**Grand Challenge Initiative: Promoting Tolerance**

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**Summary:** Our Grand Challenge is addressing ethnic, racial, and religious intolerance in society through multi-disciplinary research and several practical initiatives with a goal of promoting tolerance, defined as cultural pluralism, in Indiana and beyond.

**Abstract:** Ethnic, racial, and religious intolerance occurs too frequently throughout the world. It is a Grand Challenge because locally, its occurrence diminishes social vitality and the full integration of diverse groups into the state, and globally, its occurrence produces conflict that rebounds into Indiana through the circulation of intolerant messages on the internet and social media and the arrival of refugees fleeing conflict zones. Indiana University has the capacity to conduct innovative, multi-disciplinary research to analyze the problem in its full complexity and to implement effective measures to promote cultural pluralism. The initiative will draw on faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences, including those in the new School of Global and International Studies and the new Media School, with faculty members in the Jacobs School of Music, the Maurer School of Law, the School of Education, and departments in Indiana University campuses across the state. The initiative builds on the strengths in various centers, programs, and institutes, including the Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society, the Islamic Studies and Jewish Studies programs, and numerous area studies centers, programs, and departments. The initiative proposes multi-faceted efforts, including policy advocacy, curriculum development, engagement through the arts, media, and video games, and outreach to communities of faith and refugee communities in Indiana.
The Grand Challenge: Our Grand Challenge is addressing intolerance in society. American vitality is rooted in the integration of diverse peoples and their cultures into the national fabric. In today’s increasingly interconnected world, openness to others has even greater social value. But tolerance is not achieved easily. American history includes too many examples of ethnic, racial, and religious bigotry, and this past resonates today in enduring negative stereotypes and bias-motivated intimidation and hate crimes. While “Hoosier hospitality” is an aspiration for the state’s residents, this welcome has not always been offered to all. Beyond the United States, ethnic hatred, racism, and religious extremism have produced instances of mass violence in the past and continue to do so in the present. These intolerant expressions contribute to political and social instability, which produce mass migrations that reverberate well beyond national boundaries, including the arrival of refugees in Indiana and other American states. No one is immune, as the internet and social media equally brings hatred and religious bigotry directly to those browsing sites produced by groups committed to extremism. The local is not distinct from the global.

Goal: Our goal is promoting tolerance, which we define as societal acceptance of cultural pluralism. This initiative will seek to counter ethnic, racial, and religious intolerance in Indiana and beyond through innovative, multi-disciplinary research to analyze intolerance and through a series of coordinated initiatives to promote cultural pluralism. Intolerance, defined as the social construction and maintenance of boundaries between groups based on notions of difference, infuses ideas about social difference with emotional power and encourages ethnic, racial, and religious distrust and hatred. States and social organizations can construct intolerant societies by defining boundaries as a projection of power relations between groups, and robust cases involve exclusiveness at all levels of society and the reliance on state force to maintain the hierarchical order. Even after such states and social organizations no longer enforce legal boundaries between groups, informal processes of differentiation can encourage distrust and
violence between groups. Our initiative seeks to diffuse feelings of anxiety, fear, and hatred between groups by encouraging understanding and fostering social interactions so that Indiana becomes even more accepting of cultural pluralism.

This pre-proposal outlines a multi-disciplinary research agenda and practical efforts to promote cultural pluralism. Firstly, IU faculty members will conduct research to analyze the factors that, in the past and present, encourage ethnic, racial, and religious bigotry. Secondly, this research will guide practical efforts in Indiana and beyond. The overall goal of promoting tolerance will be achieved through advocacy and the production of policy papers, development of curricular reforms, outreach to immigrants and communities of faith, and interaction with Indiana residents and others through websites, blogs, podcasts, musical and theatrical events, films, and interactive games. These practical efforts draw on the expertise of faculty and existing capacity in Indiana University centers, institutes, and programs, as well as outside partners. These initiatives will be evaluated by quantitative and qualitative measures and enhanced over time. We expect that grants and gifts from donors will support this effort on a continuing basis.

**Proposed Research and its Impact:** This initiative includes more than sixty researchers and several Indiana University departments, schools, centers, programs, and institutes. The scholars and units will be involved in multi-disciplinary research and implementing practical efforts. This pre-proposal outlines the research plan and practical initiatives only in the most general terms.

**Research Plan:** Numerous Indiana University scholars in various departments and professional schools will contribute to existing scholarship on the history and contemporary manifestations of ethnic, racial, and religious intolerance through a multi-disciplinary, comparative approach. The research will focus on Indiana and beyond, and it will examine intolerance where it exists and also where indicators suggest it might emerge. We will adopt quantitative and qualitative methods, we will study the past and present, and we will integrate diverse perspectives to generate insights that often elude research in narrow disciplinary corridors. Note that many researchers in this initiative already are leaders in their fields, and others are emerging scholars who bring new questions and perspectives to the project. The group will draw on statistical and
ethnographic analyses, it will uncover patterns and identify outlying examples for specific analysis, and it will bring together scholars who will produce cutting-edge research.

