

July 1, 2002

## **Enhancing Diversity in the Curriculum, Classroom and Campus:**

### ***Definition/Purpose of the Task Force***

The purpose of the “Enhancing Diversity in the Curriculum, Classroom and Campus” Task Force is to assess, support and assist in the recognition and expansion of diversity at IUSB. This includes the recruitment and retention of students, faculty and staff that will reflect the full range of diversity in the wider community. We also seek to foster a curriculum that reflects and respects that diversity. The diversity that we seek is broadly understood to include many factors, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family composition, disability, religion, sex, veteran status, international origin, age and gender. That our task force will be the bridge, a conduit, resource, assessor is reflected by the make- up of our committee: faculty, staff, students and community representing each of these aspects of diversity and drawn from all parts of the campus.

The first stage of Task Force work, the assessment phase, will be complete later in the summer with the final analysis of the campus-wide diversity survey. This will update and complement the wide range of institutional research on diversity that the Office of Campus Diversity has conducted over the past nine seven years.

### ***History: Campus-wide Diversity Program***

Diversity efforts on the IUSB campus in the past have included such activities as minority recruitment in area high schools (in the early-mid 90’s) and summer “early start” programs.

IUSB also was a participant in the statewide IU “Minority Enhancement” initiative, sponsored by a Lilly Endowment planning grant to draft a university diversity plan for the 90’s. That plan set numerical goals for representation of African-American and Hispanic students and faculty on each of IU’s eight campuses, and sponsored several intercampus conferences on diversity efforts, involving faculty, staff, and students

IUSB pursued a wide range of activities through a number of offices and departments, until the establishment of a central Office of Campus Climate. IUSB’s present Office of Campus Diversity is an outgrowth of that Office of Campus Climate that opened in 1995 as a result of another Lilly Endowment Grant. IUSB, like many public institutions of higher education, understood our responsibility to meet the needs of an ever-more-diverse community and student body. We were also aware, again like other institutions of higher education, that faculty and staff, themselves products of a different educational environment, needed to change their attitudes and practices (elements of the “campus climate”) to adapt to our changing world and fulfill their mission to students and the civic community.

In 1993, IUSB was approached by an Endowment program officer who challenged the university to envision a project to address diversity issues of the demographic changes that were projected for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in IUSB’s service area. Our response was an abstract of possibilities, developed in conjunction with campus and community leaders and members, that was compatible with the guidelines set up for Indiana University’s multi-campus “Campus Climate” proposal funded by Lilly Endowment.

IUSB took over full funding of the Office of Campus Climate in 1995. The major activities of its first director included diversity workshops for faculty, staff, and students, a diversity attitudinal survey, and the establishment of an annual event involving campus and community dialogue, "Conversations on Race," which began in fall, 1997. Also in 1997, the Office of Campus Climate was changed to the Office of Campus Diversity and reorganized as a Student Affairs program. From its earliest history, it has had (and continues to have) an advisory board that makes up the broad diversity of the university and the community.

Today, the Office of Campus Diversity is part of the Office of Academic Affairs, and continues to sponsor public events and campus programs. A full listing of all of the campus and community events sponsored by the Office of Campus Diversity is available in the Appendix to this report, and in the Office of Campus Climate archives.

### ***Setting the Boundaries: Members, Affiliates, and Priorities***

This spring, we have divided our work into two general areas: 1) situational assessment (a review of current activities and programs) and 2) the background needed for the development of a campus wide diversity plan. Both efforts have required us to join forces with existing groups and committees already established at IUSB to address the wide range of diversity issues.

**WGoD Partnership.** One of the groups we have joined forces with is the Working Group on Diversity, created by participants in IU's statewide diversity "Leadership Institute" in Indianapolis and the "Enhancing Minority Achievement" conference held annually at IU-Kokomo.

Supported by the Office of Academic Affairs and through a grant from Vice President Charlie Nelms, the “WGOD” committee is assessing the climate of IUSB through the eyes of faculty, staff, students and alumni. In Spring, 2002, the group has administered a campus-wide diversity survey and are currently analyzing the results. This working group is chaired by Betsy Lucal, who is also a member of our task force, and many of the task force members, including both co-chairs, are on this committee or assisting in its efforts. In addition, to gather current diversity statistics essential to future planning, we are coordinating quantitative data collection with the Affirmative Action and Human Resource Offices. (The Affirmative Action Officer is also a WGoD member.)

**Curricular Issues.** One of the major concerns of the Task Force has been a focus on the curriculum, Diversity Task Force members and affiliates are working with the revised Latin American/Latino Studies program, the new African-American Studies program, the proposal for Islamic Studies, and the National Center for Great Lakes Native American Culture as well as diversity programs within the divisions and schools of the campus. In the near future, we also expect to work closely with the General Education committee, co- chaired by Rebecca Torstrick and Jerry Hinnefeld, in assessing and incorporating diversity into our general education curriculum.

**Student Involvement.** Finally, we have placed a high priority on involving students in our planning and discussion. We have surveyed student organizations/unions and we will continue to support and work closely with them in welcoming and including our diverse student body in our Task Force deliberations. All student groups have a role in this, and we are particularly interested in groups that directly address issues of diversity, such as the Black Student Union, the Latino Student Union, the Native American Student Union, OUT-IUSB and STAAR (students with disabilities), and have included members, officers and faculty advisors from these groups on our committee.

### ***Future Goals and Challenges***

The major immediate challenge we face is to broaden the pool of those who participate in diversity initiatives. We need to demonstrate that embracing diversity is everyone's responsibility and everyone stands to benefit from it, and that it is not only a moral and legal issue, but an institutional priority. IUSB must expand its diversity to remain competitive with other institutions of higher education.

However, meeting immediate challenges will also require a long-range planning effort. Thus, the next step will be the discussion and eventual drafting of an IUSB Campus Diversity plan to organize and govern our future campus activities. The planning process will begin in earnest in the fall. The diversity portion of the strategic plan will form the core of a Campus Diversity Plan, a longtime goal of the Office of Campus Diversity. Members of the Diversity Task Force will also form a core group to work with the Office of Campus Diversity in conducting diversity training and other aspects of plan implementation.