

Social Justice Forum – Additional Questions

July 2, 2020

Responses provided by University Leadership: Wendy Wintersteen, president; Sharron Evans, associate vice president and dean of students; Chief Michael Newton, associate vice president and chief of police; Michael Norton, university counsel; Reginald Stewart, vice president for diversity and inclusion; Jonathan Wickert, senior vice president and provost

1. Last year, Students Against Racism called for the removal of racist students and staff from ISU, including the Student Government adviser who wore blackface. How will Iowa State hold racist members accountable for their actions this next year?

As a public state institution, in most cases the University cannot impose restrictions or punish individuals based on the content of their speech or their beliefs. Iowa State condemns racism and will continue to advance efforts to educate about the harm and hurt caused by racist conduct, as well as the expectation that all members of the campus community follow and uphold ISU's Principles of Community.

When speech creates a "true threat" or is "harassment" as defined by the law and university policy, the university will respond consistent with university policy and procedures. Where appropriate, students will be held responsible for misconduct pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct, and employees will be held responsible for misconduct pursuant to University policy, including the Faculty Handbook and policies governing Professional and Scientific and Merit staff.

2. Iowans have seen police departments use excessive force on black and brown people, as well as protesters. Students are advocating for a divestment from police funding. What is ISU PD's response to this and are you going to address these, and other concerns, to the student body?

ISU Police is a full and active partner in creating a welcoming and inclusive campus environment, and has been ahead of the curve in establishing a community-centered approach to public safety. This includes the department's Engagement and Inclusion Officers program, a full-time mental health advocate, and officers trained in bias incident response. Additionally, ISU PD has extended its annual bias trainings to all officers and all Department of Public Safety staff. An article from ISU News Service has more detail about ISU PD's efforts to be a national leader in community-centered policing: <https://www.news.iastate.edu/news/2020/07/01/police>

It is important to note that funding for ISU Police also supports many student services, including the ISU Guardian App, Safe Ride, self defense courses and training, and the department's sexual assault response team which consists of 15 nurses.

ISU PD also has a Student Advisory Board and will continue to leverage their insight and feedback to positively impact the student experience. Engagement and Inclusion Officers will continue to take a proactive approach to engaging with and educating the campus community about the role, programs, and services provided by ISU PD.

3. With the recent removal of the Hornaday plaque there have been students advocating for the name change of the Carrie Chapman Catt building. Are you planning on having a conversation about changing the name and why haven't you decided to change it in the past when this subject has come up before?

As you know, President Wintersteen recently appointed the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming. Iowa State has never had a renaming policy, so this is the critical first step to allow for the formal review of historic naming and honoring decisions.

Once the committee has developed the university policy on reviewing names, the issue of the naming of Catt Hall can be put forward. At that time, ISU will have an agreed upon, consistent process for a review. Also at that time, all of the factual evidence can begin to come forward for consideration and careful analysis. Once we have a university policy and a process in place, then a review can proceed.

4. Are there any other plaques, buildings or additional landmarks on campus that the university is investigating for possible racist affiliations?

The University Library Special Collections and University Archives is identifying individuals honored on the Iowa State University campus, and searching the archival record to document the nomination and approval process of these recognitions.

5. The university has conducted training sessions for students, faculty and staff covering the subjects of sexual harassment and substance abuse. Do you plan to require/offer training in the areas of social justice and racial equity? How are you going to enforce this learning with students?

As you may know, Iowa State has offered a variety of opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to better understand and respond to issues of social justice and racial equity.

For faculty, for example, we required that all academic departments complete an inclusive classroom workshop. Topics in this program include addressing controversial topics, building inclusive syllabi, creating accessible course content, and managing group projects to ensure mutual respect. This training is now an annual requirement. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, 41 departments (or 69%) completed the training this spring, with a reach of more than 1000 faculty. 93% of the faculty participants identified specific improvement they could make in their courses.

We have also established training for search committees, and promotion and tenure committees, which help to create equity by making sure individuals are aware of their unconscious biases.

For all faculty and staff, we have several training programs available through our provider, Everfi, including *Managing Bias*, which was profiled this week in our faculty and staff newsletter, Inside Iowa State: <https://www.inside.iastate.edu/article/2020/06/25/managingbias>.

Students in Iowa State's residence halls have also been receiving training, and the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion are highlighted during Destination Iowa State for new students. Similar training is underway in the College of Veterinary Medicine. The residence hall training is just one of many opportunities for students to learn more about diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- We launched the Cyclones 101 course as a pilot last fall, which includes a section on the Principles of Community. We are currently working to offer this training virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic during online orientation.

