

**University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign Senate**

Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion
EQ.18.03, Annual Report for 2017-2018
(Final; Information)

The Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion (EQ) is responsible for developing, encouraging, and evaluating the development of equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and guidelines that are intended to increase the numbers, and improve the status of minority groups across campus. The issues considered at length by EQ during the 2017-2018 academic year are below:

- **EQ.18.01, Resolution on Planned Termination of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Policy**
At the request of the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee, EQ drafted a resolution encouraging the University of Illinois to provide enhanced support to undocumented students emperilled by the termination of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA policy). The resolution was approved by the Senate on September 18, 2017.
- **EQ Committee Membership Proposal**
In the Spring of 2017, the EQ committee had made a proposal to the Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures for an expansion of EQ membership in order to more effectively reflect the diversity of faculty we are mandated to consider with regard to issues of campus climate and inclusion and to be able to more effectively handle through subcommittee work some of the investigation necessary to the issues we take up. We also had proposed an inclusion of community members on the committee, but this proposal was removed in a revision from the Senate floor. The revised proposal was approved as SP.17.15 (Revision to the *Bylaws*, Part D.10 – Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion) on November 15, 2017, and the requisite new members were added to the committee.
- **Recommendations on Chancellor’s Office ADVANCE grant proposal**
EQ made suggestions on an NSF ADVANCE grant proposal to support mentoring and other methods of increasing numbers of women faculty. Chair Oberdeck attended a meeting where the grant proposal was discussed by various stakeholders and supplied a letter of support.
- **Meeting with Chancellor Jones**
In recognition of Chancellor Jones’s request for discussion of committee concerns prior to Senate action, EQ requested a meeting with the Chancellor in early Spring 2018 to address our concerns of the lack of administrative effort to enforce the University’s policies regarding the retired Chief Illiniwek symbol. The meeting was held February 16, 2018. It involved an exchange of views about issues involving Native American imagery, particularly as they negatively impact the campus climate for underrepresented students, faculty and staff; demonstrated unequal policies toward Chief Illiniwek supporters as opposed to those concerned about these negative impacts; and plans for the Chancellor’s Critical Conversation program. The discussion also touched on other issues related to wider concerns for inclusion, including attention to disability accommodations, particularly for faculty and staff, and the timetable for the selection of the new Vice Chancellor for Diversity.

- **EQ.18.02, Resolution on Native American Imagery and University Climate**
In the wake of our discussion with the Chancellor, which revealed points of agreement as well as differences about the urgency for explicit policies on Native American imagery, EQ introduced EQ.18.02, which urged that the Critical Conversations provide a springboard for actions to put the “Chief” symbol in the University’s past, and that these actions include the rebuilding of American Indian Studies on campus and a commitment to the unit’s scholarship as a foundation for understanding Native American cultures, an enforcement of University policy with regard to its rights related to “Chief Illiniwek” and “Oskee-Wow-Wow,” and the removal of vestiges of offensive Native American imagery around campus to make the University more inclusive. The resolution was approved by the Senate on March 12, 2018.
- **Disability Issues**
Though preoccupied for much of the semester by the Native American Imagery issues that were raised by several campus events, EQ also worked to address issues of disability inclusion that had been outlined in a report produced for the Committee by members Tina Cowsert and JJ Pionke. The document addressed needs for enhanced education about disability accommodations and procedures among faculty and staff, support services, signage, and the greater institutional prioritization of disability issues necessary to move forward on these issues. EQ discussed the report at several meetings and resolved at the end of the year to investigate reasons why, among other things, response time to accommodation requests for faculty and needed education on disability issues were so slow. This plan has yet to be implemented and should be among the priority agenda issues for next year.
- **Strategic Plan Diversity Document**
EQ reviewed the Diversity and Inclusion Goals and Actions report for the Strategic Plan and developed a document with several recommendations. These were still in draft form at the end of the year but will be forwarded to the appropriate representatives in the Office of the Provost in June 2018.
- **Native American Imagery and Campus Climate**
Concerned about continued controversy over campus policy on Native American Imagery, EQ invited several faculty and emeriti who had been active in addressing this issue over several decades to talk to Committee members about their perspectives on the ongoing issues. The conversation revealed varied views on issues such as student leadership and potential committee strategy going forward, which will no doubt continue to be addressed in Committee agendas for the coming year.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND INCLUSION

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