

# UM System Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force Initial Response to the IBIS Audit Report

Response prepared by Task Force Chair S. David Mitchell  
with feedback from Task Force members

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**UM System DEI Task Force Members**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Diversity. Equity. Inclusion. Each of these principles is of critical importance to the success of the University of Missouri System and campuses. As an institution, there had often been a lack of direction and a clear plan on how to ensure that each of these concepts is integrated throughout the university. The success of each has often been predicated upon the commitment of a few dedicated individuals sprinkled throughout the university. Moreover, because the importance of these three concepts has waxed and waned over time based upon changing leadership priorities and resource allocation, the success of these concepts has been inconsistent often coming across as haphazard and lacking institutional importance. Events on campuses around the country including our own signal that it is imperative that universities not only emphasize the importance of these concepts but devote the necessary capital, both financial and human, to achieving their success.

It is also imperative that we recognize that dissatisfaction around / the unrealized fulfillment of these three concepts is not a contemporary phenomenon. Universities and society have historically struggled with diversity, equity and inclusion reducing these qualities to discussions of race and gender alone while ignoring other important identities such as class, religion or sexual orientation, to name just a few.

In order for the University of Missouri System to effectively and adequately address these issues, we must have a concrete plan of action to make diversity, equity and inclusion a practical, collective reality for its constituents. The university must create an environment where each constituent is not just welcomed, but able to thrive and succeed. By acknowledging the multiple identities of our constituents, the university will be giving voice or recognizing the value therein of each member of the community. By creating a plan of action or recommendations that can be measured, constituents will be able to hold the university accountable and in turn the university can track its own progress in and across these areas.

In this report you will find context for the IBIS audit engagement and a summary of the UM System Task Force Retreat, where members reviewed and discussed the Audit Report and identified recommendations that could work best for the unique campuses and system-wide. Additionally, the Task Force identified recommendations that can be coordinated by the System to address diversity, equity and inclusion at the institutional level.

## **BACKGROUND**

The University of Missouri Board of Curators (Board) announced a series of strategic initiatives<sup>1</sup> on November 9, 2015, to be implemented to address areas of diversity, equity and inclusion across the four campuses, University of Missouri-Columbia (MU), University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), University of Missouri St-Louis (UMSL), and Missouri

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Board's initiative to create a task force that would develop both a short- and long-term strategy, plans for action and metrics to be used system-wide based on an inventory and audit of current programs, policies and practices, Interim President Michael Middleton chartered the UM System Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force (DEI

well as from each of the System administrative units. When the focus of the proposed audit changed from an examination solely of UM System to an exploration of the entire University of Missouri System and campuses, it was necessary to expand the representation of campus participants whose responsibilities included in whole or in part the coordination and implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Hence, Phase II membership not only invited self-nominations but also considered accepted nominations from existing Task Force members.

The DEI Task Force was comprised of a diverse collection of individuals from System administrative units, each of the four campuses, and included representatives from University of Missouri Healthcare and University of Missouri Extension.

### **DEI TASK FORCE RETREAT**

On November 28-29, 2016, the DEI Task Force convened for a retreat in Columbia, MO. The purpose of the retreat was to discuss the IBIS Consulting Group's Audit Report (IBIS Audit Report) and to identify short- and long-term recommendations that can be implemented on each campus and at UM System as well as short- and long-term recommendations that can be coordinated system-wide. Prior to identifying a set of recommendations, the DEI Task Force undertook a critical review of the IBIS Audit Report.

For some members, the IBIS Audit Report was lacking in depth of analysis or specificity of recommendations, as well as an institutional data analysis that some had anticipated. Additionally, some members stressed that the report did not strongly address issues of power, privilege and intersectionality. Some members were concerned that the history of events presented in the Audit Report was too brief, and thus did not provide a longer historical context of the genesis of the initiatives announced in November 2015. Others raised questions about methodology, specifically calling attention to the small sample size of students, and that some protected classes appeared to have been omitted, such as veterans for example. Lastly, some members wanted concrete suggestions on how to recruit and hire a diverse faculty.

