



A Mosaic for UIC Transformation

Diversity Strategic Plan

2012

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation: Diversity Strategic Plan

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Introduction: A Mosaic for UIC Transformation

The UIC Diversity Strategic Plan, entitled *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation*, marks a pivotal point in UIC's history, designed with the intention of guiding UIC towards achieving diversity and equity in all levels of our campus community and activities. It unifies the past work of many who often toiled in isolation to advance principles of inclusion, access and equity at UIC with the present activities of each student, staff or faculty member who share the responsibility of realizing the UIC vision for diversity.

Through the University of Illinois strategic planning process, a priority emerged for UIC: “develop UIC as the nation’s premier urban public research university.” UIC added that this priority was envisioned by providing “access to excellence and success.” The Diversity Strategic Plan lays out “an effective strategy execution for realizing the University’s priorities” as well as UIC’s “preeminent vision of access to excellence and success.” It reaffirms the assertion made in the Diversity Thinking Process, *Through the Lens of Diversity*: “Diversity is the essence of UIC’s character and reputation.” It recognizes UIC’s unique role as the major public research university in the City of Chicago in fulfilling its mission of teaching, research, and service by bringing diversity into our curriculum, scholarship, and service. Besides receiving the resulting benefits of diversity in learning, creativity and innovation, UIC also seeks to acquire its transformative values as evidenced in inquiry and discussion, practiced in residential and extracurricular living, applied in public service and exercised in institutional decision-making. As such it is a document of significant importance to every member of the UIC community and to the public we serve.

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation adopts a definition of “broad diversity” encompassing the totality of many factors that impact inclusion, access and success. Although diversity accords particular emphasis to groups that have been historically under represented, excluded, marginalized or discriminated against in access to higher education, broad diversity is not limited to these groups. Nor is it restricted in its definition to characteristics of people but extends to action. It is wide ranging in its breadth of activities as well as pervasive in the climate it creates. And while “broad diversity” adheres to the defined path of legal compliance, it is not afraid to blaze new paths through advocacy, equity, or social action. This *Mosaic* brings all of these varied components together in a comprehensive, focused, campus-wide strategic diversity framework.

This diversity strategic plan calls upon the campus community to:

- Agree upon and work towards achieving a shared set of goals
- Coordinate our efforts and resources in order to achieve the goals
- Maintain our focus on achieving these goals yet be ready to adapt without sacrificing our core commitment
- Accept this commitment as a collective undertaking, not the work of a few but the duty of all.

The goals of *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* permeate all aspects of the campus. In doing so, it seeks to reinforce and renew our commitment, highlight our successes and ensure the plan’s sustainability.

This Mosaic is the Work of Many

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation was formulated by many, who over a three-year period continued the decades-long efforts of committed yet frequently isolated staff and faculty who have worked to make UIC a truly public university. Hundreds of individuals participated in different settings for the purpose of dialogue and deliberation about diversity. There were committees, advisory groups, town hall meetings, comments gathered from website feedback, campus leadership retreats and workgroups.

The Plan was developed through a multi-staged process. The first stage was a process of institutional self-examination in regards to diversity at UIC. It allowed for the respectful sharing of independent views, questions and discussion in order to gain a more robust understanding of UIC's context and identification with this issue. The diversity strategic thinking process resulted in *Through the Lens of Diversity*, a document defining core values, vision and mission of strategic diversity at UIC. The diversity strategic thinking process established the platform for setting goals and developing an action plan designed to meet those goals.

With this as a foundation, work groups and subcommittees were formed to identify goals, objectives and activities for the campus. College and major administrative units formed similar teams to develop plans specific for them. At the University level, all three campuses are participating in a climate survey and chancellors have been charged with examining diversity for students and faculty. *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* is intended to be read with *Through the Lens of Diversity*, college and major administrative unit diversity plans and University of Illinois diversity efforts.

A Time for a Diversity Strategic Plan

Some may view a time of competing demands for diminishing resources as an inopportune environment for advancing *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation*. But the diversity thinking process, feedback received and the strategic planning process have uniformly observed that there are both external and internal reasons for now being the right time.

First, time does not wait to do what is right. Our ethical responsibility compels us to recognize a basic human right that everyone should have access to learn, excel and succeed in public higher education. *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* acts upon the belief in this right and accepts responsibility for its implementation.

Secondly, this time of competing demands makes diversity an easier target for those who contend that systemic racism and sexism has come to an end and that the America of today is color-blind, particularly in public higher education. Unfortunately, a time of competing demands is also a time when the gaps in racial and gender equity widen in our society. It is therefore a time to reaffirm, renew and clarify our commitment to offer access, advance excellence and attain success to those who have historically been denied full participation in higher education.

Thirdly, recent federal and state funding reductions require public universities to clearly define their priorities as they deal with the many decisions that lie ahead. The on-going review and restructuring of administrative functions at the University of Illinois for the purpose of containing and reducing costs reminds us of the importance of defining priorities and the benefits to be derived from them. A deliberate plan outlining diversity priorities will not only reinforce the important work done by many offices on campus but it will also demonstrate that the rewards and benefits of diversity are shared by all members of the community. It will also ensure that diversity efforts are focused on shared goals, that they are coordinated, that they are consistently reviewed and measured for outcomes. It will build a climate, marked by a culture committed to diversity and a structure

designed to achieve it. Above all, A Mosaic for UIC Transformation will advance both the institutional mission and our campus' vision.

