DIVISION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW RESPONSE

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Overview of Recommendations and Responses
The Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DDEI) appreciates the thoughtful and thorough recommendations provided by the DDEI External Program Review Team. This document reflects the staff’s response to the recommendations and our plans for implementing initiatives relative to the external reviewers’ recommendations for each unit.

At the time the external program review was initiated in the spring of 2019, the search for the next leader of the DDEI was underway. The role of the Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (AVP-DEI) at UI is currently unfilled. In order to bring clarity to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on campus, the UI Executive Vice President and Provost, Dr. Montse Fuentes, announced that the units that make up the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion—the Center for Diversity and Enrichment (CDE); Diversity Resources (DR); and Equal Opportunity and Diversity (EOD)—will temporarily report through the Office of the Provost to continue providing direct links between all the leaders. It is our understanding that the university plans to re-launch the search for the AVP-DEI role.

In sum, the recommendations from the external reviewers and discussions with DDEI team members, campus partners, and UI leaders included:

1. Clearly defining the Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (AVP DEI) position and scope of responsibilities; providing the needed human and financial support to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion among students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

2. Redesigning the Advantage Iowa Scholarship with specific student success outcomes, as measured by retention and graduation rates and post-graduation outcomes; fostering greater connections with honors and research.

3. Developing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)-related metrics and use of institutional systems for data collection and analysis.

4. DDEI Unit-Level Recommendations: enhancing the effectiveness and better equipping the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity; expanding Building University of Iowa Leadership for Diversity (BUILD) training opportunities and the breadth of work for the Diversity Resources Team; and addressing multiple pieces involving the Center for Diversity and Enrichment in order to better align with the university’s paradigm shift and maximize opportunities for student learning, engagement, and success.
Recommendation #1

Clearly define the Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (AVP DEI) position and scope of responsibilities; providing the needed human and financial support to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion among students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

Response #1

As leaders of our respective units within the DDEI, we recognize the critical importance of the role of an associate vice president for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to a higher educational institution such as the University of Iowa. While the role of the AVP-DEI is currently vacant, we recommend the Provost’s Office, in consultation with stakeholders from the DDEI offices, the various colleges and divisions of UI and UI Health Care, and shared governance, consider the optimal structure for the AVP-DEI role and the DDEI. The results from the recent DEI Climate Survey provides valuable data demonstrating the need for the university to continue to enhance its effort to recruit, retain, and support a diverse campus of students, faculty, and staff from all backgrounds at the University of Iowa. We believe a senior leader of the DDEI aids in the planning, implementation, and assessment of DEI initiatives, such as those proposed in the DEI Action Plan. A successful implementation of the DEI Action Plan will require a senior leader who can engage leaders across the varied colleges and divisions to support the efforts to enhance the living, learning, and working environment for all members of the UI community.

Resources Needed

As part of the review of the AVP-DEI role and administrative structure, we recommend the Provost seek input from the various stakeholders on their recommendations for resources that may be needed to ensure successful implementation of the DEI Action Plan and the scope of the regular duties of the current DEI offices and the AVP-DEI role.

Metrics

We recommend benchmarking of the DEI divisions within the Big Ten and amongst UI’s other peer institutions as a first step for assessing needs.

Partners

For the AVP-DEI position to be most successful, we recommend the position have a more formalized connection to other DEI-associated roles on campus. These partnerships would bridge between the senior level administrators and individuals completing the day-to-day roles specifically associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Recommendation #2
Redesign the Advantage Iowa Scholarship with specific student success outcomes, as measured by retention and graduation rates and post-graduation outcomes; foster greater connections with the Honors and Research units.

Response #2
The DDEI began a data driven overhaul process of the Advantage Iowa (AI) Scholarship in 2016 that addresses key components of retention and graduation rates of the AI students. This overhaul continues with the support of strategic campus partners. Ongoing improvements to the current Advantage Iowa structure are anticipated through fall 2020. Some key highlights follow:

- Two years of metrics indicated an inability for a moderate number of students to retain their AI scholarship due to eligibility requirements. This issue was addressed by changing CDE’s outreach processes. These changes resulted in a decrease of AI loss by 27% in 2017. DDEI’s removal of event requirements as a mandatory component of retaining the award also has increased the number of students remaining eligible for their AI scholarships. CDE continues to see fewer students losing AI eligibility each academic year since 2017.

- Association of AI scholarship with a “free handout” or something negative is currently being addressed via a partnership with Admissions to model the award and marketing of AI after the Honors Program recruiting structure. From the recruiting stage to matriculation, messaging to AI students will be clearer, will involve a welcome letter and a letter of award signed by the AVP DEI, and AI students will be called AI Scholars to further reflect the inclusive excellence expected of them as UI students.

