

**REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS IN ILLINOIS HIGHER EDUCATION**

Submitted for: Information.

Summary: This annual report presents information on the students and faculty who are identified as minorities, females, and persons with disabilities at Illinois colleges and universities. The report consists of a brief discussion of Illinois underrepresented student and faculty participation in a national context; a report on campus climate at public colleges and universities; a summary of student participation and completion and the resources devoted to increasing underrepresented students' participation and completion; and several data table appendices.

Action Requested: None.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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ON UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS IN ILLINOIS HIGHER EDUCATION**

Background

Pursuant to the statutory requirements included in the Board of Higher Education Act (110 ILCS 205), this annual report on underrepresented groups presents information on minority, female, and disabled students and staff in Illinois higher education. It seeks to track recent changes in representation among these groups. On a three-year rotation schedule, the institutions report on areas critical to the improvement of representation of underrepresented groups: 1) recruitment and preparation; 2) academic achievement; and 3) campus climate. This year's report focuses on campus climate.

Executive Summary

Diversity continues to be a significant issue for the Illinois higher education community. The significance of diversity grows as the national and state demographics change, the economic imperative to produce a more highly skilled workforce increases, and the understanding that a well-educated population enhances the quality of life in the nation and the state is heightened.

For those individuals who enter college, national and state data reflect a disparity for underrepresented groups. This disparity, especially for Black and Hispanic students, raises questions of equity and harbingers serious economic implications given the fact that the state faces a shortage of skilled workers along with a growing minority population. This latter concern is further enhanced by the increasingly competitive international economic environment.

This year's focus topic for the underrepresented groups is campus climate. The surveys reveal that the general perceptions of the racial climate are positive but there is ample room for improvement. Students with disabilities report that they receive fair treatment on Illinois campuses but express a desire for additional counseling and advising, improved academic support for freshmen, and better availability of adaptive technology.

The Board of Higher Education recommends continued support of (1) the existing programs that aid in the diversification of the postsecondary student body and faculty; (2) the support services targeted to improve the educational attainment rates of Hispanics; and (3) initiatives that identify and help to repair the leaks in the P-20 pipeline for Black men. In addition, the Board recommends supporting the implementation of the new race / national origin categories for students to improve data collection.

This year's report also includes the seeds of a transition to a broader context for the underrepresented groups report. In this report, those seeds include additional state and national comparisons of enrollments and completions by students from underrepresented groups and comparisons of employment of underrepresented faculty.

The comparisons are not intended to be all inclusive and definitive; rather, they are intended to help the reader understand how Illinois compares to the nation and to several other large, racially and culturally diverse states in terms of educational attainment, enrollment, degree completion, and the employment of faculty from underrepresented groups. Readers should bear in mind that national reports and summary statistics are released on different schedules from Illinois data and may be prepared for different purposes; hence direct comparisons to the most recent Illinois data are not always advisable or possible.

**PLEASE NOTE: FULL REPORT IS CURRENTLY BEING
FINALIZED AND WILL BE AVAILABLE
AFTER NOVEMBER 27, 2007.**

WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE.