illinois?
2. Do you have any “dotted” lines of reporting?
3. Do you have vision, mission and goal statements that serve as the basis of your “authority”?
4. Committees were asked: who charged them; to whom did they offer advisement, and whether they received feedback to their recommendations.
5. What units/individuals do you collaborate with in fulfilling your duties and responsibilities?
6. What is working and not working?
7. What is the perfect organizational model with respect to your role and functions?
8. How does your program or committee contribute to the overall mission of diversity?
9. Is there anything else that you would like to add that we did not ask (index cards were provided to participants and returned to the review team)?

Enrollment Management Questions:

1. What efforts are you engaged in to advance diversity?
2. How do you establish targets?
3. How do you interface with college and cultural centers’ diversity outreach and efforts?
4. How do you measure success?
5. Organizationally, what are your thoughts when it comes outreach, recruitment, and retention?
6. What is your relationship to the registrar, admissions, and financial aid?

Senate Diversity and Equity Committee Questions:

1. How do you contribute to advancing diversity and inclusion at Illinois?
2. What challenges do you face with addressing your diversity and inclusion responsibilities?

Faculty, Staff, and Student Questions:

1. What is your charge?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of diversity efforts?
3. What would you like to see improved?
4. What are your experiences at Illinois, in your program, department, or unit?
5. Knowing what you know now, would you have still come here?

Procurement Questions:

1. Is purchasing and/or the procurement process decentralized?
2. Do the Colleges have the discretion to do their own buying?
3. Does the Office of Procurement and Diversity (OPD) have a budget?
4. To what extent are the appropriate contract compliance activities conducted during the construction or purchasing bid process?
5. How does OPD promote awareness about the supplier diversity program with purchasing and facilities staff and within the colleges?
6. Have any of the recommendations cited in the Bonner study been implemented?
7. How the OPD is currently structured and where does it report?
8. How does OPD track second- and third-tier subcontract spends?
9. Is there a standard agreement of reciprocity for certifying or recognizing the certification of qualified businesses owned by minority, women and persons with a disability?
10. Is there standard boilerplate language in RFPs, RFBs, and RFQs that outlines the goals and requirements pertaining to women, minority-owned businesses, and businesses owned by persons with a disability?

Those who contributed to the self-studies and attendant data, and those who participated in the interviews were generous with their time, thoughtful insights, and suggestions for how the campus might advance its equity, diversity, and inclusion agenda. Those interviewed described the role of their various offices. This included the Associate Chancellor for Diversity, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Access (ODEA), Title IX and ADA

Coordinator, Disability Resources and Educational Services, and Student Affairs and its Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations and Office for Minority Student Affairs. The review team met with other units that informed our review, including Human Resources, Faculty Affairs, Graduate College, and Enrollment Management.

In addition, perspectives from the six established university diversity committees was provided and included the role academic governance plays in furthering diversity and inclusion at Illinois. The evolution of *Inclusive Illinois* was shared with the review team, along with the role of the Staff Advisory Council and Council of Academic Professionals in advocating for the advancement of diversity and inclusion among civil service staff and academic professionals. The review team was also appreciative of the opportunity to meet with a diverse group of faculty who provided their perspective and suggestions for Illinois moving forward, and having the opportunity to interview various individuals on procurement and supplier diversity efforts.

Based upon the interviews, we believe the campus community is highly invested in the success of the institution’s diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts. The responses to questions by the review team underscored the strong desire among those we interviewed to be engaged in the Illinois diversity efforts. Advocacy occurs through a wide array of committees that have fairly defined constituencies. In addition, much of the equity, diversity, and inclusion work arises from a long tradition of investment in decentralized efforts, which is not necessarily unique to Illinois, nor necessarily detrimental to success. The team questioned if the decentralized model contributed to the overall growth of programs without a specific plan in place that gives the impression growth happened in response to immediate concerns.