- Although AI students have higher retention and graduation rates than similar students who are not recipients of the AI scholarship, the DDEI has implemented a cohort-based AI program that will begin formally in fall 2019 which includes programming specific to student cohort levels. This programming will be evidence-based and supported by best practices for success of students with underrepresented identities.

- A proactive advising model was implemented in 2018 for AI recipients to further enhance graduation rates via scholarship retention.

- An application process for AI students will be implemented in fall 2020 to strategically connect students with CDE and academic coaches before matriculation and to mediate concerns about buy-in of scholarship eligibility requirements.

- The DDEI plans to increase student touchpoints via the CDE by not only focusing on first-year student outreach, but by carrying caseload contacts for all AI students through all four years.

- The program reviewers have recommended that the AI scholarship not be based on both academic merit and financial need, but to focus on the scholarship as simply an academic merit scholarship with any remaining need awarded from the Office of Student Financial Aid via the usual need-based pool. DDEI is open to further discussions with the Office of Student Financial Aid to determine if this approach is in the best interest of AI scholarship recipients as it relates to optimized financial aid packaging.

- Although the DDEI already has embarked on the process of improving the AI scholarship structure and experience for award recipients, the division plans to follow the program review recommendation of convening a campus-wide committee to research exemplary evidence-based practices for academic coaching/advising, identity-based programming, and academic programming for students with marginalized identities.
Resources Needed
Academic coaches within the CDE work with Advantage Iowa students, with non-AI students with marginalized identities, and also will be providing support to GEAR UP students matriculating in fall 2020. In order to implement the recommendation to increase positive student outcomes as measured by graduation and retention rates, the DDEI will benchmark ways to offer support to an increasing number of students without diminishing services. The hiring of an additional academic coach in the CDE may prove beneficial for the ability of CDE to offer on-going caseload management and student outreach to students until they graduate, since the updates to the AI support structure will quadruple the number of students on each caseload. In addition, NACADA best practices indicate an optimal number on advising caseloads for maximum effectiveness, and if caseloads are quadrupled without additional staff, the division will far exceed this best practice limit.

Metrics
Advantage Iowa deliverables will continue to be measured via retention and graduation rates, data reflecting scholarship fulfillment versus scholarship losses, and AI caseload contacts. CDE will implement an annual satisfaction survey as an additional means of accessing qualitative student data and began working on this project at the start of the fall 2019 semester.

Partners
CDE plans to develop the survey questions using feedback generated from CDE student liaisons.
Recommendation #3
Develop DEI-related metrics and utilize institutional systems for data collection and analysis.

Response #3
In summer of 2019, the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, in consultation with the Office of the Provost, convened a group of individuals whose primary job responsibilities included collecting data, creating and analyzing metrics, and distributing surveys. This group included individuals from the Office of the Provost, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Division of Student Life, University Human Resources, and the Graduate College. One of the primary goals of this group was to create a formalized process that allows individual units to make data-informed decisions without duplicating efforts across campus. A need stated in the Excellence through Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan was to generate a list of clear metrics used to measure diversity, equity, and inclusion. Such a list could include student retention and academic performance or overall satisfaction for faculty and staff at the University. The group will work to compile which surveys currently exist and which metrics are being collected. In addition, this group will consult with the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on the best process to continue campus climate research, survey assessments, and listening sessions every year.

The DDEI also plans on building centralized assessments to measure the success of programs, units, and initiatives. This will be addressed further in the unit specific recommendations.

Overall, the priority includes communication to the wider campus around what are the division’s expectations, achievements, and metrics of the work currently being done by its members. Additionally, DDEI needs to establish a clear understanding of university metrics used to engage the conversation related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Resources Needed
To best benefit the institution and the alignment with the strategic planning process, a clear charge from the Office of Provost and support from campus partners to make recommendations are critical to reach the desired outcomes.
**Recommendation #4: Center for Diversity and Enrichment**

**Recommendation 4.1 (CDE)**
The concerns around the historic high staff turnover within the CDE should be addressed. The committee recognizes that high staff turnover and low morale has been a concern in CDE for many years.

**Response 4.1 (CDE)**
The DDEI agrees that low morale due to feeling unappreciated, undervalued, and disrespected by campus constituents has historically played a part in high staff turnover for the CDE; however, Human Resources data indicates turnover in CDE is nuanced and not attributable to one specific factor. Competing family obligations, inability to build community in Iowa, academic pursuits, financial incentives/job competition, burn out, terminations, and other causes also have contributed to staff turnover. Currently, CDE staff can apply for other positions on campus that involve less work and commitments, with greater pay. It’s difficult to retain staff for the long haul with competitive salaries being offered elsewhere.