In conclusion, the forecast of diminishing resources should not deter UIC from developing and implementing a diversity strategic plan. To the contrary, current circumstances point to this being an optimal time for an undertaking that bears a cost to be paid with our institutional will and shared commitment.

Diversity Defined

As we move ahead in this initiative it is important to read this document and pursue this commitment with a shared definition of diversity that conforms to our vision and mission. UIC's usage of the term "diversity" is intended as a reaffirmation of our commitment to "the principles of inclusion, access and equity with an emphasis on groups that have been historically underrepresented, excluded, marginalized, or discriminated against" (*Through the Lens of Diversity*). This same text continues to explicitly define the term first noting that it is borrowing from UIC's College of Education.

Diversity

"...the totality of the many ways that people are similar and different-including by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation and identity, disability, national origin and citizenship status, age, language, culture, religion, and economic status..."

Through the Lens of Diversity

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation endorses this definition of "broad diversity." It emphasizes however that diversity is not limited to characteristics of people: it must also extend to action. It should be pervasive in its scope, addressing a range of activities, looking at specific acts but inclusively broadened to the evolution of a campus culture that encourages the success of each individual. It expands beyond compliance with requisite laws and policies, recognizing access, support, advocacy, equity, and social action. Where feasible, it will look at outcomes by groups. Yet without losing sight of the importance of race and ethnicity, it encompasses many groups, and differences within those groups.

Furthermore equity and fairness constitute a form of diversity, practiced to eliminate intentional or unintentional bias that impacts outcomes. Equity and fairness must be addressed as they are essential elements that affect environmental diversity, the climate and how an individual feels valued or devalued at the university. As it works to achieve strategic diversity in the UIC setting, race, ethnicity and gender will invariably be foremost in its assessment of access, equity and social justice status at UIC. The call to social justice will also point to other groups traditionally denied access to higher education, such as persons with disabilities, and to groups denied equal benefits or fair treatment.

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation specifically speaks to addressing economic status and access to higher education. Because race has historically had an impact on socio-economic status, and consequently affects access as well as attainment, it is expected that race and ethnicity will play a prominent part in assessing UIC's diversity successes and shortfalls.

The Purpose of this Strategic Plan

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation incorporates and builds upon UIC strategic initiatives, in partnership with those related documents, reaffirming stated values and goals. A review of the UIC Strategic Thinking and Planning Process and subsequent strategic actions demonstrate recurring and consistent themes also evident in the Diversity Thinking and Planning Process. This congruency, neither impaired by the passage of time nor the change in personalities, speaks to the universality of our institutional identity and values. *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* embraces a vision of a more egalitarian society where a decidedly diverse student population has access to a public research institution with the expectation that academic excellence and success will be achieved.

This campus vision became the starting point for formulating Vision and Mission Statements for *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation*. The Diversity Vision and Mission statements as articulated below emphasize that as the premier public research urban university, UIC will be noted for its diversity achievements, particularly in the active engagement of its diverse cultures, identities, voices and perspectives in our scholarship, service and teaching.

Diversity Mission

As a public research university in the City of Chicago, UIC will take advantage of and build upon its diversity to create, share and apply knowledge that prepares people for citizenship in a changing global society. While diversity of its members will be apparent, UIC will be known as an institution of higher education where diversity is a cornerstone of its intellectual achievement. UIC's diversity boundaries will not be limited to the campus but instead will extend to the communities of Chicago and the citizens of the State of which we are part and of whom we serve.

Diversity Vision

As the nation's premier urban public research university, UIC will be known as an institution where neither difference nor disadvantage stands in the way of intellectual and professional ambition; where each individual member of its community realizes his or her full capacity for creativity, innovation and service; and where the promise of equal opportunity is a reality.

Values

Foundational to the UIC Strategic Plan was the articulation of core values identified as, “so essential to UIC that they inform every element of individual and institutional practice.” They include: Knowledge, Openness, Access, Excellence, Collaboration and Caring.

With these values as fundamental to our institutional culture, we further state our commitment to diversity, which must extend beyond policies and statements, to ensure our campus climate makes all our community members feel welcomed and valued. As such these are the values that have emerged as essential to a truly diverse university and must be infused in every aspect of the work of the university:

Human Dignity

- UIC has a responsibility to help all our students, faculty, staff, alumni and communities achieve excellence.
- UIC has a responsibility to value the excellence within each student, faculty, staff member, alumnus/a and community.

Affirmative Action

- UIC has a responsibility to provide opportunities to those from groups who have historically been denied access to universities due to discrimination.
- UIC has a responsibility to encourage meaningful participation from all who come to study, teach, create knowledge or work.

Social Action

- UIC has a responsibility to provide education, health care and leadership to our diverse communities.
- UIC has a responsibility to learn from our diverse communities.

Social Justice

- UIC has a responsibility to help create an egalitarian society through education, knowledge making and employment practices.
- UIC has a responsibility to continually monitor the demographics and expressed needs and aspirations of our students, faculty, staff, alumni and external communities so we can make educated and informed decisions about recruitment and services consistent with the campus’s commitment to broad and deep diversity.

Creating Knowledge

- UIC has a responsibility to use every available approach to creating knowledge.
- UIC has a responsibility to create knowledge that serves our diverse communities on- and off- campus.

Accountable Leadership

- UIC has a responsibility to create mechanisms that increase access to decision-making and power to all groups that constitute the university.
- UIC has a responsibility to assure that those in positions of decision making and power actively advance positive institutional transformation.

Trust

- UIC has a responsibility to promote and foster a climate of trust based on respect for individual identities, shared values and our vision for the university.
- UIC has a responsibility to create a safe climate that allows us to honestly and fearlessly discuss building and embracing a stronger, more diverse campus community.

Five Year Goals for Campus, College and Major Unit Plans

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation identifies seven goals formulated to integrate diversity into our University and campus mission. Each goal has two to five sub goals or objectives, followed by activities intended to further the attainment of the goals. The plan will unfold over a five year period.

It is acknowledged that during this five-year period, circumstances may require that some activities be refined or modified. The exercise of responsible flexibility in such cases allows for the adaptation of specific activities while still adhering to the underlying intention of the goal and its supporting objectives.

Colleges and major administrative units will share leadership and responsibility for diversity commitments. While the campus provides the framework of leadership, coordination and institutional commitment, colleges and major administrative units will set specific targets and implement actions appropriate to their varied settings. Therefore, *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* is intended to be read in conjunction with college and unit plans.

Goal 1: UIC will establish an organization for diversity structure that reflects its vision as a fundamental institutional value supported and realized through shared leadership and responsibility.

1.1 UIC will undertake a comprehensive inventory of diversity-related activities, programs, and services for the purpose of assessing and adopting an organizational model that leads through coordination while promoting shared responsibility for achieving its diversity strategic goals.

- a. The Chancellor and Provost will charge a Task Force to collect information from all campus and college offices that perform services or functions intended to further diversity objectives. Information gathered will identify functions performed, volume of activity, quality of outcomes achieved, staffing effort and resources expended.
- b. The Chancellor and Provost will then invite a small group of external diversity experts in higher education to review all information gathered by the Task Force for the purpose of providing an external assessment of a potential organizational model or models that will enable UIC to realize its vision for achieving access, excellence and equity through diversity.
- c. The Chancellor and Provost will then be advised by a select group of those with expertise in diversity at UIC as well as senior level administrators to review information gathered from the inventory of services, organizational models examined by the external experts, and *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation*. This group will be charged to recommend the organizational model best suited to UIC's needs, to identify any gaps in services that must be addressed in the new organizational model and to develop a resource plan needed for the diversity structure.
- d. The process of this review and its results will be broadly disseminated to the campus.
- e. An institutional diversity leader reporting to both the Provost and the Chancellor will be appointed and have the title Vice-Provost for Diversity and Senior Advisor to the Chancellor (hereafter referred to as VP-SAC) will be appointed to direct a permanent office of diversity and be accorded authority, access and resources to properly execute the duties assigned.
- f. The Chancellor will define how the functions of the Office of Access and Equity and the Office of Diversity are coordinated and their respective reporting structure.
- g. The institutional diversity structure adopted by UIC will be assessed three years after it has been established. Thereafter it will be subject to a five-year review process.

1.2 The campus institutional diversity leader (VP-SAC) and the Office will be transparent in its practices, intentional in priorities, and collaborative in sharing responsibility for diversity across campus and within colleges.

- a. The VP-SAC will be advised by a council comprised of campus diversity experts, scholars, practitioners and campus or college administrators. Known as the Diversity Advisory Council, it will meet regularly to assess progress and assist in identifying priorities.
- b. Each college and VC unit will establish a diversity and equity committee. The chair of this committee will report directly to its respective Dean or Vice Chancellor. Among the committees' tasks will be the setting of the college/units' annual diversity goals and monitoring progress towards meeting those goals. The chairs of these committees will meet regularly as the Campus Diversity Planning Council.
- c. The VP-SAC will guide and coordinate college and VC unit diversity planning efforts, ensuring conformance to UIC's strategic diversity goals and standards.
- d. The VP-SAC in collaboration with the respective Dean or Vice Chancellor will ensure consistency of college and unit missions with campus goals on diversity, access and excellence.
- e. The VP-SAC will engage and collaborate with colleges and units in vertical and horizontal development of their diversity initiatives.
- f. The VP-SAC will consult with numerous campus groups and offices to develop diversity benchmarks, indicators, and outcomes that will be used to assess the effectiveness of our activities and their impact on diversity.
- g. The VP-SAC will ensure that tracking of diversity objectives and impact is done in an effective and regular manner.
- h. The VP-SAC will develop a UIC Equity Scorecard-like assessment tool to benchmark outcomes indicative of achieving equity across racial, ethnic and gender groups.
- i. The VP-SAC will give an annual report to full Senate, Deans and other appropriate administrative entities on the status of diversity. The annual report will also be posted on-line.

