

**GEMS and EPC
Diversity Taskforce
Report to BFC – April 2017**

Context: In April of 2016 the BFC passed a Resolution on Diversity which states: “The Bloomington Faculty Council adopted a resolution calling on the Educational Policies Committee for 2016-17 to explore the addition of an enhanced diversity requirement to the General Education requirements.”

After consultation with the Chair of the EPC Simon Brassell and GEC co- chairs VP Dennis Groth and Jonathan Michaelsen, it was determined that a joint committee composed of members from the EPC and GEC be formed to make recommendations regarding the BFC’s charge. A call was sent to each committee and anyone that volunteered was invited to be part of the taskforce. The committee fully embraced its charge with all members expressing the need for a fresh look at the critical need to educate IU students in Diversity in the United States.

This taskforce was formed in early March 2017 and has met four times, deliberating and fashioning what is written below. This timeframe has not given the taskforce a chance to investigate all the issues that the BFC’s charge implies or to hear the opinions of members from the IU community outside the taskforce.

With these caveats, the Committee offers the following recommendations:

1. Changing the language of the original 1990 BFC resolution (Circular B39 – 1990) from “each degree-granting unit should adopt a degree requirement appropriate to their curriculum that addresses issues of diversity in the United States.” To “each degree-granting unit **“must”** adopt a degree requirement appropriate to their curriculum that addresses issues of diversity in the United States.” Thus clarifies the intent from “should” to “must”.
2. A student’s experience with Diversity in the United States on the Bloomington campus shall include two components:
 - a. An academic requirement. This requirement is already in place (Circular B-39 1990), however from a recent survey of Schools it appears that compliance varieties widely – from no educational component to a broad range of courses addressing Diversity in the United States. The taskforce has discussed several options that would hopefully address this lack of consistency among academic units on campus. (See #5. below)
 - a. A co-curricular, social/experiential component. This component provides experiences in diversity outside the classroom.

The more these two components can be coordinated and intentionally designed together, the greater the impact on students and the campus.

3. In order to facilitate the implementation of both the academic and co-curricular components, the taskforce recommends creating the following committee structure:

- a. A committee that defines Diversity in the United States and establishes clear Learning Outcomes for IU students.
 - b. A committee that creates a plan for implementation of the academic component (possibly a sub-committee of GEC) and establishes ways that the Learning Outcomes are met.
 - c. Charge the Offices of Undergraduate Studies and Student Affairs with creating a co-curricular structure for engaging students in meaningful diversity experiences outside the classroom.
4. The committee recommends that the co-curricular component be introduced as part of a student's first year experience and that every attempt be made to have the academic component be fulfilled as early as possible in a student's career at IU.
5. While 3.b. above suggests that a future committee address implementation plans for an enhanced diversity component, the taskforce did debate a number of structural approaches to meeting the BFC's charge and offers three possibilities (5.a-c.).

- a. Require all IU students to have a common course in diversity regardless of their School or major in the College. This approach has the advantage of allowing the campus to thoughtfully create a course in diversity, designed by faculty and staff who have expertise in this topic and would provide all students with a shared experience. It would also allow depth and breadth in examining issues of Diversity in the United States, something that is not always apparent in the way this requirement is currently being fulfilled in the General Education curriculum.

It would also be a bold action by IUB and make a clear statement to our students and other constituencies on and off campus.

There are several difficulties with this approach. Certain Schools and majors would need to make room for this single course in a curriculum that is very full. Teaching such a large course would require additional resources and training of instructors. Finding times and rooms etc. to teach a campus wide course could also be challenging.

- b. Another approach would be to continue allowing the College and Schools to address this requirement, but form a campus wide committee that would define "Diversity in the United States" for the campus and identify specific Learning Outcomes.

Meeting these outcomes could take two forms: a stand-alone course or ways to infuse a curriculum with a number of components that speak to diversity and satisfy the prescribed Learning Outcomes.

In order to ensure that the College and the Schools are addressing diversity in a meaningful way, guidelines would be created and the College and Schools would submit their plans to a campus wide committee for approval.

This approach has the advantage of allowing the College and Schools to incorporate diversity components into their existing curriculum, yet creates a structure and standards by which the College and Schools are both guided in how to meet this requirement and judged as to whether they are fulfilling it.

The disadvantage of this approach is that student education in diversity could be seen as an add-on or afterthought to a curriculum already in place. The fear is that the College and Schools might have courses that can double or even triple dip, shortchanging the diversity component of a student's education. Also certain Schools may not have the expertise to teach an in-depth course in diversity or introduce diversity into a curriculum in a meaningful way.

- c. A hybrid was suggested using the following structure. A committee from the College would be created that would work with each School to establish diversity components within their curriculum. This would have the advantage of giving each School some leeway in fulfilling this requirement, yet provide area expertise from the College.

The difficulty to this approach is forming a committee from the College that would be acceptable to the Schools and creating an open environment for conducting this work and a timetable for completion.

This approach would change the diversity mandate within the General Education requirements from "Shared Goals" to "Common Ground."

Note – any plan would take the following into account: An enhanced Diversity in the U.S. academic requirement could be implemented either as part of the IUB GenEd Common Ground or as one of the IUB GenEd Shared Goals. Currently it is a Shared Goal. Whether it remains a Shared Goal or becomes part of the Common Ground, the definition of Diversity in the U.S. and the appropriate student learning outcomes could be specified and overseen by a campus-wide committee (possibly a subcommittee of the GEC). If Diversity in the U.S. remains a Shared Goal, the schools and the College would be responsible for determining how the learning outcomes should be implemented within each degree program. If Diversity in the U.S. is moved from the Shared Goals to the Common Ground, all undergraduate students, regardless of school and/or degree program, would fulfill the same requirement. There would be a single requirement for all students.

Conclusion

As stated above, four meetings allows little time to work through all the elements of this important issue, however the taskforce wishes to express the urgency it feels in moving from plans to actions in introducing meaningful change to address issues of diversity within the General Education curriculum.

I am extremely grateful to the taskforce members for their hard work and collegiality. Each member was thoughtful and willing to openly discuss this important issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Michaelsen, Chair
GEC and EPC Diversity Taskforce

At our final meeting the following representation was present: 5 members from the College, 3 members from JSOM, 1 member from the College/Music, 1 member from Kelly, 1 member from OUPUE, and 1 student from SPEA.

Committee Members: Wilkerson, Michael Neil; Isaacson, Eric John; 'Ryan Arick'; Maltese, Adam Vincent; Lucaites, John Louis; Strand, Katherine Dagmar; Cohen, Judah M; Deliyannis, Constantine P.; Estell, David B.; Mowatt, Rasul A; Vargo, Susan S.; Hurley, Mark I; Arick, Ryan; Williams, Latosha M.; Groth, Dennis Patrick; Lundell, Michael W.