Program reviewers have recommended that efforts be made to make CDE staff feel substantially more valued on campus. In order to help stem turnover in CDE, increasing salaries is recommended. DDEI plans to benchmark salaries of staff in similar institutions doing similar work to guide decisions. DDEI has started working with HR to provide a market analysis of current salaries of staff. Program reviewers also have noted that CDE staff should be playing larger roles in campus change efforts. DDEI will help facilitate a larger discussion with relevant campus leaders about including CDE staff on committees, initiatives, and change efforts related to DEI where appropriate.

**Resources Needed**
Reallocation of DDEI funding could potentially support appropriate salary adjustments or additional staffing where needed. Continued benchmarking in this area is planned.

**Recommendation 4.2 (CDE)**
The AVP DEI should work with CDE staff and campus stakeholders to create a new mission, direction and strategic plan for CDE that are in-line with the paradigm shift and institutional strategic priorities.

**Response 4.2 (CDE)**
The AVP DEI position is currently vacant. CDE leadership is currently engaged in the process of updating the mission statement and strategic plan to align with the university paradigm shift.

**Recommendation 4.3 (CDE)**
The AVP DEI should institute a strategy to leverage resources in the CDE to assist with campus-wide training that equips faculty, staff, and students with the skills to work and learn across differences.
Response 4.3 (CDE)
A thread throughout this report is the observation that everyone in the campus community must embark upon and be held accountable for practicing these skills. Leveraging resources within the DDEI to lead these efforts across campus is critical.

Program reviewers have recommended that the AVP DEI should leverage CDE to assist with campus-wide trainings. The CDE has been leveraged as a resource to assist with campus-wide DEI training since 2015. CDE staff attend NCBI train-the-trainer and become NCBI affiliates. They work with the DR unit to provide DEI training via BUILD, NCBI, and other training initiatives. They also provide DEI training to student groups and campus partners where requested. All CDE staff are expected to attend BUILD and NCBI related training as part of their onboarding. DDEI plans to continue this expectation for CDE.

Recommendation 4.4 (CDE)
CDE should consider strengthening its partnerships with other units across campus that function in a student success and retention capacity.

Response 4.4 (CDE)
The program reviewers have recommended more collaboration between CDE and units that work with students across campus. CDE has over 50 existing relationships with campus partners and collaborates with them on the execution of various programs and initiatives. Some of these partnerships include, Admissions, Office of Student Financial Aid, College of Law, Hancher Auditorium, International Scholar and Student Services, Athletics, Multicultural and International Student Support and Engagement, School of Social Work, Academic Advising Center, Early Intervention Team, Tippie College of Business, Study Abroad, UI Libraries, Veteran Education and Transition Services, Residence Education, College of Engineering, ROTC, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences/Chemistry Department, University Housing and Dining, Student Wellness, Women’s Resource and Action Center, Writing Center, Orientation Services, Office of Academic Programs and Student Development, Pomerantz Career Center, University Counseling Services, College of Education, Student Disability Services, College of Nursing, Office of Graduate Inclusion, Jacobson Institute, Belin-Blank Center, Academic Support and Retention, and Student Legal Services.

Although the CDE has had strong existing partnerships across campus and within the community for many years, DDEI is amenable to strengthening existing collaborations and building new ones. Specifically, CDE leadership will build bridges with the Honors Program and with research units where relevant via outreach to discuss collaborative opportunities.

Recommendation 4.5 (CDE)
The review committee recommends that CDE use institutional systems and data to create a culture of data-informed decision-making in order to establish measurable outcomes for all programs.
Response 4.5 (CDE)
The program reviewers have recommended that DDEI should transition from using internal data systems to track student outcomes and utilize institutional-wide systems instead. DDEI, in particular the CDE, has utilized institutional systems to track success outcomes for many years. Internal systems are used only as depositories to store coaching session information and various milestones. CDE utilizes institutional-wide systems like MAUI to track student outcomes along with data query requests from Enrollment Services units and staff in Institutional Data. The CDE utilizes the institution’s SWIPE system in TRIO and is working on implementing it more broadly in its remaining units. The DDEI will continue to partner with campus partners for continued access to necessary institutional-wide systems.

Program reviewers also recommended hiring assessment staff within the CDE. The DDEI will utilize data and assessment expertise of staff within the division to provide data analytic support where relevant.

