



Northern Illinois
University

3-year Plan to Improve NIU Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Dr. Edghill-Walden, Chief Diversity Officer

The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force convened in May 2014 at the request of Dr. Douglas Baker, President of NIU and Dr. Lisa Freeman, Executive Vice-President and Provost. The Task Force consisted of sixteen members, both faculty and staff, and was chaired by Associate Vice-President/Director of Athletics Sean Frazier and Professor Laura Vazquez of the Department of Communication. The group was charged with exploring issues that pertain to diversity and inclusion at NIU with the ultimate goal of doing some of the groundwork for the hiring of NIU's first Chief Diversity Officer.

The task force completed their work and produced a [thorough report](#) released in fall 2014. This report consisted of thirteen recommendations, which are the foundation of Dr. Edghill-Walden's plan for improving the university commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The key initiatives informing the plan to improve NIU center around access, academic equity, inclusion and professional development & trainings. The following action items all fall under one or a combination of these four key initiatives.

In spring 2016 we continue to engage faculty in curricular transformations to enhance student learning and to improve academic equity at NIU.

The Committee for Multicultural Curriculum Transformation (CMCT) is laying the groundwork to add a mandatory human diversity requirement with a target implementation date in fall 2017 to positively impact academic equity at NIU.

In spring 2016 NIU began utilizing the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Equity Academy plan as a blueprint to address academic equity gaps.

Working with existing partners across the university such as: the four Presidential Commissions; SAEM Equity and Inclusion Committee; Affirmative Action, Equity & Compliance Committee;

and CMCT, we have begun work to enhance lateral diversity relationships and implement organizational diversity socialization in spring 2016. We are empowering existing committees and commissions to inform our goal of creating a more equitable and inclusive environment at NIU.

Beginning in summer 2016, we will develop diversity strategic plan templates that colleges and departments across the university can adopt and adjust to address specific needs in their unique areas. These plans will also include accountability and assessment measures and will address access and academic equity at NIU.

Work to expand and support diversity programming for students to eliminate silos and improve coordination with student groups will begin in fall 2016. These efforts will improve access and inclusion efforts at NIU.

In fall 2016 we will utilize the college-level strategic plans to inform hiring practices to diversify NIU's faculty and staff which will improve inclusion at NIU.

Key to Inclusion, the first in a series of monthly strategic campus-wide [facilitated dialogues](#) will take place in March 2016. The second dialogue will take place in April 2016 and will help NIU launch the Presidential Commission on Interfaith Initiatives. The dialogues will continue in September 2016.

To ensure we are on the right track, we will conduct a comprehensive campus climate survey addressing diversity needs and to improve Inclusion at NIU. The survey will be offered annually beginning in Spring 2016. We will begin in April with the Campus Experience Climate Survey related to sexual misconduct.

In Summer 2016 we will begin work to develop measurable and sustainable Professional Development & Training to educate faculty, staff and students on cultural competency which will strengthen hiring practices for faculty and staff diversification and improve diversity dialogues on campus.