Indiana State University, like much of the United States, has a mixed history when it comes to race. For the moment, let’s focus on one lesson. In 1947, our basketball coach, the legendary John Wooden took a stand for Clarence Walker when Wooden declined the NAIB invitation to compete for a national championship because the organization refused to let black players compete. All Sycamores can be proud of the stand he took that year. That organization backed down the next year and let the Sycamores compete (with Walker on the court) and we were national runner up. This is not to minimize some of our less-glorious episodes, but only repeated to say this: When Sycamores take a stand for justice, we can effect change.

Our faculty come from different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, religions, political philosophies, sexual orientations, and gender identities. We have one thing in common, however. We came to this institution to teach young people. Our educational mission **must** include teaching people to live, love, respect, and work with all people.

The events surrounding and following George Floyd’s death make clear that we need faculty from **every** discipline and perspective to engage in deliberate and concentrated efforts to educate ourselves and our students, and to work collaboratively and with the community towards changing the current systems of racism, sexism, hetero-centrism, and privilege. The three of us are white, heterosexual, and are full professors. We epitomize privilege. We are not able to demand anything of you. However, we come to you with the earnest request that you join us and spend considerable time this summer thinking about how we can improve ISU for our students and our future.

How do we ensure an equally welcoming environment for those from Chicago, Vigo County, Gary, Indianapolis, as well as rural Indiana and Illinois? How do we ensure that faculty equitably teach and mentor students while recognizing and honoring their differences? How do we ensure that our staff (from housing, to the campus police, to college offices, to financial aid) do the same? How do we respond when our faculty, staff, and students do not treat one another with respect? How do we teach, learn and make real change in the wake of such terrible events? How can we use the resources and voices we have to listen, share, and act? We want ISU to be a part of the change.

President Curtis is organizing a vigil for the fall, when we return to campus. We expect this to be an opening for a diverse and sustained campaign for inclusion and equity. We will work with the administration, but—equally important—we want to work with you, drawing on your expertise, your knowledge, and your lived experience to make social justice the priority.

Liz Brown, Chairperson

Keri Yousif, Vice Chairperson

Robert Guell, Secretary