Decentralized efforts have contributed to certain successes. However, the team believes there are ways in which decentralization of efforts also contributes to a number of challenges. Those challenges can include unnecessary redundancy, communication issues, lack of connectivity and synergies, and finally, difficulty in the assessment of programmatic efforts and accountability for results that align with Illinois’ diversity and inclusion aspirational goals.

# General Perceptions of Interviewees

Those interviewed appear to have some common concerns, points, and recommendations as highlighted below. The review team was impressed with their candor and eagerness to share their thoughts in an effort to ensure the institution would move in a more positive direction toward its diversity and inclusion goals.

# Emerging General Themes

* There was a general expression of appreciation that Chancellor Jones has asked for the self-study and external review, and there is a great deal of pride in and support for the equity, diversity, and inclusion work that is being done across the campus, while also acknowledging that more can be done.
* Among those interviewed, there was universal commitment to Illinois’ equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts, and the desire to work with senior administration in framing future efforts.
* The need to increase the diversity, advancement, and retention of underrepresented students (undergraduate and graduate) and faculty was frequently identified by those interviewed, and is reflected in the various self-study documents provided to the review team.
* Campus climate and diversity among staff – which is affected by the civil service system – diversity among academic professionals, are ongoing concerns. Advancement and leadership opportunities are issues going forward.
* The lack of stability in senior leadership (Chancellor and Provost) was raised several times by those interviewed as affecting forward movement of efforts, particularly with respect to the role various committees play in understanding their mission and charge, derived authority, buy-in from academic and administrative units and leadership, and leadership response to recommendations made by a committee. There was consistent concern that there did not appear to be consistent leadership to advance diversity in a coordinated manner.
* Funding levels of committees, including reduction in, or loss of funding is a concern.
* Integration of efforts across committees is variable, and does not happen as frequently as it may have in the past for certain committees.
* Various units now provide programmatic support for Illinois’ compliance with university nondiscrimination policies, and state and federal nondiscrimination laws, including those related to equal opportunity, affirmative action, Title VI, VII, IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
* There has been some modest success with recruiting students, because many programs appear to focus on recruiting. The Cultural Centers appear to play a role recruiting diverse students with the Office of Admissions. There is concern that with African-American high school graduation rates decreasing, the institution should reassess recruiting strategies and priorities to attract diverse Illinois residents, students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and explore recruiting nonresidents.
* Based on the data shared with the review team, Illinois has had success with reducing the achievement gap for African-American and Hispanic students as compared with peer institutions, especially those within the Big Ten. However, of those interviewed, there was no specific identification of the various efforts that are contributing to these outcomes.
  + Funding support for graduate students, particularly graduate students from underrepresented populations and those with families at Illinois is an issue among those interviewed. In addition, the climate within units for diverse graduate students was a particular concern that is affecting graduate student success and the desire for some to continue with Illinois. Rigor is not the issue – support for and climate within programs were identified as a source of concern for some of those interviewed.

The review team understands that not all of the information and perspectives shared accurately reflects the state of work done, processes used, or resources available.

However, widely held perceptions, whether based on accurate or inaccurate information, suggest a need for enhanced communication. The team extrapolated some key points that were consistent throughout the interviews.

# General Observations of Review Team

There are **numerous programs** and committees dedicated to ensuring the campus is diverse and inclusive. It is clear that some programs like the disability services through Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) can trace their early beginnings to 1948. There are many people who care and lead in this effort. It appears that the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR) is especially strong in terms of services, accountability measures, etc.

**Training programs** are prolific throughout the campus, with similar goals of preparing individuals to become familiar with diversity issues in areas of race, immigrants, LBGTQ, policies and more, to training on sexual misconduct, including sexual assault and sexual harassment more broadly. There may be a need to do a complete assessment of the effectiveness of these programs to determine if greater coordination of effort will better serve the goals of Illinois.

