

Application for Spring/Summer 2017 UCET Fellow  
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Fostering Conversations about Justice, Equality and Inclusivity

Background

Inclusion, equality and justice are hallmarks of higher education in the United States. Just last week, the Chancellor reminded the campus community that “IU South Bend students, faculty, and staff remain leaders by advancing our inclusive values”. Specifically, he urged “that our campus provides a safe and supportive place for diverse views and backgrounds, where differences can be explored thoughtfully and with respect.” One of Indiana University South Bend’s stated missions is to “support student learning, access and success for a diverse residential and non-residential student body that includes underrepresented and international students.” While we have institutional diversity goals, offer various programs aimed at equity and social justice, and have a number of faculty who reflect these values in their research and teaching, there hasn’t been a systematic opportunity to learn from and to train faculty in issues of higher education equity.

In the past week, since the most recent Presidential election, there have been numerous reports of harassment and hatred directed toward minority students on US college campuses. Many of my colleagues have talked about the difficulty of trying to “handle sensitive discussions” about inclusiveness in a fair and relevant manner in the classroom, especially among students who are upset or worried about being targeted. In this environment, it seems a good time to foster conversations about how we reflect the values of inclusivity, pluralism, diversity and social justice in our classrooms. I believe our faculty colleagues would be strengthened by learning or improving on such strategies.

Proposed Project

There are faculty members in all units on campus who have developed strategies toward teaching for justice and inclusion. We have experts in global education, immigration, and economic injustice. We have faculty who teach art for social change, and the literature/history of the civil rights, feminist and LGBTQ movements. Some faculty members do research or are involved in prison reform, combatting environmental racism, and promoting refugee rights. However, we have no systematic strategies to encourage conversation and coordination between faculty members on such issues.

I propose a UCET Fellow project that would involve a) reviewing the literature regarding faculty training in social justice, equity, and inclusion, b) speaking with faculty from across our campus about their everyday strategies to promote these values in the classroom, c) developing a set of “best practices”, and d) disseminating my findings across campus. Each faculty member has his or her own way to engage certain strategies in one’s own area of expertise and experience. I will compile these findings and share them with our faculty, either through a workshop, a series of workshops, or a digital document that we may locate on the UCET website.

I am seeking \$2500 to support performing the bulk of this work in Summer 2017. If it happens that one of my classes in spring 2017 doesn’t carry and gets cancelled, we might discuss with my chair

and dean whether it would make more sense to use the funds as a course release for spring 2017, in which case, I would do most of the work in Spring, with dissemination in early Fall.

### Qualifications

This project is close to my heart; from the time I was hired at IU South Bend, I have been involved in committees and activities that support inclusion and diversity. For instance, I have been a member of our campus' Working Group on Diversity, was closely involved in the Conversations on Race committee, and have held and attended local and national workshops on social justice and social issues in the classroom. I have won the Trustee's Teaching Award several times, and have been a member of FACET since 2006. As a social psychologist, I regularly teach about sexism, racism, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and homophobia. I have presented about fostering justice and inclusion in the classroom at national conferences. I have published in *Teaching of Psychology* on diversity in the classroom, and recently had an article about feminist pedagogy accepted by the *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*.

### Timeline

If chosen as UCET Fellow, I would pursue conversations with colleagues (using an unstructured interview format) during Spring semester, when they are more readily available. I would research the literature on best practices in training faculty for equity and inclusion early in Summer I, and prepare a document or workshop in Summer II. If there appears to be enthusiasm for a workshop or conversation at UCET, we would try to implement this early in Fall, 2017.

It is worth noting that in Spring 2016, I had engaged in a number of conversations with newer faculty about holding a workshop at UCET about justice and inclusion (we had organized a similar event a number of years earlier, and had a standing-room-only audience), and there was keen interest. However, I simply did not have time to organize anything and still get asked occasionally whether I plan to follow up with the idea. I believe there is a strong appetite for these conversations on our campus.