IBIS consultants responded to these concerns on the second day of the retreat. Given more time, the Audit Report could have addressed the scope and breadth of the inquiry. The complex nature of the University of Missouri System and its campuses presented unique challenges to compiling a report that could address each aspect of the university or each campus with the level of detail that was desired. To be clear, the IBIS Audit Report was neither designed nor contemplated to be a campus climate survey and thus receive feedback from every university community member. A broader campus climate survey of the University of Missouri System and its campuses occurred simultaneous to the IBIS audit. Unlike that survey, IBIS data was gathered using individual interviews and focus groups of randomly selected participants on each of the four campuses and System. In brief, the audit was designed to review the policies, practices, and programs<sup>4</sup> related to

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<sup>4</sup> A separate review of the Collected Rules and Regulations (CRRs) was conducted and completed by Quarles & Brady, LLC, a law firm affiliated with the IBIS Consulting Group.

diversity, equity and inclusion and to gather feedback from a sample of members of the community.

In addition to the critiques that were raised, the DEI Task Force identified parts of the IBIS Audit Report that were praiseworthy. The collection and populating of a DEI Asset Inventory was identified as a key strength of the audit, as it provides preliminary information on current programming and practices. Also, it was appreciated that the IBIS Audit Report highlighted the need for sustained funding as a critical component of diversity, equity and inclusion work. Task Force members reported that the Audit Report served as a good bridge for ongoing conversations about next steps and for the creation of metrics for assessing progress. For some members, the







## RECOMMENDATIONS

### University of Missouri-Columbia (MU)

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#### Access and Success

\*Include Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) student, faculty, and staff recruitment and hiring goals into the University of Missouri strategic plan, consistent with the law and the University's affirmative action program initiatives; ensure accountability, metrics and oversight.

\*Identify best practices and ways to expand existing programs to enhance retention for students, faculty and staff with appropriate funding, accountability, oversight and metrics. Include representatives from Human Resources (HR), Graduate Studies, faculty, staff, and students.

Develop a check list for inclusive recruitment practices for faculty and staff searches, e.g. unconscious bias training, broad position descriptions etc., to be reviewed and approved by Provost prior to job offer. Work with HR to determine at which position grade levels that the checklist must be used for staff.

Ensure effective communication between Promotion and Tenure (P & T) and search committees for faculty searches.

Job description for faculty searches should include diverse research areas, methodologies and epistemology.

Job description for staff should include inclusion and diversity goals and/or expectations. Recommend that search committees take the IAT assessments in at least two categories – race and gender; critically examine the composition of search committee members to reflect diversity of gender, age, tenure status, etc.

Recommend that Promotion and Tenure standards be revised to value inclusion and diversity, including non-canonical research.





“Have each department (academic and administrative) create specific DEI goals and plans tied to the strategic DEI plan for the campus.  
“Develop funding models that reallocate significant resources to support widespread organizational transformation.”

## University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC)

### Access and Equity

#### Faculty and Staff

- Coordinate advertising for faculty and staff positions to save dollars and expand diversity of applicant pool by posting one large advertisement in national publications (to improve visibility and outreach to diverse applicants).
- \*Promote the practice that advertising alone is not sufficient. Encourage departments to expand outreach during professional meetings, with underserved and minority population professional groups, etc.
- Promote cluster hiring to reduce isolation and lack of critical mass for faculty of color (FOC) and under-represented groups.
- Include unconscious bias training for hiring committees and personnel engaged in hiring that focuses on applicant screening, interviewing and selection.
- Expand resources available on the day of interview for candidates of color and other under-represented groups. These candidates often have questions about the community that are pertinent to their minority status, but that cannot be answered by current faculty and staff. Expanded resources will improve the likelihood they will consider Kansas City/UMKC.
- Expand capacity for faculty retention initiatives. University leadership needs flexible mechanisms to move swiftly when a retention issue arises (often involving money or a change in duties). To this end, dedicated financial support for retention initiatives would be helpful.
- Address the issue of faculty of color and female faculty being burdened with a disproportionate share of service obligations by channeling serblind undg0 G{disporor)3(ti a)3(t



Incentives should be developed to encourage faculty to contribute DEI-related articles and research from all disciplines. Existing faculty who have committed their careers to DEI teaching, scholarship, and community outreach should be given institutional recognition and support through awards, promotion and tenure criteria, and research funding.

