

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
(Final; Information)

EQ.24.04 2023-2024 Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This report summarizes the activities of the Senate Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (EQ) during the 2023-2024 academic year. EQ held three meetings during the fall 2023 semester (September 21, October 26, November 30) and three meetings during the spring 2024 semester (February 13, March 5, April 9). More detailed information is provided in the minutes of those meetings.

EQ received relevant updates from *ex officio* members including representatives from Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

I. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA

EQ.24.01, Campus Climate Survey

The purpose of the University of Illinois All Campus Climate Assessment Initiative is to examine whether our university's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are reflected in the daily experiences of students, faculty, and staff. The assessment will begin with a diversity, equity and inclusion climate survey that will be administered during the Fall 2023 semester. Analyzing and understanding the responses to the Fall 2023 survey will allow us to better understand what is going well and the current challenges to creating a campus climate that is respectful and inclusive for all.

The Campus Climate Survey was open from November 7, 2023 – December 15, 2023. The results of the survey will be available to the campus in Fall 2024.

EQ.24.02, Campus Belonging Discussion

Abdullah-Span shared information regarding Campus Belonging. Campus Belonging is a resource focused on addressing bias incidents that impact the campus community. Campus Belonging, through its educational and reporting processes, encourages understanding of others' perspectives, identities, and lived experiences. Processes are designed with the goal of ensuring that the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is an equitable and inclusive community for all.

II. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE

EQ.24.03, Safety and Accessibility Issues in Ethnic, Gender, and Women's Studies

The committee discussed the safety and accessibility issues in ethnic, gender, and women's studies. The committee invited department heads/chairs of the effected units to the April 9 EQ

meeting. Representatives from the Gender and Women's (GWS), African American, and Latina/Latino Studies Programs attended the meeting to discuss their concerns regarding the structural safety, accessibility, and security of the buildings that house their departments. Leakage and flood damage have made portions of the GWS house inoperative and unsafe. Attempts to supplement the heating system with space heaters have caused power outages. Lack of cameras at building entrances also poses a threat to the safety and security of people in the building. Students, faculty, and staff with mobility challenges cannot access the second floor of the building which houses faculty offices. Personnel have been trapped inside their office due to faulty door locks.

Faculty members from African American and Latina/Latino Studies Departments also expressed concerns about the lack of accessibility to second floor offices in those departments and the inability to accommodate wheelchairs in the buildings, chipped and peeling paint, and substandard technology infrastructure.

While there are current plans for a new facility to house the Ethnic and GWS departments, it is anticipated to be 4-5 years before that space will be available. It is imperative that University faculty, staff, students, and guests have space in the E/GWS departments that are accessible, safe, secure, and functional. It is inconsistent with an integrated and values centered budgeting philosophy when departments focused on DEI are housed in facilities that inaccessible and unsafe. In addition to demoralizing current students, faculty, and staff in these departments, the facilities impede recruitment and retention of talented students, faculty, and staff. Hiring requests for GWS have been denied due to lack of office space for the prospective personnel. It is not feasible to admit students or hire personnel with mobility challenges when the facilities are not accessible.

It is imperative that funds be allocated to make the repairs and renovations needed to bring these facilities up to fire, safety, and accessibility standards by the start of fall semester 2024. If the needed repairs and renovations are cost-prohibitive or will extend beyond fall semester 2024, these departments must be prioritized for the allocation of temporary space.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

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