

September 10, 2020

**Addressing Racism and Social Injustice at the University of Illinois: Steering Committee**

Sean C. Garrick, Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Chair  
Christopher Ackerman-Avila, Vice President, Illinois Student Government  
James Anderson, Dean, College of Education  
Matthew Ando, Professor, Department of Mathematics  
Jennifer Bernhard, Associate Dean, Grainger College of Engineering  
Jeffrey Brown, Dean, Gies College of Business  
Danita Brown Young, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs  
Antoinette Burton, Director, Humanities Research Institute  
Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko, Dean, Graduate College  
Margareth Etienne, Associate Dean, College of Law  
Kevin Hamilton, Dean, College of Fine & Applied Arts  
Wendy Heller, Professor, Department of Psychology  
Jonathan Inda, Chair, Department of Latina/Latino Studies  
King Li, Dean, Carle Illinois College of Medicine  
Reitumetse Mabokela, Vice Provost for International Affairs and Global Strategies  
Kevin Pitts, Vice Provost, Office of the Provost  
Gene Robinson, Interim Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
Michael Schlosser, Director, Police Training Institute  
Wanda Ward, Executive Associate Chancellor for Administration and University Relations  
Gioconda Guerra Pérez, Executive Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity (*ex officio*)  
Elizabeth K. Tsukahara, Assistant Director for Communications, OVCDEI (*ex officio*)  
Holly Clingan, Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (Staffing and Support)

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the *Addressing Racism and Social Injustice at the University of Illinois: Steering Committee*. Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Sean Garrick will chair this committee and Holly Clingan will provide staffing and support.

As I stated in my message to the campus community announcing the Call to Action to Address Racism and Social Injustice, this steering committee will lay out a framework for how our university can take the steps forward necessary to dismantle systemic racism and injustice at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Institutional change requires institutional action, and I ask that the work of the steering committee begin from the foundational acknowledgement that systemic racism exists at the University of Illinois within our practices, processes, culture, and structures. We have the responsibility to take the intentional, considered actions necessary to address these historical and institutional inequities. It is now time for our university to place its

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deep abundance of knowledge, will, hopes, and expertise into motion to consider the necessary and difficult questions that we need to ask of ourselves as a university.

I ask that your committee:

- Review the role of the university in addressing systemic racism and social injustice on our campus in ways that can impact our community, the larger society and nation.
- Identify institutional gaps and barriers to the success of current and new diversity and inclusion programs or initiatives.
- Develop processes, structures, and action plans that establish the foundation for lasting, positive systemic change throughout the University of Illinois.
- Build the continuity and structures necessary for sustained university commitment and initiatives.
- Identify timelines and achievable milestones to facilitate the implementation of action steps and recommendations.
- Develop the accountability measures necessary to produce honest evaluations of effectiveness, critical assessments, and recommendations for future improvement.

The charge of this committee, then, is to focus on the concrete actions that the university can take that will result in measurable and lasting structural change at the University of Illinois. These actions may include, but are not limited to addressing racial bias, barriers to opportunity and access, campus climate, decision-making processes, and assumptions that can be structural impediments to institutional equity, inclusion, and belonging. These actions should be comprehensive in scope, thoughtful, transparent and prioritize steps that this university can take by the end of the coming academic year.

In your discussions and action plans, I ask that you be guided by these core principles:

- Embed racial equity and inclusion as foundational values throughout a University of Illinois educational and workplace experience, as well as its public engagement.
- Prioritize concrete action steps and plans that will lead to positive, lasting change.
- Establish processes that are bold, open, generative, collaborative, transparent, and respectful of our traditions of shared governance.

As the first step in this process, I ask that the steering committee coordinate the charging and activities of the following working groups, including deadlines for interim reports and communications expectations between the groups and the steering committee.

- **Teaching and Scholarship** (Chairs: Dean James Anderson and Vice Provost Kevin Pitts)
- **Diversity and a Culture of Inclusion** (Chairs: Humanities Research Institute Director Antoinette Burton and Dean Kevin Hamilton)
- **Public Safety, Policing, and the Justice System** (Associate Dean Margareth Etienne and Police Training Institute Director Michael Schlosser)



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- **Community Action and Public Engagement** (Executive Associate Chancellor Wanda Ward and Vice Chancellor Danita Brown Young)

Holly Clingan will soon be in contact with you to coordinate your first meeting. I request to receive a final report from the steering committee by **June 1, 2021**.

I thank you for your service as we transform the capacity of the University of Illinois to create a more just society.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Jones  
Chancellor