**More than $60 million** is invested in diversity and inclusion, with over 80 percent for scholarships. It was not clear how these resources are prioritized for allocation and/or assessed for outcomes. It raised several questions: How are units held accountable for resources? How are funding priorities established, and are these ongoing commitments? Is there room for redistribution of funds? Are these dollars used for innovative programs, research, etc.? Are there other diversity/funding opportunities that are not part of this funding base?

**Retention and graduation** rates are exceeding national and peer averages at the undergraduate level. These outcomes may be a result of the efforts of the many units who provide direct student services, including academic orientation programs, advising, and mentoring. However, no one specifically mentioned evidence in support of the role their program played in producing these positive outcomes. While acknowledging the level of student success, students, staff, and faculty nonetheless raised concerns about students feeling isolated and at risk in light of scattered acts of bias throughout the campus.

**Faculty Affairs/TOP** has achieved some success but needs to be re-evaluated in terms of future outcomes. Postdoctorate programs present great opportunities for increasing faculty diversity. However, transition of post-doctorate appointments to tenure-system faculty at Illinois has not been as successful, and some view this as related to funding issues (assumption of salary costs by the department/colleges for type 2 TOP hires). There may be other opportunities for building a community of diverse scholars through, for example, a diversity research institute to bring diverse faculty together to enhance research, encourage interdisciplinary work, etc. The opportunity to develop this area is significant and can yield outcomes in terms of recruiting, advancing, and retaining diverse faculty.

While it may have been a product of insufficient time with the faculty affairs team, it was not clear if faculty affairs is leading curricular issues, including diversity requirements in curriculum, or faculty development in inclusive teaching and learning.

**Curriculum/pedagogy** efforts were shared mostly in the context of the work of the Committee on Race and Ethnicity (CORE) to garner support and approval by the Faculty Senate in May 2016 of the new diversity course requirement. Beyond meeting with faculty from Latino Studies who focused their remarks on climate issues and the lack of diverse faculty, there was limited discussion about the role of the curriculum and pedagogical methods as factors toward achieving diversity and equity aspirations.

**Civil service staff and academic professionals** have concerns related to their status within the institution. In addition, representation of diverse civil service staff and academic professionals on campus is a concern that also affects advancing diversity among these groups (i.e., a lack of critical mass and advancement opportunities). The review team noted an absence of in-depth representations of the lived experiences of staff of color at Illinois. Mechanisms for resolving disputes between management and employees was also raised as a concern, and the review team was not clear how disputes are moved through a conflict resolution process (grievance process) to actual resolution of the dispute.

**Communications on and messaging of Illinois’ diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts** based on the brochures, reports, documents, and data forwarded to the review team certainly provided a clear overview of the investments Illinois has made to diversity efforts during the last 40 years. In addition, these documents enumerate the interest, commitment, and leadership to make the campus more diverse. The review team is concerned by the lack of a coherent communications strategy for diversity efforts at Illinois. A diversity communication strategy that is shared with the various campus units can achieve consistency in messaging and alignment of the messaging with Illinois’ overall diversity and inclusion goals.

# Summary of Review Team Conclusions

After reviewing the materials and assessing the interviews, the review team concluded the following:

Vision/Goals

1. There was not a clear, overarching understanding of the definition of diversity. Over the two days of interviews, diversity efforts were generally associated with women, minorities, and members of the international, disability, and LBGTQ communities.
2. While recognizing the importance of the various committees, it appears that many were established to meet a need and/or crises. The team was not always clear that the committees understood their level of authority, if they were ad hoc in nature and intended to address a specific need, or if they were to interact with each other.
3. While supportive of the Associate Chancellor for Diversity, some of those interviewed stated that it is not clear what the Associate Chancellor for Diversity does, or whom faculty should interact with on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.
4. A review of the roles of DRES, ODEA, HR, Title IX, Legal Counsel, and ADA needs to be a high priority to sort through the confusion and potential competition for resources as these roles continue to evolve and respond to the ever-changing regulatory landscape.
5. There is no existing University plan for equity, diversity, and inclusion, which contributes to confusion, duplication, inefficiency, and frustration.

