

IUPUI Intergroup Dialogue Initiative

IUPUI has embarked on a campus-wide initiative of engaging in intergroup dialogue (IGD) with the goal to learn more and better about intergroup relations among all university employees and students in order to recruit new members and retain those who make up the campus community.

Intergroup dialogues are facilitated, face-to-face interactions between individuals from two or more social identity groups that have a history of conflict or potential conflict. It is a sustained communication process involving a series of meetings and emphasizing issues related to social justice, social group membership, identity, and the positionality (privilege and oppression) of groups. A dialogue typically involves 14-16 participants whose social identity provides general parity between the two groups represented (e.g., women and men; people of color and white people; LGBT persons and heterosexuals; persons of different socioeconomic classes, etc.).

IGD principles and practices can serve as tools to put into better and broader practice various campus core values, as articulated in IUPUI's mission. In particular, IGD can support campus efforts to (1) embrace and provide a climate of respectful inclusion for all members of the IUPUI community that enables all faculty, staff, and students to participate and work toward making IUPUI a safe and enjoyable place to work and learn, and (2) make civic engagement a commitment that is especially mindful of responding to and respecting the needs of the greater Indianapolis communities. Intergroup Dialogue can also be integrated into the Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL). The PUL most emphasized in an IGD course is Understanding Society and Culture (#5) with a moderate emphasis on Values and Ethics (PUL #6) and an additional emphasis on Core Communication (PUL #1). An IGD course also fits well into the IUPUI undergraduate experience as articulated in the RISE to the Challenge, with special focus on Experiential Learning.

Interest in the IGD initiative is broad based, including plans for curricular and co- and extra-curricular implementation for undergraduate and graduate students, all IUPUI employees, and community partners. To date, individuals from numerous IUPUI schools, departments and constituent groups have participated in planning efforts to develop a campus-wide IGD program. This includes approximately 55 participants in a two-day IGD workshop held on campus in August and facilitated by individuals from the University of Michigan Program on Intergroup Relations (www.igr.umich.edu), with whom IUPUI is collaborating and seeking support as it develops its program. Plans for 2012 include: development and facilitation of IGD pilot programs involving curriculum development, student co-curricular and experiential learning activities, and faculty and staff professional development; identifying and developing students, staff and faculty to serve as IGD peer facilitators; and identifying and establishing the appropriate academic base from which a sustainable campus-wide program or center can be developed and supported.

For further information regarding this initiative, contact Daniel B. Griffith, Manager of Training and Organization Development, Human Resources Administration (317.274.5467; dgriffit@iupui.edu) or Marianne S. Wokeck, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, IU School of Liberal Arts (317.274.5820; mwokeck@iupui.edu). Interested individuals may also contact Dan Griffith and request to be included in an OnCourse project side devoted to IGD efforts.