Resources Needed
DDEI plans to leverage existing departmental expertise as it relates to data collection and analytics.
Recommendation #4: Diversity Resources

Recommendation 4.1 (DR)
The AVP DEI should consider expanding Building University Iowa Leadership for Diversity (BUILD).

Response 4.1 (DR)
The expansion of the Building University of Iowa Leadership for Diversity (BUILD) certificate program has occurred through a couple of methods. First, the BUILD Plus program allows individuals to engage with the program outside of attending specific in-person sessions. BUILD Plus includes our coaching, meet-up, and passport opportunities. Coaching is a structured, non-judgmental, motivational resource that allows individuals to work one-on-one with a trained Diversity Resources member to set personal goals, synthesize training information, and problem-solve specific issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Participants will be able to have up to three 45-minute sessions. Meet Ups are a quarterly opportunity for BUILD certificate recipients to continue conversations, share learning, and engage in collective problem-solving with other BUILD certificate recipients. Sessions are designed to address real-time issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in your workplaces, home, or in nation. This structure allows for each session to connect to the specific needs or questions of the participants. The Passport allows faculty and staff to gain course credit by pursuing diversity, equity, inclusion activities on their own time.

Diversity Resources has also expanded the course offerings to include advanced sessions. Advanced sessions are for individuals who have completed their BUILD certificate and/or have extensive knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Resources Needed
In order to achieve this outcome, we need to continue leveraging existing resources as well as obtain at least 2-3 new full-time staff members to support the current BUILD trainings, advanced sessions, and Plus programs and the other initiatives within our office. Additional staff would help to fulfill departmental requests and increase development of resources. Finally, knowing that the effectiveness of training is enhanced with coaching indicates a need for more attention and hours dedicated to 1:1 engagement with participants who have attended our open sessions or observation of individuals who have completed our Train-the-Trainer sessions on unconscious bias, microaggressions, and difficult dialogues.

Recommendation 4.2 (DR)
DRT should consider expanding the BUILD training opportunities into UI Health Care.

Response 4.2 (DR)
In 2017, we began working with UI Health Care Human Resources to host BUILD session each semester at the hospitals. Thus far, we have hosted more than 20 sessions related to LGBTQ identity, how to have learning conversations, understanding difference, etc. We have also increased our engagement with different professional schools including the College of Pharmacy, College of Dentistry, the College of Nursing, and the Carver College of Medicine. It is important, however, to be sure to include the Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Carver College of Medicine, Dr. Denise Martinez, in engagements connected to UIHC given their charge to implement diversity trainings and professional development programs.
Additionally, we are not connecting to all parts of the hospitals. Our hope is to expand our contacts and work more intentionally with the professional schools in supporting their efforts at the hospital. We also want to continue our training work with the Veteran Affairs (VA) hospital.

Recommendation 4.3 (DR)
The review committee recommends expansion of online training offerings and capabilities.

Response 4.3 (DR)
There are two primary needs that could stem from this recommendation. First is the need to have supplemental tools and resources that are offered in an online format and the second need is to have online course or training offerings.

In response to supplemental tools and resources, University Human Resources has recently obtained a license or an online video creation site Vyond. We hope to utilize this program to expand quick video refresher resources. One way in which we hope to utilize the video tool is through creating an introductory clips on unconscious bias that can be coupled with an in-person training session. These would be offered primarily for search committees through the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Office of the Provost, and University Human Resources.

In order to address the need for online courses or trainings offered, we need to increase awareness about what our other peer institutions are doing to address the necessary resources for expanding in this manner. Our hope would be able to expand our methods for offering quality education to reach as many people as possible.

Recommendation 4.4 (DR)
DR should also consider designing executive BUILD training opportunities for campus leaders and administration.

Response 4.4 (DR)
For this recommendation, it is important to think about the opportunity to have a clear recommended path for individuals at different levels of the institution as well as different levels of learning. Besides possibly expanding resources to include online components, Diversity Resources has interest in hosting a BUILD institute for executives to obtain their certificate in a specific, more intensive amount of time. DR desires to be able to pilot this in summer of 2020. Given that this effort involving high-level leaders would stretch the current community of practice model, we will need to consider how to create a space of trust and vulnerability so the depth of learning can occur.
Recommendation #4: Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Recommendation 4.1 (EOD)
The AVP-DEI should consider reviewing staffing needs within EOD to determine if additional support/FTEs are needed.

