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BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — The Association of American Colleges and Universities ([AAC&U](#)) has cited Illinois Wesleyan University as one of 10 exemplary institutions in the development of curricular innovations to address issues of diversity.

A study by the AAC&U in 2000 found that 63 percent of colleges and universities either have or plan to have requirements within the curriculum to address issues of diversity. The latest issue of Diversity Digest, a publication of AAC&U, highlights the programs at Illinois Wesleyan and at four of the nine other institutions, ranging from Kent State University to Pitzer College in California to San Jose State University.

• [Read the article in Diversity Digest](#)

In the article on Illinois Wesleyan, Digest Editor Heather D. Wathington observes that the incorporation of a diversity requirement into the University's curriculum was based on "an important shared institutional value."

During planning for a new curriculum, "it became clear that learning about diversity was a shared goal for the new curriculum," writes Wathington. "As the work continued discussions about a diversity requirement became central to the design of the new curricular model."

Illinois Wesleyan's two-course diversity requirement includes courses in two categories: "Encountering Global Diversity" and "Encountering U.S. Diversity." Courses that satisfy the global diversity requirement prepare students for responsible citizenship in a global community; those satisfying the U.S. diversity requirement introduce students to the ways in which diversity shapes identity and experience in the U.S.

The decision to address the two issues — global diversity and U.S. diversity — through two requirements was determined by a faculty committee after participation in the AAC&U-sponsored American Commitments project which linked a national network of colleges and universities seeking to increase diversity on their campuses and in their curricula.

As Wathington's articles notes, "Illinois Wesleyan University believes that its diversity requirement provides students with an understanding of different cultures so that they are better able to meet responsibilities to the world community. Recognizing that IWU students are workers of tomorrow and leaders of the future, IWU is committed to developing student minds to meet the challenges of our changing world."