Governance/Authority

1. There appeared to be overlap of services and functions, especially as it relates to some of the committees.
2. It was also difficult to determine how individual diversity, equity, inclusion offices, and programs engaged with traditional offices, including advising centers, financial aid, and human resources, even though many of the programs interviewed were engaged in functions that are formally and organizationally the responsibilities of these offices. Those interviewed did not address the alignment of the various offices and programs with Illinois’ diversity and inclusion goals.
3. Given the decentralized nature of diversity efforts at Illinois, it was not always clear who, or what office/unit is ultimately responsible for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion at Illinois, and how the message of diversity, inclusive of all marginalized groups, is collectively advanced in a synergistic manner without losing individual group identity. This lack of central structure, organization and clarity are the greatest impediments to efforts to build a more diverse university.
4. The diverse faculty we met with had very little experience working with faculty affairs, or were not aware of the role that faculty affairs plays in advancing faculty

diversity. There was also a lack of clarity among the group regarding the equity, diversity, and inclusion priorities established for Illinois and a lack of clarity on who establishes the various priorities.

1. The Student Affairs Office appears to occupy programmatic space that may more appropriately be within the responsibilities of a reinvigorated CDO role, including responsibilities that implicate Title IX.
2. Diversity programming is ubiquitous. Illinois should explore ways to coordinate efforts across administrative and academic lines.

Organization and Resources

1. It was not clear how and if the centrally managed programs were connected and or interacted with each other.
2. A decision was made prior to the arrival of the current Chancellor to reorganize the ODEA unit. Although the current Associate Chancellor for Diversity structure and functions were only recently launched, they seem inadequate given the general themes that evolved from the self-studies and interviews.
3. There was expressed confusion over the evolution of the function, breadth and depth of ODEA’s responsibilities, and concern over the adequacy of the resources allocated.
4. Current committee structures that directly report to the Chancellor and Provost should be reviewed for duplication of functions/roles, and to determine the optimal direct reporting lines to the Chancellor and Provost. The role of the chief diversity officer (CDO) to not only support the work of the committees, but also counsel, analyze, and make recommendations to the Chancellor and Provost on the work of the committees should be considered as a way to raise the level of impact of the CDO on the diversity agenda-setting role of the university.

Communications

1. Decentralization of efforts was often cited as the basis for lack of coordination, clarity, collaboration, and finger pointing.
2. Vertical and horizontal communication was identified as a problem. Committees in the equity, diversity, and inclusion space do not uniformly communicate, collaborate, or consult with each other to any significant degree.

Decentralization appears to be a part of the culture of the institution and is not necessarily a bad thing. Recognition of this should be accounted for going forward in light of the recommendations of the review team below.

While the meetings helped clarify some of these issues, there remained a consensus among those interviewed, as well as the review team, that there was a need for a model that provides leadership, coherence, consistency, and coordination of the many Illinois diversity efforts. Issues of resources were raised throughout the two-day interviews. The team believes a more in-depth programmatic review is necessary to determine if resources are adequate for the assigned responsibilities of the programs/units and desired outcomes.

# Recommendations

Although there are many recommendations that could be made, from coordinated training to developing recruiting strategies, the team determined it would be most helpful to focus on the overall organizational structure of diversity at Illinois that provides the leadership and vision for addressing the many issues addressed in this report. Therefore, we recommend the following in the hope that the University can strategically advance its diversity efforts in a more coherent, synergistic, and efficient manner.

# Structure, Roles, and Responsibilities Recommendation:

The review team recommends that the Chancellor appoint a cabinet level Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (VCDEI) to enhance coordination, sustainability, and accountability. The position should be empowered to make University-level decisions in concert with the Chancellor on diversity priorities as they relate to programs and policy. Furthermore this position should be adequately resourced and have authority of staff and resources to ensure the VCDEI is successful.