Leadership and Responsibility

Without diminishing the importance of institutional, individual or shared responsibility in fulfilling our commitment to diversity, it was nevertheless recognized that the lack of a designated leader in diversity can result in a proliferation of uncoordinated and redundant efforts, or subject it to inconsistent application in making key decisions, thereby failing to impact a sustaining institutional culture. It was proposed that enhanced performance in diversity and equity would require institutional leadership that fosters responsibility for sustained diversity attainment throughout the levels of UIC. It requires a skillful pilot to stay the course if we are to weather the storms of change endemic to a large university. The VP-SAC will be responsible for creating and leading the Office of Diversity. Diversity efforts must be **transparent and intentional**: deliberately communicating with the campus community, not only our diversity and equity priorities but also a resource plan to accomplish those priorities, as well as measuring and assessing them. Diversity efforts will be intentional and purposeful by acknowledging problem areas and finding solutions.

Principles to be taken into account in defining an organizational model for organizational structure focused on responsibility and leadership. Responsibility for diversity is perceived to operate on three levels, all of which should be operative in a new organization structure for diversity at UIC. Activities have been devised to relate to the various levels of responsibility, namely while one activity may be intended to instill individual responsibility another addresses a matter of institutional responsibility. The three levels of diversity responsibility are:

- **Institutional Responsibility:** implements policies, practices and procedures that further campus diversity goals; it accepts and reinforces accountability in leadership.
- **Individual Responsibility:** creates a culture where all members of the UIC community understand, accept, and exercise their responsibilities in diversity and equity. In the words of *Through the Lens of Diversity*, “Making diversity fundamental to our core mission is everyone’s responsibility.”
- **Shared Responsibility:** functions as various levels of campus populations, colleges and VC units work in conjunction with the VP-SAC in developing targets and programs; the VP-SAC is advised and regularly consults with deans, vice chancellors, a Council and various campus groups, including practitioners and diversity experts.

Shared responsibility in transformative diversity is not hierarchical, dependent upon higher authority. It is expected to occur at all levels of operations, undertaken and engaged by all levels of faculty, staff, students and administrators. It crosses disciplines, departments, functions and administrative units. In essence, it transforms practitioners into leaders, increasing the sustainability of diversity priorities despite change in campus or diversity leadership.

Goal 2: UIC will recruit and promote the success of a diverse student, faculty, and staff population.

2.1 Adopt practices that enable diversity to be planned and assessed for impact across and inclusive of all campus constituencies.

- a. Colleges will annually collect data on the diversity of its faculty, students and staff, including data on retention, graduation, new hires, and promotions, disaggregated by race, ethnicity and gender. For students, economic profile information will also be collected.
- b. Coordinate each college's and campus unit's review of its diversity profile and assess how it aligns with UIC's vision and priorities.
- c. Gather data to purposefully assess efforts to enhance diversity outcomes.
- d. Colleges will use the UIC Equity Scorecard-like tool to assess the quality of outcomes for their students, and equity indicators for faculty and staff.

2.2 UIC will ensure access to admission and support for achievement and success to a diverse student population.

- a. Ensure access for a diverse student population, particularly applicants from groups historically lacking access to UIC by developing holistic application review processes that replace non predictive barriers to access with a panel of predictive indicators of academic success.
- b. Colleges will track the history of participation and success of individuals from groups that traditionally have unequal access to its programs, with particular emphasis on first year enrollment and retention.
- c. Review and consider redesigning UIC's recruitment program for undergraduate admissions.
- d. Collaborate with the UIC Office of Alumni Relations and campus groups in the creation of a diverse student ambassador group reflecting the academic excellence of UIC that meets with high school students.
- e. Increase offering of "true" university experiences for visiting applicants and commuter students.
- f. Identify, nurture, encourage and mentor students to prepare them for graduate school and academic careers.
- g. Evaluate undergraduate and graduate programs for meeting their diversity goals.
- h. Increase residential learning centers to maximize success of potential at-risk students.
- i. Ensure student advising standards are clearly defined and consistently practiced in colleges and support programs.
- j. Strengthen relationships with Chicago Public Schools for recruitment of students and placement of graduates.
- k. Collect annual outcomes information from campus academic support services to be used in systematic five year review process.
- l. Eliminate the achievement and graduation gaps among our diverse student population within 5 years. (Use summer college to shrink the preparation gap; programs such as PAP, ASCEND, ILSAMP, etc. to develop effective approaches towards elimination of performance gaps.)
- m. Set a first-year retention rate of 85% and six-year graduation rate of 65% as benchmarks to be achieved in seven years.

Students, Faculty, and Staff

A review of previous UIC efforts in achieving diversity reveals a focus on compositional diversity: referring to numerical and proportional representation of various groups on campus or, who is here, where they are and how we compare to similar institutions. An unintended consequence of this perspective has been a focus on recruitment or getting underrepresented groups in the front door while taking our eyes off the back door. *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* goes beyond compositional diversity.

It is not simply who we admit as students or hire as faculty and staff (access) but how we utilize the diversity that each member brings (excellence) and whether those we admit and hire attain their aspirations (success). In regards to students, *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* views access and success together, not as separate outcomes but as a single outcome. The intended result should be a signature branding for UIC.

Our measure of success is not the test scores of those we admit but the accomplishments and the quality of those we graduate.

2010 Strategic Thinking

By such indicators as degrees awarded or second year students returning in good standing, UIC will be shifting the focus to a commitment of success to those we admit. Also, *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* calls upon colleges and campus offices to examine students who have succeeded at UIC within groups to determine what would aid in recruitment, criteria for admission, predictive barriers to success and other positive practices designed to maximize student success. Colleges play a critical role in this part of the development of *A Mosaic for UIC Transformation* and in contributing to the future success of their students.