- Students in learning communities, and those taking introductory courses to their major (110 courses) – who represent the vast majority of new students – also are exposed to learning opportunities around these topics.

6. How are each of the panelists going to continue this conversation until racial equity is achieved on campus and around the world?

President Wintersteen and university leaders remain committed to working with the campus community to make Iowa State University the best land-grant university in the country in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all of students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Goal 4 of Iowa State University’s 2017-22 Strategic Plan states that ISU will “continue to enhance and cultivate the ISU Experience where faculty, staff, students, and visitors are safe and feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued by the university and each other.”

Aligning with these goals, the university will continue to support and build off the work of programs and initiatives that advance racial equity, including:

- The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs: established in 1978 to support and empower students of multicultural identities. The office administers programs including:
 - The George Washington Carver program, which awards 100 full-tuition scholarships annually to incoming multicultural first year students, directly out of high school
 - The Multicultural Vision Program, which grants 100 full-tuition scholarships to incoming first-year students.
 - The Academic Program for EXcellence (APEX), an eight-week academic summer program designed for incoming multicultural first-year students. APEX helps multicultural students transition to Iowa State University during the summer prior to their first semester.
- The Multicultural Liaison Officer position was created in the late 1990’s. Today each college has a Director of Multicultural Student Success to support and serve as an advocate for multicultural students.
- The number of Learning Communities for students of diverse backgrounds has expanded:
 - FOCUS – open to all multicultural students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
 - BUILD – designed to support incoming multicultural students in the successful transition and completion of the Design Core program.
 - LEAD – open to all multicultural students in any engineering major
 - BOLD – open to all multicultural students in any College of Liberal Arts and Sciences major
 - Multicultural Vision Program (MVP)
 - George Washington Carver Scholarship Program (GWC)
 - Men of Color
 - Connect Four – open to all first-year students of color within the College of Human Sciences
- Cultural Centers where students can find community, foster collaboration, and engage in dialogue: George A. Jackson Black Cultural Center and the Memorial Union Multicultural Center.

- The NCORE/ISCORE Office. Iowa State will continue to invest in ISCORE, the university's premier event for students, faculty and staff to engage in constructive dialogue and enhance understanding of racial and ethnic issues on campus, in the community, and across the country. 2020 marked the 20th year for the Thomas L. Hill Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity (ISCORE). More than 1300 people attended the 2020 conference.
- The SVP and Provost office hosts and supports the ISU ADVANCE program, which works to recruit, retain, and advance women and scholars of color in faculty positions. Through ISU ADVANCE, appointed equity advisors in each college work with their respective deans, diversity committees, department chairs, and faculty to implement best practices for faculty searches, and transform policies and practices that help faculty succeed.
- Holding Campus Conversation events to bring together students, faculty, and staff to discuss timely issues, including:
 - "Big or small, do you call? A review of racial bias during police interactions"
 - "From words to bullets – Managing threats and fear"
 - Conversation with Students Against Racism
 - What should I do? White action and accountability to combat anti-blackness and systems-based racism
- Partnering with the Ames Community to create a more welcoming and inclusive living and working environment for citizens of color.
 - Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations – an Iowa State University, Ames Human Relations Commission, and Ames Chamber of Commerce partnership to share practical strategies toward building more inclusive workplaces. Inaugural symposium held in 2018, second annual symposium held in October 2019.
 - Reg Stewart, vice president for diversity and inclusion, moderated a [panel discussion on policing and justice](#) hosted by the Ames Chapter of the NAACP. ISU Chief of Police Michael Newton participated on the panel. President Wintersteen will participate on a similar panel in July.
- The university supports the Faculty Fellow for Diversity and Inclusion position – a partnership between the Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, the Ivy College of Business, and the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost to look at diversity, equity, and inclusion through a faculty lens.

In fall 2019, students formed the group, Students Against Racism, and presented university leaders with a set of demands to address racism and improve the campus climate. You can find more about the university's actions taken in response to Students Against Racism on the campus climate website: <https://www.campusclimate.iastate.edu/responses/sar>.

The university has a [Campus Climate Reporting System](#) (CCRS) that collects and assesses bias incidents and provides resources and support for those impacted.

The university continues to promote a learning, working, and living environment that aligns with ISU's [Principles of Community](#): respect, purpose, cooperation, richness of diversity, freedom from discrimination, and honest and respectful expression of ideas.