The team asks six broad questions in this Grand Challenge Initiative:

1) How do societies construct social difference?
2) What factors encourage tolerance in society?
3) What factors contribute to the rise of ethnic, racial, and religious bigotry?
4) What factors lead to mass violence based on ethnic, racial, and religious hatred?
5) What can be done to prevent recruitment into violent groups?
6) What role do new media play in the rise of intolerance and the promotion of tolerance?

The research team will be organized into three thematic groups, each with sub-groups. The thematic groups are focused on three drivers of social separation, anxiety, and fear: ethnicity, race, and religion. Sub-groups will tackle specific issues in smaller teams. The overall effort will be synergetic, with interactions between sub-groups and across thematic groups. Some faculty members will have simultaneous memberships in several thematic groups to allow for the flow of ideas. This organizational structure – both non-hierarchical and organic - relates to the topic: expressions of intolerance usually focus on multiple dimensions of social difference simultaneously; the past influences the present; the contemporary world is interconnected, especially in the age of the internet and social media. To comprehend this complexity, statisticians will engage with ethnographers, political scientists will draw on the perspectives of historians, and research comparing world regions will make connections about contemporary expressions of intolerance throughout the world. This initiative matches a multi-faceted challenge with researchers who will transcend disciplinary boundaries, be open to new ideas and approaches, and explore new avenues as productive lines of inquiry open.

This initiative will bring researchers together in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. These scholars work in distinct disciplinary and professional areas, each with its own conventions and methodologies. This initiative asks them to transcend narrow research tracks, work together, and come to new insights. Illustrative is the creation of interactive video games promoting
cultural pluralism: faculty in the Media School bring the expertise to write the programming, and other scholars will provide content, such as details in archives that only historians can uncover and statistical data about the impact of intolerance that sociologists produce, and still others will lend cultural insights into the construction of masculinity that informs male participation in gaming. This example is just one of the many exchanges of perspective, data, and research methodology that are anticipated in this initiative and the practical initiatives the team will pursue.

Practical Mechanisms: The means of attaining our primary goal - promoting tolerance - are multiple. The practical mechanisms will draw on the team’s research into what works, and does not work, to promote cultural pluralism in specific contexts, and use those insights to inform efforts to promote cultural pluralism. Education is one means to encourage understanding. Also effective are activities that build solidarity among members of different social and religious groups. The arts - including music, plays, films, museum exhibitions, and other aesthetic expressions - also draw in audiences with powerful images and performances that encourage understanding as a basis for the acceptance of cultural pluralism. Practical initiatives, such as outreach and policy advocacy, also are effective. Numerous Indiana University scholars in diverse disciplines and professional schools already have been engaged in such efforts. This initiative will build on these efforts, coordinate them, integrate various Indiana University units into new partnerships, and press into new areas to promote cultural pluralism. We arrange the initiative’s efforts into seven areas:

1) Scholarship and policy-advocacy: Indiana University faculty members will produce traditional scholarship, but the initiative will add policy papers. Most researchers have not engaged in public advocacy previously but are committed to adding it to their repertoire. The team also will work with the Indiana University Libraries to create an online data-base to provide access to both scholarly work and policy papers produced by the team.
2) **Curriculum enhancement**: Indiana University faculty members in the School of Education and numerous Indiana University centers, programs, and institutes already are involved in enhancing the curriculum of Indiana schools. The group will expand this effort with innovative, multi-media materials targeted to promote cultural pluralism in Indiana and beyond.

3) **Engagement through the arts**: Indiana University faculty and various centers have been involved in staging exhibitions, sponsoring concerts, showing documentary films, and other activities that celebrate cultural diversity. This initiative will build on that effort and seek to coordinate and integrate activities. Our effort will include events on Indiana University campuses, traveling shows, and websites to take this effort to audiences that might not cross the threshold of an Indiana University museum or auditorium.

4) **Media**: Indiana University faculty members and area centers have used traditional and new media to reach audiences, and this initiative will build on these efforts. This initiative builds on faculty expertise in the Media School. Area studies centers and programs also will be involved, drawing on their past collaboration in producing “Muslim Voices,” a series of podcasts that will be a model for future media efforts in this initiative.

5) **Games and media-intensive presentations**: One new initiative would be the production of games and other media-intensive presentations to alter perceptions of others. These games and presentations will seek to enhance the sense of shared humanity and community among youths of diverse ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds and also demonstrate the effects of violence.

