

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

### **Executive Summary**

#### ***Definition/Purpose***

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 the diversity at IUSB. This includes the recruitment and retention of students, faculty and staff that will reflect the full range of diversity. 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.

#### ***Planning Boundaries***

We have been working very closely with existing groups and committees. The Working Group on Diversity is assessing the climate of IUSB through the eyes of faculty, staff, students and alumni. They have administered a campus-wide diversity survey and are currently analyzing the results. This working group is chaired by Betsy Lucal, who is 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. We also want 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.

In addition, we are coordinating quantitative data collection with the Affirmative Action and Human Resource Offices. We also have committee members and affiliates who 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.

Finally, 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. 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.

### ***Challenges/Goals***

We have divided our work into situation assessment and the development of a campus wide diversity plan. 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. 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.

### **History of The Office of Campus Diversity**

The above-mentioned Office of Campus Diversity is an outgrowth of the Office of Campus Climate that opened in 1995 as a result of a 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.

In 1997, the Office of Campus Climate was changed to the Office of Campus Diversity and became part of the university’s budget and continues to have an advisory board that makes up the broad diversity of the university and the community.

The office provides a wide range of services to the university such as classroom, department, and community diversity workshops, heritage month celebrations, educational conferences and it provides informational resources.

It is now in the process of expanding services that deal with student persistence for underrepresented students by establishing students cohort groups and hiring a Minority Enhancement Coordinator.

### **On-Going Challenges**

Some of the challenges are to broaden the pool of those who participate in diversity initiatives, to demonstrate that embracing diversity is everyone's responsibility and everyone stands to benefit from it, that it is not only a moral and legal issue, but, the institution must expand its diversity to remain competitive with other institutions of higher education.