It is recommended that that the current Associate Vice Chancellor position be reassigned and reframed as the Associate Vice Provost or Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reporting to the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and/or the Provost, depending on which reporting line is chosen.

The review team also recommends a comparable position, reporting to the proposed VCDEI that affects student diversity and will enhance coordination of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across campus in support of student access and success. We are aware that there is an existing Associate Vice Chancellor for Inclusion and Intercultural Relations and propose that this position formally report to the VCDEI, while retaining a dotted line reporting relationship to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Along with this position, we recommend that the Office of Minority Student Affairs report to the proposed VCDEI- again for purposes of building on current successes and promoting greater connectivity and coordination of student access, and academic and social support initiatives.

The review team believes there is a significant opportunity for continued progress if there is a reorganization of the decentralized diversity model that would align with institutional goals and desired outcomes. The proposed model would enhance institutional legitimacy, and contribute to more processes with accountability measures aligned with the UI system and Illinois diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

We recommend that the Chancellor charge the VCDEI with the responsibility to develop a diversity equity strategic plan or framework aligned with the University Strategic Planning efforts that builds upon the work of previous diversity-planning efforts (Inclusive Illinois).

A clear set of expectations around the university’s diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) aspirations should be a high priority for the new leadership team.

In the earlier years, diversity efforts focused on increasing the numbers of underrepresented groups on our campuses. Higher education did not fully comprehend or understand the complexities associated with recruiting, hiring, advancing, and retaining a diverse workforce, and the complexities of recruiting, admitting, retaining, and graduating a diverse student body. These complexities require thoughtful attention on a daily basis – responding to individual student, faculty, employee, and community needs and concerns; administrators who need guidance and direction; responding to the ever-evolving legal landscape and regulatory/compliance responsibilities; institutional goals that must be monitored and assessed; and internal and external constituencies who need and expect support.

The role of the chief diversity officer (CDO) in higher education has evolved significantly since being defined by D. A. Williams and Wade-Golden (2006)[2](#_bookmark1) as “the ‘face’ of diversity efforts [that] carry formal administrative titles like vice provos[t](#_bookmark1), vice chancellor, associate provost, vice president, assistant provost, dean, or special assistant to the president for multicultural, international, equity, diversity, and inclusion.” In 2007, Williams and Wade- Golden stated “today’s CDOs are often seen as change agents who are appointed to create an environment that is inclusive and supportive of [a](#_bookmark2)ll members of the institution in order to maximize both human and institutional capital.”[3](#_bookmark2)

In 2012, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education commissioned a presidential task force on the development of standards of professional practice for chief diversity officers. The work of the task force acknowledged that the standards should be “inclusive of the range and scope of work and responsibilities of CDOs from a broad array of different types of institutions and practicing within a variety of different contexts.” In 2014, the Standards of Professional Practice for Chief Diversity Officers was published in the Journal of Diversity of Higher Education.[4](#_bookmark3)

The recommended Vice Chancellor model will have both administrative oversight and engagement/impact on the academic portfolio traditionally shared by the Provost and Student Affairs as well as other programs at Illinois. The position should be empowered to make University-level decisions about the administrative and impact/influence resource allocations of scarce financial resources.

1. Williams, D.A., & Wade-Golden, K.C. (2006, April 18). What is a Chief Diversity Officer? Inside Higher Education. Retrieved from [http://www.insidehighered.com/workplace/2006/04/18/willilams.](http://www.insidehighered.com/workplace/2006/04/18/willilams)

3 Williams, D.A., & Wade-Golden, K.C. (2007). *The Chief Diversity Officer: A Primer for College and University*

*Presidents.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

4 Worthington, R. L., Stanley, C. A., & Lewis, W. T. Jr. (2014). National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education Standards of Professional Practice for Chief Diversity Officers. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 7,* 227-234.