6) **Outreach to refugees**: The School of Education has an active collaboration with the Burmese Community Center for Education in Indianapolis to provide education and assistance and to advocate for this displaced community. The initiative would draw on this experience and expand its activities to other displaced communities in Indiana.

7) **Outreach to Indiana communities of faith**: Indiana University faculty members have engaged communities of faith in Indiana, and this initiative will build on these contacts and create new networks to promote inter-faith understanding and cultural pluralism.
Resources: This Grand Challenge Initiative draws on numerous scholars in several Indiana University units and on several centers, programs, and institutes at Indiana University. These researchers and Indiana University units are committed to working together in new ways to support the research and activities of the multi-disciplinary thematic groups. Central to the effort is bringing the College’s new Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity (CRRES), into active coordination with two established programs, Jewish Studies and Islamic Studies. Also integral to the initiative is bringing these three units into interaction with the outstanding international and area studies centers, programs, and institutes in the new School for Global and International Studies (SGIS). This moment is propitious, given the recent creation of CRRES and SGIS, and the reputations of the Jewish and Islamic Studies programs, to bring these units into an effective combination that will advance the goals of this initiative. Another new unit, the Media School, is essential to this Grand Challenge Initiative and will add important expertise through its faculty and its resources, such as the Black Film Center/Archive.

The effort also draws on expertise in several professional schools and other Indiana University campuses. Faculty in the School of Education’s two campuses, Indianapolis and Bloomington, are members of the team and central to the practical efforts proposed in this Grand Challenge Initiative. They offer connections to Indiana’s schools as well as to immigrant communities that they serve in the state. Members of the law and music schools also are involved, and their roles will be to add expertise, connections, and insight from these areas. The Institute for Advanced Study in the Office of the Vice Provost for Research in Bloomington also will be involved.

Additional resources: This Grand Challenge anticipates the need for additional resources. The expanded research will require an increase in the number of post-doctoral positions at CRRES and in various College units and the professional schools. Expanding capacity at CRRES also will require additional administrative support, and other units might also need such administrative support to increase activities. Also anticipated is expanded funding for graduate students who would assist in the research and become the next generation of scholars and professionals committed to research that promotes cultural pluralism.
A major investment is anticipated in strategic hiring of faculty to add expertise to the initiative. We anticipate hiring in various units associated with initiative, both to augment areas where expertise is not sufficiently robust and to address departures to retirement or outside offers to current team members. Hiring in clusters to bring a new cohort of senior scholars to campus also is an activity that this pre-proposal anticipates.

Additional resources are needed to support the activities with new media. No specific new infrastructure is anticipated, but the expanded activities may require addition space for CRRES and other centers engaged in the initiative.

**Team**: The pre-proposal process has brought more than sixty faculty members into planning for this Grand Challenge Initiative (see Appendix A). New members are welcome to join if and when their research agenda or schedule allows, or if the research takes a new direction.

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**Team leaders/steering committee:**

Asma Afsaruddin, Professor, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
Edward E. Curtis, IV, Professor, Religious Studies, School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI
Sumit Ganguly, Director, Center for American & Global Security; Professor, Political Science
Hilary E. Kahn, Director of the Center for the Study of Global Change; Assistant Dean, SGIS
Bradley A. Levinson, Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, School of Education
H. Timothy Lovelace, Associate Professor, Maurer School of Law
Dina G. Okamoto, Director, CRRES; Associate Professor, Sociology
Radhika Parameswaran, Chair and Professor, Journalism, Media School
Daniel B. Reed, Associate Professor of Folklore and Ethnomusicology
Mark Roseman, Director, Jewish Studies Program; Professor, History
**Sustainability:** This initiative will seek future support from funders of the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Sources include the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Social Science Research Council, to name a funder in each category, but many others exist. Another major source is the US Department of Education: supporting this initiative will provide resources that will bolster the proposals of several Indiana University Title VI area studies centers that lost funding in the last cycle and could return to that status in the next round of applications. Another potential source is gifts from generous benefactors interested in comprehensive efforts to promote cultural pluralism in society.

**Partners:** The initiative expects to partner with other groups. Team members have links with Burmese Cultural Center in Indianapolis, the International Red Cross, and the Early Warning Project at the Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. We would expect several additional partners by the time full proposals would be due.

**Metrics of evaluation:** This initiative will use both quantitative and qualitative measures to assess its effectiveness. The steering committee will keep track of the number of materials produced and numbers of those engaged in schools, visiting websites, downloading podcasts, or contacted by outreach efforts; other measures are tracking the requests for materials and visits to exhibits and other presentations. Qualitative measures such as user feedback and commentary also will be collected and analyzed. Indiana University’s Center for Evaluation and Educational Policy will assist in the quantitative and qualitative assessment. This assessment will be on-going to evaluate both the research and practical efforts associated with this Grand Challenge Initiative.
Appendix A: Team Members
Grand Challenge Initiative: Promoting Tolerance

College of Arts and Sciences, IUB
African-American and African Diaspora Studies
   Phoebe Wolfskill, Assistant Professor
Anthropology
   Nazif Shahrani, Professor
   Marvin Sterling, Associate Professor
Art History
   Patrick McNaughton, Chancellor’s Professor
Borns Jewish Studies Program
   Mark Roseman, Pat M. Glazer Chair and Professor, History
Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society (CRRES)
   Dina Okamoto, Director and Associate Professor, Sociology
Comparative Literature
   Eileen Julien, Professor and Director, Institute of Advanced Study
   Rosemarie McGerr, Professor
Criminal Justice
   Arvind Verma, Associate Professor
Folklore and Ethnomusicology
   Alisha Jones, Assistant Professor
   Daniel Reed, Associate Professor
   Ruth Stone, Laura Bolton Professor
French and Italian
   Guillaume Ansart, Associate Professor
   Hall Bjornstad, Associate Professor and Director, Renaissance Studies
   Alison Calhoun, Assistant Professor, Adjunct, Theatre & Drama
   Eric McPhail, Professor
Geography
   Ishan Ashutosh, Assistant Professor
History
   Deborah Deliyannis, Associate Professor
   Jeff Gould, Rudy Professor
   Alex Lichtenstein, Associate Professor
   Michelle Moyd, Associate Professor
   Amrita Myers, Associate Professor
   Kaya Şahin, Associate Professor
   Rob Schneider, Professor
Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism
   Günter Gikeli, Assistant Professor and Justin M. Druck Family Scholar, ISCA
   Alvin Rosenfeld, Director and Irving M. Glazer Professor of Jewish Studies
Islamic Studies Program
   Ron Sela, Director and Associate Professor, CEUS, SGIS
Media School
   Black Film Center/Archive
      Michael Martin, Director; Professor, Media Studies; Professor, Comp. Literature
   Cinema and Media Studies
      Akin Adesokan, Associate Professor; Associate Professor, Comparative Literature
   Communication Science
      Andrew Weaver, Associate Professor
   Journalism
      Radhika Parameswaran, Chair, and Professor
   Media Arts and Production
      Edward Castronova, Chair, and Professor

Political Science
   Aurelian Craiutu, Professor
   Christopher DeSante, Assistant Professor
   Lauren Morris MacLean, Associate Professor
   Abdulkadir Sinno, Associate Professor; Associate Professor, NELC, SGIS

Religious Studies
   Nur Amali Ibrahim, Assistant Professor, and Assistant Professor, International Studies
   Kevin Jaques, Associate Professor and Adjunct, NELC, SGIS
   Jason Mokhtarian, Assistant Professor; Assistant Professor, Jewish Studies

School of Global and International Studies
   African Studies Program
      Maria Groez-Ngaté, Associate Director
      John H. Hanson, Director, and Associate Professor, History
   Center for American and Global Security
      Sumit Ganguly, Director; Rabindranath Tagore Chair, India Studies, Professor, Political Science
   Center for the Study of Global Change
      Hilary Kahn, Director, and Assistant Dean, SGIS
   Center for the Study of the Middle East
      Cigdem Balim, Associate Director
      Feisal Istrabadi, Director; University Scholar in International Law and Diplomacy, Maurer School of Law; and Adjunct, NELC, SGIS

International Studies Department
   Emma Gilligan, Associate Professor, new recruit arriving in January 2016

Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
   Asma Afsaruddin, Professor
   Guadalupe Gonzalez Dieguez, Assistant Professor, and Adjunct, Religious Studies
   Asaad Al-Saleh, Assistant Professor

Sociology
   Pamela Jackson, Professor
College of Arts and Sciences, IUNW
   Marie Eisenstein, Associate Professor of Political Science

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, IUSB
   Lisa Zwicker, Associate Professor of History

Jacobs School of Music, IUB
   Judah Cohen, Associate Professor of Musicology; Associate Professor, Jewish Studies

Maurer Law School-Bloomington, IUB
   Jeannine Bell, Richard S. Melvin Professor
   H. Timothy Lovelace, Associate Professor

School of Education-IUB
   Curriculum Studies and Social Studies Education
      Keith Barton, Professor and Associate Dean for Teacher Education
   Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
      Bradley Levinson, Professor
      Sylvia Martinez, Associate Professor and Director, Latino Studies
      Margaret Sutton, Associate Professor

School of Education-IUPUI
   Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
      Brendan Maxcy, Associate Professor
      Thu Suong Thi Nguyen, Assistant Professor
   Higher Education and Student Affairs
      Lori Patton Davis, Associate Professor

School of Liberal Arts-IUPUI
   History
      Daniella Kostroun, Acting Chair and Associate Professor
   Religious Studies
      Edward Curtis, IV, Professor