This new focus on success of our students should not be interpreted as a shift in UIC's commitment to recruit and admit underrepresented students in all levels of its academic offerings. In fact, it adds activities intended to enhance recruitment and admission of a diverse student body. It expands diversity to take into account income level, Chicago Public High School graduates and those "groups that traditionally have unequal access" to particular programs within colleges and in higher education. Enrolling and graduating a "critical mass" of diverse students does matter. UIC recognizes that as representational diversity increases, students are more likely to be engaged both in the classroom and in social settings, thus ultimately contributing to retention and graduation of all students.

2.3 UIC will increase the diversity among its faculty.

- a. Augment standards for reviewing the diversity of candidate pools before interviews are conducted.
- b. Train faculty search committees and supervisors on behavior and practices that perpetuate bias into the search and selection process.
- c. Develop and promote mentoring initiatives for faculty and staff through a Center for Mentoring Excellence.
- d. Examine successes and limitations of initiatives intended to increase number of underrepresented new faculty, like the Underrepresented Faculty Recruitment Program (UFRP) with the purpose of amending the program and enhancing incentives.
- e. Establish a mechanism to increase faculty diversity in focused areas of excellence that align UIC's academic and diversity mission through cluster hiring strategies. Such strategies will be submitted in proposal form by departments and colleges for review by a panel comprised of experts in the related disciplines and diversity. Funds for this program will be allocated annually for five years.
- f. Require colleges to develop and implement strategies for hiring and retaining underrepresented faculty in departments with zero or under representation.
- g. Explicitly recognize the value of community-engaged scholarship in the promotion and tenure process by incorporating standards for reviewing such scholarship.

2.4 UIC will increase the diversity and ensure equitable distribution of group representation among its varied levels of administrative, professional and support staff.

- a. Each college and VC unit will review administrative and staff positions by responsibility and salary level to ensure equitable distribution and opportunities for advancement. Concentrations of race or gender group at any level must be given special consideration for action.
- b. Promote awareness and use of existing career development opportunities for staff, particularly the Life Long Educational Advancement Program (LLEAP).
- c. The Life Long Educational Advancement Program (LLEAP) will be more widely circulated by Human Resources. Its description and benefits will become part of all development and training opportunities offered, and will be included in all new hire materials.
- d. Any position opening within a department or College will be announced individually and publicly within the department or College.
- e. Annual evaluations will include a section on development opportunities or support sought by staff members, and opportunities or support granted.
- f. Develop metrics for assessing effectiveness of development efforts, advancing in career tracks and salary increases in order to assess for diversity and equity among professional and support staff.
- g. Climate assessment will include identification of equity issues for staff.
- h. Human Resources will conduct focus groups on equity and diversity with the goal of developing policies and programs for academic professional staff.

2.5 Systems, benchmarks and evaluation tools will be developed to assess progress and shortcomings in our efforts to recruit, retain and successfully advance faculty, staff and student populations.

- a. A process of consultation to define a range of benchmarks and metrics will be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of our efforts and the end results.
- b. A special effort should be made to evaluate retention of faculty hired with financial support with the goal of offering incentives for improved retention and advancement.

Students, Faculty, and Staff

Diverse students and diverse faculty are interdependent. A diverse student body can influence decisions about which courses are taught and how they are taught (Zepeda). And the presence of faculty who have an interest in incorporating perspectives and knowledge of racial and ethnic minority groups can expose students to diverse perspectives and expand ideas about scholarship (Guerin), making higher education more inclusive.

The benefit of a research university setting is that it creates knowledge through its research and disseminates knowledge through its teaching and scholarship. UIC is one of the few fully comprehensive public research universities in the U.S. with a medical center located in an urban area. This unique standing, coupled with diversity, puts us in an exceptional position to maximize our potential for discovery and innovation in our diverse urban setting.

Ensuring a diverse population of researchers requires that the campus recruit faculty on a holistic basis, valuing personal history, collegiality, scholarship, as well as expertise in a narrowly defined area of research. Tenure must recognize all forms of research—basic, translational, applied and engaged.

Through the Lens of Diversity

Aggressive recruitment of faculty will be complemented with new initiatives, such as the Chancellor's Diversity Cluster Hire Initiative. This initiative will promote hiring and retention of a diverse faculty "with an eye towards a more interdisciplinary culture."

In addition to UIC being a place of learning and knowledge creation, we cannot lose sight of the fact that it is a workplace, employing approximately 10,750 non faculty staff who work with students, patients, faculty and members of constituent communities. They are the public face that performs nonteaching functions in health care, public service, technicians, counselors and advisors, communications, scientific researchers, and all levels of administration. Our responsibilities to our staff are no less than they are to our students and faculty, namely we must also create for them an environment where they can thrive and succeed, one where their aspirations can be attained.

Goal 3: UIC will have a climate of diversity and equity where individual students, faculty and staff feel welcomed in their identities, valued for their contributions and feel their identities can be openly expressed in their living, working and studying environments.