Response 4.1 (EOD)
Since the university’s transition to a new talent acquisition system (OTAC) for staff positions in Sept. 2018, the role of EOD in the compliance review of the recruitment process for UI staff positions has changed. EOD now monitors compliance with federal and state laws and regulations and university policies by reviewing transactions processed with the OTAC system after offers of employment have been made. Prior to the transition from Jobs@UIOWA to OTAC, one of EOD’s staff members transferred to University Human Resources (UHR), resulting in a vacant line in the EEO/Affirmative Action compliance unit of EOD. This vacant line was used to hire another investigator in EOD’s Complaint Investigations Unit (CIU) to address the increased volume of complaints and inquiries made to EOD and to provide a timelier response to concerns raised to the office.

EOD will continue to monitor complaint volume and may recommend the addition of another position, either as a full-time ADA coordinator or as a 50% investigator/50% deputy ADA coordinator. EOD will work with UHR and the senior HR leader from the Provost’s Office to assess needs and benchmark with peer institutions.

EOD also has interest in assessing the current classifications of its compliance staff. This analysis will also be conducted in coordination with UHR and the Provost’s Office.

Finally, since the transfer of EOD’s secretary and associated budget line to UI Shared Services, the EOD office has been challenged in providing front office reception coverage and meeting other office support needs, (e.g., creating accessible documents for publication on EOD’s website and digitizing office records for long-term document retention). The office has begun to utilize student workers to provide some of the front office coverage but there is insufficient funding in EOD’s budget to provide this service full-time and year-round. EOD will ask the Provost or the AVP-DEI, once hired, to consider fully funding the cost of these reception services to ensure the prompt response to visitors and callers to the EOD suite. Due to the confidential nature of EOD’s work, we believe it is vital to provide front office coverage during all university business hours throughout the year.

Resources Needed
To be determined following the benchmarking and assessments with UHR and the Office of the Provost

Recommendation 4.2 (EOD)
The university should consider reaffirming the reporting line for EOD to the AVP DEI for the near future to provide the assurance of consistency to EOD staff members.
Response 4.2 (EOD)
The EOD staff concur with the external reviewers’ recommendation to have the UI administration reaffirm the reporting line of EOD to the AVP-DEI for the near future. Discussions occurred over the past year regarding having EOD report to the chief human resources officer and associate vice president rather than the AVP-DEI. The EOD staff greatly value the current reporting structure within the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DDEI) and believe it is consistent with best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion divisions at U.S. universities to have the equity and compliance office independent from their offices for human resources. The university is obligated to investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment in a prompt, neutral, thorough, and effective manner. University faculty, staff, and students who avail themselves of EOD’s services commonly mention that they appreciate the neutrality of the office.

Prolonged uncertainty regarding the reporting structure for the EOD office may lower morale amongst the staff and may lead some to pursue opportunities elsewhere. EOD invests considerable time and resources in the professional development of its investigative and compliance staff and is concerned about the potential loss of some of its talented and highly dedicated staff.

Recommendation 4.3 (EOD)
EOD should consider creating a database to collect and analyze complaints; perhaps through a sustainable program created in conjunction with Information Technology Services (ITS) or a commercial vendor.

Response 4.3 (EOD)
The EOD office has used a MS Access database for many years to track complaints filed with EOD, as well as the complaints filed with external agencies against the university. EOD staff also collaborate with the Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator (OSMRC) on its collection of data on all Title IX-related complaints, whether investigated by EOD or the Office of Student Accountability (OSA).

EOD will continue to evaluate its options for either enhancing its current Access database, purchasing a case management software system, or utilizing the same type of case management system used by OSMRC, which was developed internally at UI.

Resources Needed
To be determined following assessments of needs and benchmarking with peer institutions.

Recommendation 4.4 (EOD)
EOD should consider revising the unrealistic policy requirements for issuing investigative reports in 60 days. External analysis of realistic best practices timelines should be included in any policy revision.
Response 4.4 (EOD)

In November 2018, the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education, issued a proposed rule for improving schools’ responses to sexual harassment and sexual assault under Title IX regulations. This proposed rule brings the potential for substantial changes to university policies and procedures for the investigation and adjudication of complaints of sexual harassment / sexual misconduct. The University of Iowa will likely prefer to wait until the final rules have been issued by the U.S. Department of Education before changing its standard for the timely completion of complaint investigations. The university should also consider whether the university should have the same or similar standards for the timeliness of complaint investigations filed under other UI community policies, such as the Human Rights Policy and/or the Code of Student Life.

EOD will consult with the Office of the General Counsel, University Human Resources, the Office of Student Accountability, and OSMRC regarding a comprehensive review of applicable university policies for the resolution of complaints of discrimination or harassment, including Title IX complaints, to consider changing EOD’s current 60-day standard for the timely resolution of formal complaints. The committee should also conduct a benchmarking analysis of peer institutions and best practices before finalizing its recommendations.