A DEI reading list should be developed and promoted among faculty and staff.

A fact sheet on how to have a respectful conversation across differences should be developed and widely distributed.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) should be promoted by the UMKC Division of Diversity and Inclusion and Academic Affairs.

### Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Utilize a current organization that already represents student groups (Student Government) to expand DEI awareness, engagement and initiatives. Find strategies and funding to promote student group collaboration on DEI issues and expand on-campus activities and engagement.

\*Students should have an orientation that incorporates diversity, equity, and inclusion. Due to time constraints as the current orientation format is full, alternatives, including small student groups (during the freshman experience) following orientation or online activities, might be worth pursuing.

### Institutional Infrastructure

\*Provide CDO with appropriate funding 912 0 61p- h.0o0

## Missouri University of Science & Technology (Missouri S&T)

### Access and Success

\*Identify DEI champions and establish a rewards system.

\*Facilitate venues where students, faculty, and staff can participate in meaningful interaction and thoughtful engagement.

\*Review job recruitment and hiring practices

- Review departmental job postings for wording and to identify areas of optimization;
- Train tenure review committees on unconscious bias; and,
- Ensure diverse composition of search committees.

Engage local stakeholders, staff, and students to recruit potential staff and faculty (greater St. Louis area).

Facilitate venues for students and faculty to connect, in an effort to increase informal mentoring.

Encourage and engage faculty and staff to pursue educational program funding for both secondary and post-secondary learning.

Create a pipeline of public K-12 students to Missouri S&T.



Ensure that Disability Support Services and other intervention programs engage and connect with DEI programs and services.

Develop a DEI Scorecard.

Develop a database that captures the accomplishments of diverse faculty and students; highlight in marketing materials.

### Community

Establish engagement programs with the larger S&T community (including St. Roberts, MO; Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Waynesville, MO and St. Louis, MO).

**University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL)**



## **Communication Recommendations**

Create better information sharing between campuses and System Communications staff to share best practices and coordinate training.

Identify distinctly different goals and processes for external media/public relations/marketing communication and internal community (students, faculty and staff) communication to avoid confusion between the two.

Create agile, responsive protocols to effectively respond to critical incidents with communication to internal campus community.

Take steps to increase diversity of communication staff or encourage or support alternative viewpoints within existing staff.

Ensure both campus and system strategic communications staff seek feedback from DEI experts on communication and messaging, especially if the messaging pertains to a sensitive or racially-charged topic.

## **Opportunities for System-Wide Collaboration**

Implement selected K-12 pipeline initiatives, and assess existing ones, to make a UM System campus an organization of choice for historically underrepresented/underserved populations.

Create leadership development and career path programs for faculty and staff, with special attention given to historically underrepresented populations to enhance their leadership opportunities.

Create a comprehensive recruitment and hiring toolkit, including DEI best practices in advertisement, job descriptions, career ladders, search committee processes and education, and outreach.

Develop a standardized system-wide diversity dashboard to track data and highlight areas of growth.

Promote the development of DEI-intensive courses by developing a rubric to identify such courses and track in a standardized way in myVITA.

Provide learning experiences that support faculty and others in developing or adapting existing courses and academic programs with aspects of diversity and inclusion.

Offer system-wide diversity training on unconscious bias and other diversity-related topics, and include incentives for participation (e.g., wellness incentive).

Increase recognition programs that acknowledge contributions made to advance diversity and inclusion.