3.1. The campus climate for diversity and equity will be assessed and evaluated for improvements.

- a. A qualitative survey will be conducted of faculty, staff and students.
- b. In the interest of transparency, the results of the survey will be published.
- c. Survey results will be evaluated and used as the basis for identifying programs and activities that enhance campus climate.
- d. Measurements for monitoring progress in improving campus climate will be developed and reported on.

3.2 UIC will offer living and lifelong learning environments that promote understanding and appreciation of identities.

- a. Living and lifelong learning will traverse campus constituencies, i.e. faculty, staff and students. It will bring in those who support diversity as well as those who find the concept of diversity threatening.
- b. Beyond initial orientation sessions, faculty, staff and students will be offered opportunities to talk about difference, bias, power, privilege and climate.
- c. Different tools and learning or working modes will be explored.
- d. Language and cultural barriers in learning, instruction and working will be assessed and ways to erode barriers will be addressed.
- e. Physical barriers, including accessibility, safety, schedules, transportation and others identified as having an impact on inter-relations and performance will also be openly discussed and resolved.
- f. Alumni and donors will be enlisted to participate, contribute and support these efforts.

3.3 UIC will build a vibrant climate by promoting collaboration, communication and exposure to different environments.

- a. A campus database of and for members of the UIC community either with interest or active in all forms of social justice will be developed.
- b. Create social networking software for all areas of scholarly activities important to campus.
- c. Explore ways to market outings, trips, volunteer activities, immersion experiences to cross constituency groups, i.e. mixed groups of faculty, staff, students and alumni particularly in different environments like Study Abroad, and Alternative Spring Break. Integrate student diversity programming into such areas as Intergroup Dialogue, UIC Experience and freshman seminars.

A Climate of Diversity and Equity

Just as UIC is framed by its historical, economic, social, political and demographic forces, so are the individual students, faculty, and staff who comprise our campus community. Each member carries these forces within as they arrive on our campus. And even though many come to UIC because of its diversity, it does not mean that simple exposure to difference will transform us into a thriving community that values differences. This goal requires UIC to consciously and deliberately work to instill an environment that welcomes the varied identities of our many members in order to create a community branded by its practices of diversity, equity and social justice. It focuses specifically on our interactions and understanding of each other in order that we might appreciate the contributions of others. It should be emphasized here that the ultimate goal of environmental climate of diversity and equity is not to make everybody feel good about him or herself. It is however to offer a culture where individuals are poised for the pursuit of excellence and exposed to opportunities to achieve it.

The starting point to building climate is to first know your climate. The campus will assess climate for its staff, students and faculty through a University-wide survey assessment. Where shortcomings are identified solutions for improving it will be designed.

Town hall meetings held on campus and web comments received have already identified the need to create an environment that enables each individual member of the UIC community to feel comfortable in their own identity or identities in order to recognize and understand the value of others thereby stimulating a climate that produces and rewards success. As a community, we are asked to break out of comfort zones, whether they be defined by race, religion, language or disability, or economic class. It promotes interaction across campus constituencies, i.e. faculty, staff or student. This goal acknowledges the need to break the artificial ties that limit our understanding of and interactions within the UIC community.

UIC will work to promote a climate of collaboration, lifelong learning and exposure to different environments. Exposing each other to differences, talking about differences and working together in the face of difference will build a community that values differences.

This goal is intended to complement other Diversity Strategic Plan goals which directly or indirectly affect climate, representation of faculty, graduation gaps among racial/ethnic groups, etc. It is related to and should be read in conjunction with climate aspects addressed in Goal 4.

Goal 4: UIC will have an ethic of diversity that lessens stratification, provides access and promotes opportunity by expecting success of all members of its community.

4.1 UIC will promote understanding and engagement with diversity among varied campus populations. We will leverage the intersections between groups with different degrees of educational and employment attainment.

- a. Ensure each college's and campus unit's diversity plan addresses issues of stratification and interaction.
- b. Include vertical and horizontal input and interchange at appropriate stages in the decision-making process.
- c. Offer events for cross-socialization and celebration of achievements for the various employee groups (including faculty) and students
- d. UIC will give special attention to and address the communication barriers among faculty, staff and students marked by class difference, especially when it affects the learning environment.

4.2 UIC will identify specific barriers and solutions to recruitment of students of a defined social class and their particular needs for success once arriving on campus.

- a. Encourage affiliations between colleges and departments and high schools that align with the social class profile of our institutional mission.
- b. Make an effort to make early financial aid decisions to ensure the recruitment of diverse social classes.
- c. Bridge the gap between recruitment and graduation by promoting summer bridge programs for newly admitted students and further mentoring services.
- d. Develop metrics for assessment.

Less Stratification, Greater Expectation of Success for All

If we are intentional about diversity then we need to be intentional about providing places [and opportunities] to build relationships.

We must recognize that each person in a diverse community brings to campus his or her own strengths and biases. As we capitalize on the strengths, we also must find ways to recognize how and when biases work at cross-purposes to our mission and develop best practices for all members to come to terms with their personal biases.

Through the Lens of Diversity

Even though Americans take pride in claiming to be a nation of diversity, we must also acknowledge that we are a country comprised of many homogenous communities, stratified by socio-economic lines, frequently exacerbated by the effects of latent racism and other isolating practices such as limited accessibility for persons with disabilities. The ill effects of stratification can be demoralizing, even as bad as “working on a plantation” in the words of one staff member. It can perpetuate a culture of fear, reinforce stereotypes, generate mistrust and foment disrespect among groups.