The review team also recommends that with this new organizational structure, there be a **new branding** of Illinois’ efforts. Examples include *New Pathways to Inclusion; Pathways to the Future: Advancing Diversity and Inclusion at Illinois; and Moving Forward: Inclusivity at Illinois*.

# Committee Structure

**Recommendation:** Presently, numerous committees with what appears to be similar if not overlapping purposes/roles/portfolios operate with little collaboration/consultation with each other. They appear to compete for limited resources and may have some concerns about “turf.” Given the number of committees, it is often difficult for the Chancellor or Provost to respond to the various reports in a timely manner.

An alternative to the present committee model is to establish a university-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion council with subcommittees that assume the responsibilities of some of the present stand-alone committees. The areas of focus and responsibilities for the subcommittees may include those of the various existing committees reporting to the Chancellor or Provost. The VCDEI will assume responsibility for receiving annual reports and recommendations and provide advice to senior leadership on actionable agenda items for the University. Greater coordination and collaboration may occur using the proposed model.

# Compliance Responsibilities

**Recommendation:** We strongly encourage the institution to conduct a review of the current equity and compliance functions carried out by multiple units to ensure the interests of the campus community and the institution are adequately addressed, that resources are appropriately configured and allocated, and that capacity to effectively carry out the responsibilities exists.

A number of programs are responsible for, or affect Illinois compliance responsibilities including DRES, OIIR, ODEA/EEO, Title IX and ADA Coordinator, Human Resources, Student Affairs, Faculty Affairs, Committee on Access and Accommodations, Senate EOIC, Legal Counsel and others. We did not have an opportunity to meet with the Office of University Counsel or the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics (DIA), but we are well aware of the roles that DIA and Legal Counsel play in this area.

We recognize that the legal and regulatory environment may be in a state of change at the national level. The review team is concerned, given the risks and liabilities associated with these areas of responsibility, that offices do more to coordinate efforts and communicate with each other, and employ staff that possess depth in the core competencies necessary to do this work. Over 370 sexual misconduct cases have been investigated by the federal government’s Office of Civil Rights, with the vast majority remaining open. Access to education, employment, and contracts are also a continuing concern based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and gender identity. These categories of identity are not all inclusive. They do, illustrate the importance of our campuses being alert to the changing regulations, and the impact on the individual parties by conduct and behavior that alters the educational or employment

experience of those who are members of the campus community, or affects access to public contracts.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs also plays a significant role in the work of our campuses to advance equity and diversity. This includes Illinois’ affirmative action program and gender equity efforts under Title IX and Title VII, and its efforts under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and outreach and support for veterans among campus employees at all levels.

Greater coordination across programs, as well as clear delineation or roles, responsibilities and resources among equity and equity/related campus programs is important in the evolving regulatory environment. The coordination between the offices of Human Resources, ODEA/EEO, and Title IX and ADA Coordinator is particularly important. We had limited time to interview those representing these areas. However, the connectivity of effort across units was not clear based on our interviews. Realignment of EEO/affirmative action, Title IX, ADA, and related areas may provide options to the model currently in place.

# Student Support Services

**Recommendation:** The pending retirement of the current Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs offers an opportunity to conduct a review of the Student Affairs division for possible realignment of some functions with other units. This may include responsibilities associated with the recommended Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion position.

Numerous support services contribute to “underrepresented” student success. The Student Affairs Office sponsors services across student life and academic support programs. It was not evident that the Associate Chancellor for Diversity or ODEA collaborates with the services in Student Affairs, nor was it clear the extent to which Student Affairs actively collaborated with these offices or others that affect student success. Again, we note the abbreviated time we had to engage with those interviewed. However, among those interviewed, the lack of identified ways in which the units worked together to support student success, particularly among underrepresented students leads us to conclude that a review of the Student Affairs Office for possible realignment of functions should occur.

