



*April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Joint written submission to the Board of Trustees from Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO,) Students United, Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF,) Minnesota State University Association of Administrative & Service Faculty (MSUAASF,) LeadMN, and the Indigenous Men and Men of Color Caucus (IMMOC)*

Every student, regardless of who they are, where they come from, or what their circumstances are, has the right to experience the positive, transformative effects of education with equal access and opportunity. The inequitable gaps in outcomes for Minnesota State students—including students of color and Indigenous students, first generation students, and low-income students—are unacceptable and must be eradicated with the urgency it necessitates.

The vision of Equity 2030, to eliminate these inequities among students, is necessary to ensure the future of our system. That goal, and the transformation of our higher education system, is only possible as a collective, collaborative effort that includes all stakeholders. If this is done while centering the voices of those most impacted, honoring the labor being done, distributing labor in proportion to resources, and pushing ourselves and each other to dream bigger about what is possible, we absolutely can meaningfully move towards eliminating these inequities.

Our organizations independently noticed that many of us were asking the same questions and had the same expectations regarding equity efforts: to be involved, to see active investment from those most empowered to make change, to establish real partnerships across the system to move this work, and to see material progress with accountability. We realized we could begin to model the collective, collaborative effort our system needs to do this work. So, we came together to see what we could do.

We reviewed the recommendations of the Equity 2030 fellows and believe these recommendations are a critical tool to materially advance equity, diversity, and inclusivity in Minnesota State. The faculty fellows' expertise and labor produced meaningful recommendations and we join together in using the recommendations as a roadmap for some of our expectations of Minnesota State, specifically the System Office. We challenge the System Office and Board of Trustees to adopt these recommendations and operationalize their implementation as soon as possible.

That said, there is more that can be done, and more voices to include, across the system and campuses. The fear of overstepping, not respecting autonomy, or upsetting stakeholders has, instead, led to fragmentation and inefficiency. As some of those very stakeholders who have been tip-toed around, we state unequivocally that we want to be involved in this work together, as a collective. We want to set equity as a core value to all of our work. We want to build trust and collective power. We want to see those with power take seriously the responsibility of transforming our system. We want to see resources and support for those who have been doing, and will do, meaningful equity work. We want to see coalition-building and an organized effort to create buy-in. And we want the labor of this work to be proportional to individual's and institutions' power. We need our system to bring everyone together to push and advance this work.

To our friends all across the Minnesota State system, Trustees, Presidents, Vice Chancellors, administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members, partners: if these statements resonate with you, we want to work with you. We will be reaching out and we hope you will reach out to our organizations so we can all work together, build partnerships, and model the system we want to see. You can sign our letter calling for the implementation of the Equity 2030 Fellows' report at [studentsunited.org/blog/equity2030](https://studentsunited.org/blog/equity2030) where signatures are being collected and will be made public. Our organizations hope to connect with signatories to discuss other ways to partner and collaborate moving forward.

The future of our system depends on our ability to produce equitable outcomes and opportunities for all students. That vision necessitates urgency, growth, transformative thinking, and leadership. We are eager, willing, and ready to do our part.