

## **Diversity Statement**

**Jay D. Gatrell**

As a leader, I cultivate—and have prioritized—a culture that values diversity and strives to realize inclusive excellence in classrooms and in every space across campus. Over the course of my career, I have always worked collaboratively to create new structures, examine policies, and reconfigure everyday practices to support all employees and learners. By embracing inclusive excellence, I, as well as my team members, have advanced EIU's mission and endeavor to make our campus a place where all are truly welcomed and celebrated.

Since being appointed Provost, Academic Affairs has intentionally aligned structures and programs with values. For example, the Office of Inclusion & Academic Engagement was created to expand student participation from under-represented groups in high-impact practices. I have also worked with faculty and staff to advance EIU's year-long multi-step Quality Initiative (QI) development process, presented the QI proposal to President's Council (PC), and shared the HLC-approved initiative with the Board of Trustees in August 2021. EIU's QI project focuses on diversifying the faculty and staff to enhance student success. Over the past two years, campus leaders and stakeholders have, and continue to, implement QI recommendations by reviewing and revising policies, launching a climate survey, and searching for a Senior Diversity Officer. EIU's QI also aligns with the Illinois Board of Higher Education's "A Thriving Illinois" strategic plan. The IBHE plan focuses on fostering student success, creating inclusive economic growth, and eliminating achievement gaps. To advance these priorities, Academic Affairs has applied for and received over \$1.3m in GEER monies to create a tutoring center, provide direct financial support to students from under-represented groups, and enhance IT infrastructures to support all learners. Additionally, I am especially proud of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences championing the creation of a Latinx & Spanish Language Academic Hub, as well as forthcoming hubs that will support our African American - African Diaspora and Asian American & Pacific Islander communities. The efforts of CLAS, campus programs like EIU Reads, and our QI—as well as the administration's institutionalization of GEER-derived programs—evidence the importance of investing in student success and diversity.

At Bellarmine, I gained valuable experience as a Title IX Deputy Coordinator and investigator. Specifically, I investigated gender-based and LGBTQ+ discrimination, as well as reports of sexual misconduct and harassment. Further, I continued my work in academic programming, co-curricular activities, and policy including creating a "Women in Science" speaker series, collaboratively designing the first campus climate survey, and prioritizing grant projects focused on diversifying student enrollments—as well as the success of students from under-represented groups. At ISU, my work in the academic space included collaboratively securing \$2.5+m in competitive federal grants (including TRiO McNair, NSF Noyce, and DOE TQE) to promote student success in the areas of minority teacher recruitment and advanced STEM training. While at ISU, I also participated in my initial Safe Zone training and, as my Title IX work and additional training has demonstrated, the important work of allies must and does continue.

As I outline above, I intentionally invest in initiatives that ensure that students, faculty, and staff who have been recruited from across the state and from around the world are retained and thrive within a campus community that embraces the transformative benefits of diversity.