# Student Experiences

**Recommendation:** That Illinois engage in a closer review and analysis of the concerns of graduate students. Students suggested that the Associate Chancellor for Diversity have a role and responsibility for – or greater opportunity to influence – graduate student support within their respective colleges, given the nature of climate concerns and alleged bias behavior affecting their success and desire to stay at Illinois.

Graduate students expressed concerns that the lack of critical masses of students of color creates some climate issues that included not feeling supported or validated in their graduate programs.

# Faculty Experiences

**Recommendation:** Illinois should conduct a more thorough qualitative study to assess the climate for faculty within the various minority racial/ethnic groups, as well as international and women faculty, and faculty who identify as LBGTQ and persons with disabilities. This is not to limit the scope of a climate assessment to those who identify within these categories, but to give particular attention to their lived experiences at Illinois.

Faculty who met with the team are outstanding as scholars and instructors in their fields of study but articulated that they often feel isolated professionally and personally on the campus and in the broader community. Many stated that they are generally the only underrepresented person in their department. They also feel undervalued and disengaged from information that does not seem to filter down to them regarding critical changes.

One example offered involved the Illinois Target of Opportunity Program. The Target of Opportunity Program has two types: appointments permanently funded centrally and another that involves the transition to a tenure system appointment and unit-level support after a three year, postdoctoral appointment. In the opinion of some of those interviewed, the TOP has eroded over time and is not used to advance the transition of underrepresented faculty from a postdoctoral appointment to appointment in the tenure system at Illinois. The faculty who the team met with are not clear about the status of the TOP program and this lack of communication and information contributes to confusion for some and mistrust of institutional commitment by others. The investment in postdoctoral appointments, including those that advance diversity within Illinois warrants closer review and monitoring by the institution to determine if the TOP is achieving its goals.

The faculty also spoke of concerns that the institution does not always timely respond when there are incidents of incivility, bias, or lack of collegiality that happen throughout campus.

Illinois should do more to bring diverse faculty together, within and across disciplines, professionally and socially. Interestingly, the faculty we met with collectively believe that Illinois is an exceptional university with great potential to do more, including the work necessary to advance diversity among faculty and students (graduate and undergraduate). It is unfortunate the review schedule did not allow for similar meeting with women, members of the disability community, the LBGTQ community, and international faculty, staff, and student communities to hear the stories of lived experiences at Illinois and gain a better perspective about what they perceive as strengths and issues. Our own experiences and research suggests that the issues expressed by the faculty we met with may be similar for these communities, as well.

# Staff Experiences and Opportunities

**Recommendation:** Illinois also has a very large “non-faculty” staff – professional and civil service. According to publicized statistics, Illinois has 3,077 faculty, 3,983 administrative and professional personnel and 4,134 support staff. Recruiting, retaining and rewarding staff in a manner that promotes diversity, especially when resources are stretched, is a challenge. The campus should explore new opportunities to maximize efforts in diversifying its workforce and outreach. The Council of Academic Professionals, Human

Resources, legal counsel and others are important resources and can be consulted for input on innovative strategies to recruit, retain, and advance a diverse professional and civil service staff workforce.

# Observations of procurement and supplier diversity

This document provides the requested information for the Internal Diversity Self-Study Review of the University of Illinois supplier diversity program. The primary goal of this study was to conduct a limited review and analysis of the overall functionality of this program and provide baseline recommendations that will build the program’s capacity and remove barriers that affect performance and outcomes. Consistent with this process, targeted questions were developed to gain better insight into six key areas of the program: organizational structure, systems, processes, programmatic, operations, and resource allocations.

The University of Illinois, Office of Procurement Diversity is a system-wide program. This program provides access to procurement opportunities by creating an equitable and competitive business environment to attract qualified, certified businesses owned by minorities, females and persons with disabilities, as well as veterans, to meet their contracting needs. Supplier Diversity’s mission is to increase the award of contracting opportunities to businesses that have been historically underrepresented in the procurement process.

The University has affirmed that its mission in this area will be accomplished by not only providing the necessary resources and procurement system support, but also by implementing strategic outreach activities, and engaging with faculty, and staff.

