
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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BOARD OF REGENTS — DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STUDY GROUP REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Background. Division V of [SF 560](#) (FY 2024 Education Appropriations Act) directed the Iowa Board of Regents (BOR) to “conduct a comprehensive study and review of the diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and efforts of each institution of higher education under its control.” Division V also required the BOR to cease all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)-related hiring at the University of Iowa (SUI), Iowa State University (ISU), and the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). The [DEI Study Group Report and Recommendations](#) was released on November 6, 2023, and will be discussed during the BOR meeting taking place at UNI on November 15 and 16, 2023. **Figure 1** below outlines the current DEI-related staffing and compensation. Each university review is required to include the following:

- Current DEI programming, curricula, training, and related activities.
- Salary, benefits, and other compensation paid to employees or individuals tasked with DEI-related efforts.
- Compliance with required applicable federal and State rules, regulations, court orders, settlement agreements, or executive orders.
- Contracts or grants requiring DEI efforts.

Figure 1 — Current DEI-Related Staffing, Compensation, and Impacted Funding

	SUI	ISU	UNI	Total Impact
Full-Time Positions	48	49	9	106
Part-Time Positions	13	7	16	36
Total Impacted Positions	61	56	25	142
Full-Time Compensation	\$5,214,541	\$4,726,828	\$ 733,004	\$10,674,373
Part-Time Compensation	916,496	516,271	1,150,755	2,583,522
Total Compensation	\$6,131,037	\$5,243,099	\$1,883,759	\$13,257,895

The report identified a variety of accreditation standards, federal funding, grants, and clinical trials that have DEI-related requirements that could be affected by legislation. Below is the federal funding information reported:

- SUI receives \$101.0 million from 152 grants and \$35.0 million for clinical trials that have various DEI-related requirements.
- ISU received \$207.0 million in federal funding in FY 2022 and \$20.0 million in additional subcontractor federal funds both with various DEI-related requirements. ISU also received individual funding in FY 2022 totaling \$33.0 million from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), \$82.0 million from the Department of Energy, and \$28.7 million from the National Institutes of Health.
- UNI receives a subaward from ISU’s Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation program totaling \$175,000 over five years. Additionally, UNI receives \$12.5 million in active grants/awards and subawards through the Public Health and Safety Organization, \$131,000 in matching funds in FY 2023 from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, and \$10.8 million in five individual five-year grants from the U.S. Department of Education’s Federal TRIO Programs.

Recommendations. The report contains 10 recommendations for consideration by the BOR. The report also outlines various obligations imposed by federal and State laws, standards of accreditation, National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) eligibility, and compliance with grants and contracts by which the Regent Universities must abide. The full report and analysis of the recommendations can be found [here](#). The recommendations are as follows:

1. Restructure the central, university-wide DEI offices to eliminate any DEI functions that are not necessary for compliance or accreditation. Support services in these offices must be broadly available to all students and/or employees, subject to applicable State or federal eligibility requirements.
2. Review all college, department, or unit-level DEI positions to determine whether DEI-specific job responsibilities are necessary for compliance, accreditation, or student and employee support services. Adjust or eliminate any position responsibilities that are not necessary for these purposes. Review position and/or working titles to ensure they appropriately reflect position responsibilities.
3. Review the services provided by offices currently supporting diversity or multicultural affairs in other divisions of the universities to ensure they are available to all students, subject to applicable State or federal eligibility requirements. Update program promotional and informational materials and websites to clarify that the mission of these offices is to support success broadly.
4. Take reasonable steps to ensure that no employee, student, applicant, or campus visitor is required to submit a DEI statement or be evaluated based on participation in DEI initiatives, unless the position is required for DEI-related compliance or accreditation; and that no employee, student, applicant, or campus visitor is compelled to disclose the person's pronouns.
5. Develop a Board policy prohibiting the consideration of race and other protected class characteristics in admissions that is consistent with the law.
6. Initiate a review of DEI-related general education categories and update category names to accurately reflect the array of options from which students may select to satisfy these requirements and ensure a breadth of offerings.
7. Standardize issuance of annual employee guidance regarding the separation of personal political advocacy from university business and employment activities.
8. Explore potential recruitment strategies for advancing diversity of intellectual and philosophical perspective in faculty and staff applicant pools.
9. Develop a proposal, including cost, to establish a widespread initiative that includes opportunities for education and research on free speech and civic education.
10. Annually, the Board office is to issue a reminder to the universities on the requirements of [Board Policy Manual section 4.2.I](#), "University Statements on Matters of Public Concern," which governs university websites and other university communications.

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