



# Georgia Institute of Technology

Office of the President

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Cabinet, Deans, Vice Presidents, Vice Provosts, Executive Directors

**From:** G. P. "Bud" Peterson, President

**Cc:** Jennifer Herazy, Monique Tavares, JulieAnne Williamson, Leslie Sharpe, Catherine Ross, Wing Suet Li, Mary Frank Fox, Dana Randall, Beril Toktay, Pinar Keskinocak

**Date:** April 26, 2016

**Re:** Fostering a Climate of Gender Equity and Inclusion

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Last Fall, I invited members of the Georgia Tech community to participate in a number of listening sessions to discuss the experiences of women on our campus and to elicit ideas and suggestions for enhancing gender inclusion. Over the course of two months, we met formally with seven groups – consisting separately of academic faculty, research faculty, staff and students – and informally with various groups of faculty, staff and students to get a holistic view of the campus community.

In each session, participants were welcomed to share their experiences here at Georgia Tech, but they were asked specifically to bring forth ideas – whether related to policy or campus climate – to promote the goal of making Georgia Tech a more inclusive and supportive environment.

Several themes and common issues were raised in the discussions, but there were also issues that were germane to certain groups, such as differences in career advancement for classified staff and faculty. Over the past semester, we have reviewed and discussed several of the suggestions and ideas that came forward to determine the scope of the issue, feasibility of an action plan, which campus unit would be charged with addressing it, and resource needs.

The contributions of women in our community have always been appreciated and valued. However, not all of our collective actions, practices, and policies have demonstrated a recognition of these contributions. In the recent months we have taken steps to address processes that have discouraged inclusiveness and have made concerted efforts to recognize the contributions of women to our campus community. For example, we have recently announced a modified Regents' Professor and Regents' selection process and a leadership development program for faculty. We have also announced that this year's Diversity Symposium will focus on gender equity.

Leveraging the discussions and suggestions coming from the listening sessions, the following themes will guide the Institute's ongoing commitment:

1. Promoting gender equity through policies and processes related to the recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, professional development, and appointment to leadership roles of faculty and staff members, which includes but is not limited to, implicit bias

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workshops, providing effective practices for increasing diversity in the search and hiring processes, promoting family friendly policies and programming, professional leadership development and training, and clarifying advancement and promotion processes and pathways for faculty and staff.

2. Celebrating the contributions of women in our community and making the commitment to inclusion more visible in our communications through regular reports of diversity measures and progress, campus events that feature and celebrate women, awareness education, and internal and external communications which highlight women in our community.

We will continue to strongly affirm the commitment that was made in our Strategic Plan. “We will recruit, develop, retain, and engage a diverse cadre of students, faculty, and staff with a wide variety of backgrounds, perspectives, interests, and talents, creating a campus community that exemplifies the best in all of us—in our intellectual pursuits, our diversity of thought, our personal integrity, and our inclusive excellence.” We are all called upon to create a campus culture of dignity, respect and inclusion.

As we move forward, representatives from the Office of Institute Diversity, Office of Faculty Affairs and Office of Human Resources will provide leadership to ensure implementation of action steps and monitor progress and invite feedback from faculty, staff and students to ensure continued focus on these themes and the related actions. Over the next few weeks, the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Faculty Affairs, as well as other campus units, may be contacting you and your staff to share guidelines, protocols and policies that will further support this commitment.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Archie Ervin, Vice President for Institute Diversity or Ms. Lynn Durham, Assistant Vice President and Chief of Staff.