For many who come to UIC, either as students or new employees, this may be their first break from an insular world defined by limited interactions with individuals of varied socio-economic classes. Although UIC’s diversity is frequently cited as one of the factors that draws people to this campus, existing patterns of group representation across campus populations make it easy to fall into the same patterns of interactions that they thought they left. To do otherwise would require a conscious effort.

Interaction across social classes is key to “public” in public higher education, preparing all our citizens for the responsibilities of living in a democracy. We are accustomed to hearing the meaning of “public” when discussing tuition and fees, or in considering whether institutional policies, practices and activities take into account others who may not be part of “mainstream population base.” It rarely emerges when considering what “public” means for faculty and staff at the university. Faculty may have some opportunities to relate to those of different faculty status and sometimes participate in shared governance. But frequently faculty-to-faculty relations are stratified by rank. Other stratifications are apparent: faculty and staff; staff and staff; staff and student; faculty and student.

Goal 4 aims at breaking the patterns of societal stratification by providing occasions for interaction and increasing understanding of class differences and forms of group stratification. Interactional diversity takes advantage of structured learning, informal relationships and extracurricular activities. This goal reminds us that whether student, faculty or staff, we are always learning and our foremost learning experience comes from each other.

One last word about the significance of stratification, because “diversity is meaningful in its specificity” this goal also reinforces the need to explore the differences within each group. No group is uniformly comprised of only one part of the economic stratum. Nor are all persons with disabilities the same, all Asians, all whites, all Muslims or all gays, to name a few groups. Our responsibility is to know and understand the differences within each group.

Goal 5: UIC will engage diverse communities within Chicago and other great cities as intellectual resources and partners.

5.1 UIC will expand the Great Cities Institute to include a Great Communities Initiative.

- a. Proactively promote and develop collaborative partnerships with community leaders and organizations.
- b. Regularly sponsor tours and visits to community sites, including using students as co-guides.
- c. Utilize UIC's public and cultural spaces as opportunities to invite communities to UIC.
- d. Assist community organizations e.g. through capacity building, technical assistance, resource coordination.
- e. Provide forums to hear and learn from communities about their needs and then explore practical solutions to address those needs.

5.2 UIC will recognize diverse communities within Chicago and other great cities as learning and training resources for our students, faculty and staff.

- a. Have community engaged scholarship programs or community service learning opportunities in all its academic units.
- b. Provide a forum through the Great Cities Institute for each unit to share community-centered scholarship and ideas.
- c. Track and disseminate community-based research opportunities and grant proposal announcements.
- d. Require community-based research projects to incorporate plans to connect back to and address the needs of participating communities and community organizations.

Community Engagement

We seek to be a leading research university and a great urban institution, taking advantage of the opportunities and needs, presented to and by the state of Illinois and the city of Chicago. We believe that for this commitment to be meaningful in the 21st century, it must be both local and global, a commitment not only to Chicago but to all “Great Cities”—the physical, social, cultural, and intellectual communities that characterize our modern world.

2010 Strategic Thinking

UIC is one of the few comprehensive public research universities with a major medical center in an urban location. Perhaps best exemplifying the significance of its uniqueness, coupled with its history and commitment to community engagement, local and global, is the work produced by UIC’s Vice Chancellor of Research Advisory Council. This group identified three areas where research excellence can be advanced through community engagement. These are:

- **Translational Research, Team-Based Science and Inter-Professional Collaboration**

“The University of Illinois at Chicago, with its well established programs across the health sciences, computation, and bioengineering spectrums, and a rich history of community engagement is ideally situated to seize ...emerging opportunities [in translational research, team-based science and inter-professional collaboration].”

- **Community Disparities**

“Community engagement is a centerpiece of UIC’s urban mission and the university has achieved national prominence in several research areas pertaining to community disparities. Areas of excellence reflect mutually beneficial collaborations in a variety of community settings and with diverse university-community partners. In general, efforts to encourage synergies between the research, the educational and the clinical services mission is crucial, and prioritized research efforts should involve a dynamic interplay between these areas. Specific areas targeted for resources were: Immigration; Career Pathways for Underserved Communities; Transformative Interdisciplinary Urban Education; Violence Prevention and Treatment; and, Health Disparities.

- **Urban Resilience and the Global Environment**

This area will address issues connected to the “just city,” which poses the question of who cities should be designed for, who should benefit, and who shall bear the costs of urban growth and change. Among other areas, it will address: Immigration; Socio-economic Change and Urban Policy; and, Political and Fiscal Capacity for Achieving Urban Resilience.

In addition to recognizing engaged research with the community, this goal emphasizes that community engagement does not solely exist for the benefit of research, but it is also a form of learning for our students and for the community. And with this commitment comes the responsibility to continue to develop participating communities after our research has finished.

Goal 6: UIC will be a place where disciplines use diversity and diverse perspectives to challenge their values regarding curricula content, teaching methods, knowledge-making and scholarship.

