

October 23, 2020

Title: Resolution on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice¹

Author: Ubuntu Committee

WHEREAS Equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice are core principles of the UI community;²

WHEREAS The University of Idaho “values people of diverse cultures, classes, races, ethnicities, sexes, gender identities, mental and/or physical abilities, citizenship, nationalities, sexual orientations, religious backgrounds, ages, epistemologies, academic disciplines, veteran status, life experiences, and identities”;³

WHEREAS Society is strengthened when all members have access, support, and resources to obtain an education;

WHEREAS Institutions of higher education committed to diversity must work toward fostering an equitable and inclusive educational environment that supports those who in the past were excluded and those who are presently excluded;

WHEREAS The perspectives of people from different life experiences enrich the educational and professional experience for all;

WHEREAS Equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice promote personal growth and a healthy society for all people by challenging stereotypes, encouraging critical thinking, and fostering better communication with people of varied backgrounds;

WHEREAS Equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice strengthen communities and the workplace;

¹ Equity - is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Diversity - psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals.

Inclusion - the act of creating involvement, environments and empowerment in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

Social Justice- to take action as an advocate for a just society where all people have a right to fair and equitable treatment, support and resources.

https://uh.edu/cdi/diversity_education/resources/pdf/terms.pdf

² <https://www.uidaho.edu/diversity>

³ <https://www.uidaho.edu/diversity>

WHEREAS Education within a diverse setting prepares students to become good global citizens in an increasingly complex, pluralistic world; it fosters mutual respect and teamwork; and it helps build community;

WHEREAS Increasing and innovating global prosperity (economic, scientific, social, and cultural) in the 21st century requires us to recognize the talents and abilities of all, especially those from diverse backgrounds and cultures;

WHEREAS Equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice are crucial for increasing recruitment, enrollment and retention of students, faculty, and staff at the University;

WHEREAS Diversity programs at Idaho universities are being challenged by members of the Idaho legislature who argue that “[the] drive to create a diversified and inclusive culture becomes divisive and exclusionary because it separates and segregates students”;⁴

WHEREAS This argument reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the efficacy and importance of equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice programs with respect to attracting, supporting and educating all students to improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities in Idaho and beyond;

BE IT RESOLVED That the University of Idaho reaffirms its commitment to supporting equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice not only through its policies and procedures, but through its campus and institutional culture. Having diverse bodies in an academic setting is only enriching for all students if the institution they contribute to and learn and grow within is committed to protecting those people by providing robust institutional support to ensure that protection;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That as part of this commitment we remain dedicated to recognizing the importance of students, faculty, and staff from historically marginalized communities as they overcome obstacles to thrive. We further vow to ensure an equitable environment at the University of Idaho. Our vision of diversity and social justice is inclusive and includes people who are minoritized because of their gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, nation of origin, size, age, veteran status, family status, socio-economic status, diverse abilities, and other unique and important identities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That as a university community, we remain committed to providing, expanding, and funding appropriate and thoughtful partnerships with current programming offices, and maintaining and extending support to such programs that are devoted to increasing equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice on campus. These include the Office of Equity and Diversity, Women’s Center, the College Assistance Migrant Program, the Native American Student Center, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the LGBTQA Office, the International Programs Office and the

⁴ <https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/education/boise-state-university/article232600507.html>

Green Dot program, and areas such as recruitment and retention, student success, academic programming, instructor training, curriculum development, advising, and extracurricular opportunities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED We also affirm a renewed commitment to ensuring the mental and physical safety—and a provision of needed support—for students, faculty and staff from historically marginalized backgrounds as they navigate their experience at the University of Idaho. Finally, we affirm a commitment to maintain, fund, and expand academic programs focused on equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice on campus (e.g. Africana Studies; American Indian Studies; Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion, Latin American Studies; Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies).