

Year 1 Public Description of Work for  
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

**Instituting a New DEI Structure at the Urbana Champaign Campus**

**This Action Applies to Rubric Item:** 1, 8, 9 #PREVENTION

**Description of the work**

In 2018, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign dramatically expanded and enhanced its institutional structures in the DEI area. The university created the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (OVCDEI) and a year later, in 2019, hired its inaugural Vice Chancellor who serves as the Chief Diversity Officer for our university and oversees efforts spanning across academic, compliance, and community relations areas.

In 2020, the university hired its first Associate Vice Chancellor for Compliance, who leads the Office for Access and Equity, a key unit within OVCDEI, and a new Director of the ADA Division within that office. Additional hiring is underway in the OVCDEI to support effective response and investigation of employee misconduct.

*Purpose and goals*

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion focuses its efforts on building the organizational structures to support and sustain diversity, equity and inclusion work at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.

Within the OVCDEI, the Office for Access and Equity (OAE) is enhancing its structure and staffing to better serve the campus community. New positions created and/or filled this year include ***the Associate Vice Chancellor for Compliance; Director of the ADA Division / ADA Coordinator; Director and two Associate Directors of the EEO Division; and up to four EEO Associates***. The new Associate Vice Chancellor oversees the Office for Access and Equity and is charged with navigating the legal landscapes surrounding investigation and compliance, leading the OVCDEI's response to the recommendations pertaining to sexual harassment and misconduct and consensual relationships and bringing together the policies, legal constraints and scholarship around institutional equity for the University of Illinois. While the Office for Access and Equity has existed for a number of years, in various forms, these changes to the leadership and staffing structure and the incorporation of OAE into the newly enhanced DEI structure will serve to raise its profile, enable it to more effectively hold employees accountable for misconduct, and expand its mission from basic legal compliance to a broader vision for equity and inclusion.

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Both the EEO Division and the ADA Division are implementing new policies and procedures related to employee discrimination and harassment complaints as well as reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Academic Inclusive Excellence Office, also under OVCDEI, leads efforts to assess campus climate in departments, colleges and institutes. Recently, the office hired its first **Director of Campus Culture and Climate**. The director is working collaboratively with academic departments and several other units in developing assessment plans to evaluate climate to later incorporate deliverables to improve the climate and culture. Another addition to the office is in the area of **Curriculum Development and Education**. Both units are integral in delivering training and resources in the area of prevention and education by closely working with departments and units.

This work is not new to the institution; however, the centralized nature of it is. Several of these units have been part of the institution for decades, while other units such as Campus Culture and Climate and Curriculum Development and Education have recently been added.

These efforts are consistent with 2018 NASEM report that recommends *changes to DEI staff or structure to support office* (e.g., hiring chief diversity officer, centralizing / decentralizing staff structure, etc.).

The new structure and its leadership will be evaluated annually ensure that OVCDEI is well positioned to lead this campus effort.

To learn more about progress, programs, and initiatives please visit:

<https://diversity.illinois.edu/>

**Website for further information (if applicable):** <https://diversity.illinois.edu/>

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