6.1 UIC will utilize diversity to expand conceptual frameworks of knowledge and scholarship in every discipline.

- a. Build diversity into the required curriculum.
- b. Incorporate diversity into all General Education courses.
- c. Require entering students to learn about bias and living with differences.
- d. Develop workshops to connect and engage faculty, including introducing them to new learning methods, like complementing classroom with community service learning.
- e. Establish an instructional diversity center.
- f. Create a database on diversity scholarship.
- g. Have an open source database compiled by ACCC.
- h. Sponsor a competitive award open to all disciplines regarding research on diversity.

6.2 UIC will be a place where disciplines explore the societal dimensions of their practices and knowledge-making.

- a. Academic program reviews will include criteria linking diversity with learning outcomes in a major.
- b. Offer a multidisciplinary specialized field of study in diversity.
- c. Extend credit hour or credits to capstone courses or internships, and to partner with service learning by completing a diversity-related project.

Curriculum, Teaching, Scholarship and New Knowledge

“Diversity has something to do with the very conceptualization of knowledge.”

...

“We are facing an experiment of how to capture knowledge through diversity.”

...

“If you make everybody take one diversity course... they may never think about it again. If you integrate it into students’ entire education...they will have to learn about it all the time.”

Comments from 4.21.11 Town Hall

While the presence of numerically diverse students, faculty and staff “can be critical to challenging assumptions about the *status quo* and to providing fresh approaches that can help to invigorate—and democratize—the academy” (Ibarra) representational diversity is not “an airborne virus”(Gurin) whose mere presence spreads the beneficial outcomes of diversity. Representational diversity is a resource that must be used to be appreciated and ultimately produce outcomes. It is the first step in a diversity spectrum of intentional efforts designed to maximize the benefits of diversity by incorporating it in our teaching, learning, living, research and public service structure.

This goal also calls for systemic changes to how we reward diversity work by faculty and students, including diversity in academic program assessment. In addition to expecting students to learn more about diversity, faculty and staff will be provided opportunities, methods and resources for developing diversity competencies. New vehicles for communicating about diversity will be offered as well as resources for encouraging collaboration among researchers and practitioners of diversity.

Goal 7: UIC will be a leader in higher education through application and dissemination of knowledge gained from experience, scholarship and innovative approaches to diversity.

7.1 UIC faculty, staff, students and alumni will be recognized and promoted as individuals achieving excellence through practicing the ethics of diversity in their varied living, learning, teaching and working environments.

- a. UIC's signature brand will embrace diversity as the distinguishing strength of our academic mission.
- b. Highlight our accomplishments in all aspects of our activities with different news media.
- c. Actively communicate with alumni and community constituencies the congruence of diversity accomplishments with excellence achieved at UIC.
- d. Create a centralized speakers bureau of diversity experts for use by the media and community groups.
- e. Encourage members of the UIC community to contribute works of scholarship, innovation and good practices to diversity media and journals such as *Diversity in Higher Education*.
- f. Develop a website devoted to UIC scholarship on diversity.
- g. Actively involve alumni and donors by inviting their participation in furthering the goals of this plan.

7.2 UIC will create mechanisms to foster diversity in scholarship, innovative programs and experiences.

- a. Use available technology to encourage informal internal communication about improving diversity approaches and outcomes in our setting
- b. Create a UIC Diversity Resource Center, designed to facilitate interaction and collaboration among researchers and practitioners of diversity.
- c. Provide competitive awards for departments, individuals, and units to encourage recruiting, retention, teaching, research and travel that advance excellence in diversity.
- d. Publish diversity newsletter highlighting work being done on campus.

7.3 Access to excellence through inclusion and diversity will be evident in UIC's internal and external marketing or communication vehicles.

- a. Ensure that historically underrepresented individuals are represented in campus marketing materials.
- b. Launch a campaign to showcase UIC's diversity in the community.
- c. Develop and execute a marketing strategy and materials for aggressive recruitment of diverse student, faculty and staff populations.

A Leader in Higher Education Diversity Innovation

Unquestionably, the end goal of transformative diversity is surely to make our campus a place where equity, diversity and social justice are evident: in our institutional policies and programs; in our equitable and transparent practices; in our welcoming climate where we all feel we can thrive; in our engagement with the community; and most importantly in the daily lives of every student, faculty and staff member. As such UIC will be looked to as a model for diversity innovation and it should be prepared to make its successes and benefits known.

As UIC assumes a leadership role in the field of diversity in higher education, the central office will need to report on the impact of diversity on our campus, assume a role in leadership on a national level, and influence public policy as it relates to educational systems.

Through the Lens of Diversity

But clearly this final goal also recognizes that communicating the benefits of diversity and the continued evolution of diversity is not a function of one office. A communication structure should envision easy access to UIC's diversity scholars, active engagement of alumni, donors and community or civic partners in UIC's diversity accomplishments, highlighting these accomplishments and diversity breakthroughs to the news media and diversity publications and projecting an image of diversity at UIC.

A Mosaic for UIC Transformation also reminds us that UIC must continue to market diversity internally on campus by providing tools for collaborative research among diversity scholars, by rewarding diversity research, and by continued development in diversity by bringing diversity scholars to campus and by sharing diversity strategies. Successful techniques for teaching in diverse classrooms should be shared with interested colleagues. Internal marketing of diversity innovations and successes will also illustrate the qualitative contributions of diversity while de-emphasizing diversity in numbers.