

2016 Strategic Plan Key Question Committee – Final Report

Question: *How do we attract and retain more minority faculty and staff?*

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Summary:

It is clear that hiring and retaining faculty of color is at a crisis level among most colleges and universities across the country. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (November 12, 2015) reported that “the ranks of full-time faculty remain heavily White, according to data from the U.S. Department of Education” (<http://chronicle.com/article/Racial-Disparities-in-Higher/234129?cid>). In 2013, over 78% of the full-time faculty and 84% of the full professors were White. Concomitantly, only 6% of full-time faculty members at degree granting institutions were Black (totals do not add up to 100 percent because data on some racial/ethnic groups were not counted). Indiana State University does not have a critical mass of full-time tenured/tenure track faculty of color physically on campus which is where they are most needed for visibility, support, and community building.

The overall findings indicate that Indiana State University needs full-time tenured/tenure track faculty of color, particularly African Americans, to be visible and viable members of the university and Terre Haute communities. The ISU data reflect that there are approximately 40 faculty of color; however, these numbers should be disaggregated to show how many on campus full-time tenured/tenure track faculty of color there are by college. Research verifies that retention of students of color increases when there are visible members of their race to interact with on campus. Additionally, to retain faculty of color there needs to be a network established of persons who can lend support and build a community so that there is a sense of belongingness in the Terre Haute area. Last, if faculty of color are to be retained, there is a need to empower, train, and appoint them as department chairs and administrative leaders on campus so that there

are keen observers and voices who lead their colleagues in the search for minoritized¹ scholars. Moreover, these persons serve as advocates to assist with the tenure and promotion process. The table below parallels the aforementioned comments and provides the key findings as well as our recommendations.

¹ The term “minoritized” in this document is used to identify the individuals from the non-dominant group (Bensimon & Bishop, 2012) and it “is used in solidarity with a number of scholars and critical race theorists in reference to the societal construction of subordination of certain racial/ethnic groups in global social institutions” (Kilgo & Barajas, 2015, p. 70).

Key Findings Summary

Key Finding 1	There is the perception that Indiana State University is a revolving door for minority staff and faculty.
Key Finding 2	Minority faculty and staff feel like they are not treated with respect and are not well supported.
Key Finding 3	The Terre Haute community and ISU feel unwelcoming to minority faculty and staff.
Key Finding 4	There is a need to convince colleagues that there is a problem.
Key Finding 5	Students and faculty must be educated on different cultures and populations.
Key Finding 6	The salary and other compensation are not seen as commensurate with other institutions given ISU expectations for tenure and promotion.
Key Finding 7	ISU teaching loads are not necessarily in line with other similar institutions when total workloads are taken into account.
Key Finding 8	There is a lack of professional development opportunities.

Recommended Actions Summary²

Recommended Action 1	Institute mandatory diversity workshops and trainings similar in format to <i>It's on Blue</i> .
Recommended Action 2	Community Liaison Officer: Hire, or repurpose an existing staff position, to be a Community Liaison Officer.
Recommended Action 3	Create a Vice President for Diversity and Equity.
Recommended Action 4	Devote two days of New Faculty Orientation (NFO) to diversity.
Recommended Action 5	Provide reduced loads, on a rotation basis, for all faculty.
Recommended Action 6	Provide leadership luncheons with minoritized faculty to mentor them into leadership positions on campus.
Recommended Action 7	Create a dedicated stipend for a Diversity Ombudsman for minoritized faculty/staff.
Recommended Action 8	Offer sponsorship for faculty and staff that need to apply for immigrant visas to work in the U.S.
Recommended Action 9	Implement and support the Faculty Opportunity Hiring Program.
Recommended Action 10	Establish a spousal/partner hiring program that assists dual-career families in putting down roots in Terre Haute.
Recommended Action 11	Connect with the Economic Development Corporation in Terre Haute to ensure the presence of a job liaison to assist spouses and partners in finding acceptable employment.

² Recommended actions are not listed in any particular order of importance.

Background:

In 2008-2009, Indiana State University created the position of the University Diversity Officer who reported to the Office of the President through the Executive Assistant to the President for Internal Relations. Two individuals filled this post from 2008-2015. The role of this individual was to help sustain the diversity mission and goals of the university as well as raise the visibility and promote the multicultural initiatives of the institution. Working collaboratively with the University Diversity Council and supervising the Office of Diversity staff, this individual assisted in the creation of a culture of inclusion on campus and within the Terre Haute community.

The University Diversity Officer also collected and analyzed institutional data and conducted institutional assessments to measure the progress of multicultural initiatives on campus. The University Diversity Officer worked collaboratively with the students, administrators, staff, and faculty by helping to create best practices, programs, and policies to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion. The position was eliminated based on a climate study and recommendations from an outside consultant in 2015.

During this same timeframe, two individuals were selected to engage in targeted searches or opportunity hires of minoritized faculty. The process was deliberate and netted excellent results which were noticeable by the increase in faculty of color in all of the colleges. However, during the transition of the Provosts in 2013, the process ceased and there was a shift to place the diversity initiatives in the jurisdiction of the Deans in each college.