Furthermore, the University believes that its administration, in collaboration with other national and/or local business support and advocacy organizations, will help to foster a more inclusive supply chain process for the university.

At its core, this program is fundamentally sound, and as a result, the University has continued to produce significant and consistent outcomes when spending dollars with businesses owned by minorities, women, persons with disabilities, as well as veterans. OPD also has solid policy framework in place and two support staff to manage the day-to-day implementation of the program. However, the program could be more effective with additional staffing and resources. Also, the program could be more effective if policy and specific procedural changes were made to the construction bid process as well as contract monitoring and compliance to allow for greater process transparency and collaboration with the OPD. This also includes, but is not limited to, allowing the OPD staff’ to conduct the appropriate review activities during the pre-bid, bid review and pre-award process for all competitively bid contracts.

Recognizing that the Job Order Contracting process offers flexibility under a challenging procurement structure, it also may present challenges for qualified businesses owned by minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans with the access to compete on contracting opportunities between $100,000 and $250,000. Further review of this process is needed to determine the total value and number of lost contract opportunities that have been awarded under this model.

Additionally, greater emphasis on diversity inclusion must be placed on Construction Services contracts (projects budgeted up to $100,000) by creating policies and procedures, which encourage the use of diverse businesses.

OPD also lacks the necessary strategic and operational resources to bring the program to scale. OPD operates primarily at the system level and its impact at the university level (Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, and other ancillary sites) is minimal. However, if the goal is to maximize outcomes at the campus level, then the program’s current business model must be restructured and given the appropriate resources to create change.

# Recommendations

**Recommendation:** The Director of Procurement Diversity should have a dotted-line reporting status to the Chancellor, in an effort to facilitate clear and open communication regarding the status, progress, challenges, and outcomes associated with the program.

**Recommendation:** A formal letter should be sent from the Chancellor to all members of the management team articulating his support and commitment to the Procurement Diversity Program. This letter should outline his expectations and clearly establish this effort as a top priority of his administration. His direct reports must be held accountable to this end and responsible for disseminating all information necessary and appropriate to engage staff in a meaningful and productive way around this effort.

**Recommendation:** In an effort to ensure transformative and consistent program outcomes, the Procurement Diversity program must be provided with the appropriate resources:

* + Additional staff is needed to support and implement the full scope of the programs core activities. The additional staff would effectively promote the implementation and awareness of the program in Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield.
  + An operating budget should be approved/allocated for OPD to successfully administer the program.

**Recommendation:** A proprietary database should be developed and implemented system- wide to track all addressable spends with diverse businesses. The data produced by this tracking system will be used to generate and/or produce all appropriate diversity spend reports for the System and at the university level.

**Recommendation:** The process for competitively bidding construction contracts should be reviewed and potentially restructured to include a greater role for and emphasis on diversity advocacy. Note: This means that a compliance/monitoring component must be added to the bid process to ensure that no contract award is made until OPD has signed off that the apparent low bidder has either met the contracting goal or otherwise made good faith efforts to meet the goal.

**Recommendation:** The Job Order Contracting process should be restructured to maximize the inclusion of businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities as part of the approved short list of qualified bidders. If this adjustment cannot be made, the Job Order Contracting process should be replaced with a solution that promotes a more inclusive process while still satisfying critical delivery needs.

**Recommendation:** Policies and procedures should be created on Construction Services contracts (budgeted up to $100,000), which encourage the use of diverse businesses.

# Conclusion

The External Review Team wants to express its appreciation to Chancellor Jones, Interim Provost Wilkin, Associate Chancellor for Diversity Zerai and her staff, other senior administrators, students, staff, and faculty who participated in this review. Their candor and thoughtful commentary provided us with a broad perspective on the inclusion, diversity, and equity efforts of Illinois. The work of the entire campus community contributes to the Illinois reaching its goals to be a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.