Overall, the institution has started and stopped diversity initiatives based upon the philosophy of the individual(s) who are charged with operationalizing that edict, which has stalled progress toward an equitable campus environment.

Analysis Methods:

The committee has met four times and worked in subgroups of three to four people to develop ideas, concerns, and challenges as to how ISU may address the key question: “*How do we attract and retain minority faculty and staff?*” In addition, the two co-chairs met seven times to organize the committee meetings, and work on the progress and final reports to the strategic plan steering committee. Some of the key findings identified by the committee are supported by data from ISU exit interviews. In addition, the committee obtained results of the quantitative data and qualitative data analysis from the faculty survey done during fall 2015. These results also support the key findings identified by the committee. However, the committee has encountered a few challenges that we feel help to strengthen the need to address our key question. These are: very few faculty completed the exit interview survey and the majority of them were retiring faculty; lack of historical data to establish a trend on the number of minority faculty and staff at ISU through the years; lack of data from staff exit interviews; anecdotal evidence that suggests the same problems have been met with the same conversations/solutions for the past several decades necessitates action that will be seen as meaningful by current ISU faculty and staff and for future hires.

Key Findings:

Some of the key findings identified by the committee and supported by data from ISU exit interviews and faculty survey are:

- There is the perception that Indiana State University is a revolving door for minority staff and faculty;
- Minority faculty and staff feel like they are not treated with respect and are not well supported;
- The Terre Haute community and ISU feel unwelcoming to minority faculty and staff;
- There is a need to convince colleagues that there is a problem;
- Students and faculty must be educated on different cultures and populations;
- The salary and other compensation are not seen as commensurate with other institutions given ISU expectations for tenure and promotion;
- ISU teaching loads are not necessarily in line with other similar institutions when total workloads are taken into account;
- There is a lack of professional development opportunities.

Recommended Actions:

Some of the potential actions recommended by the committee to address the key question are:

- Mandatory diversity workshops and trainings similar in format to *It's on Blue*;
- Community Liaison Officer: Hire, or repurpose an existing staff position, to be a Community Liaison Officer. This person would work with other units on campus and maintain deep and ongoing connections with the TH and surrounding communities to assist minoritized ISU faculty/staff with: housing (real estate); churches; schools; job links for relatives; healthcare; and other quality of life agencies and concerns. This would not just be for new faculty/staff but for all minoritized ISU workers. This position has great potential to support several strategic plan goals: 1) retaining great faculty and staff, 2) enhancing community engagement, and 3) enhancing student success;
- Create a Vice President for Diversity and Equity as well as provide staffing for that office. The VP would report directly to the President. Additional responsibilities and qualifications include:
 1. Nationally recognized with strong scholarly visibility
 2. Substantial administrative and program-building experience
 3. Demonstrated leadership as an innovator, convener, ambassador, collaborator, partner, and catalyst in mobilizing leaders from various institutional and community sectors around diversity goals
 4. Demonstrated prior leadership in developing diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs within a complex organization

5. Credentials that merit appointment at the rank of full professor
 6. Lead the Diversity Council.
 7. Lead a Deans and Department Chairs Council on Diversity.
 8. Liaison to the Faculty Senate to create policy on equity and inclusion
 9. Develop a new faculty orientation on diversity.
 10. Develop a faculty, administrative, and staff diversity training program that is to be presented annually.
 11. Work with community leaders to promote cultural diversity within the Terre Haute area.
- Connect with the Economic Development Corporation in Terre Haute to ensure the presence of a job liaison to assist spouses and partners in finding acceptable employment;
 - Devote two days of New Faculty Orientation (NFO) to diversity. One day should be devoted to campus activities and concerns directed to students. The second day should be devoted to campus activities and concerns of faculty and staff. It is important that this information be shared with all new faculty. Of special note is that these two days would not burden university resources since those present at NFO are there as part of service to the university;
 - Provide reduced loads, on a rotation basis, for all faculty; For example, provide an incentive that faculty mentors to new hires will have a reduced load;
 - Provide leadership luncheons with minoritized faculty to mentor them into leadership positions on campus;
 - Create a dedicated stipend for a Diversity Ombudsman for minoritized faculty/staff to work with Faculty Senate and Staff Council on issues of shared governance;
 - Offer sponsorship for faculty and staff that need to apply for immigrant visas to work in the U.S. This is needed to be able to hire the most qualified minority faculty and staff and to be able to compete with other institutions nationwide and in the state of Indiana;
 - Implement and support the Minority Faculty Opportunity Hiring Program.

References

- Bensimon, E.M., & Bishop, R. (2012). Introduction: Why “Critical”? The need for new ways of knowing. *The Review of Higher Education*, 36(1), 1-7.
- Kilgo, C.A., & Barajas, R. (2015). Multicultural initiatives as bridges: Structures necessary for successful facilitation. In S.K. Watt (Ed.), *Designing transformative multicultural initiatives: Theoretical foundations, practical applications, and facilitator considerations.* (pp. 61-71). Sterling, VA: Stylus.