

We would like to inform the members of the ISSI community that Chancellor Christ has accepted Vice Chancellor for Research Katz's proposal to suspend all decisions and actions related to ISSI's programs and organizational structure. The response to our plan to preserve ISSI's programs, while disbanding the institute itself, made clear that there has been insufficient prior consultation with faculty and other stakeholders. Furthermore, our plan's impact on the broader campus intellectual support for social justice research was inadequately addressed. We will now pause to allow for broader engagement and consultation, not just on ISSI's future, but also about how we can, together, more fully support scholarship and research related to this critical societal challenge.

In support of those goals, the Chancellor plans to assemble a task force on Social Justice Research that will make recommendations for how Berkeley can best support the network of faculty, staff, and students pursuing research on Social Justice issues. The task force, with representation from faculty, students, and staff, will be formed in consultation with the Academic Senate, the Graduate Assembly, and the Deans of relevant academic units.

The campus already has a significant investment in intellectual support for social justice issues. A key task force objective will be to better align and support our institutes and centers, while enhancing collaboration between all who are engaged in this essential work. Furthermore, the campus has committed to hiring five new clusters of faculty members, whose scholarship will be focused on the study of issues challenging social justice, across a wide range of disciplines. The task force will make recommendations on how best to support the work of these new colleagues, as well as those who have been engaged in such work for years. ISSI will continue to exist in the interim, pending the recommendations of the task force and further consultation with the campus community. We will share the charge letter for the task force as soon as it is completed. We expect the task force recommendations to be finalized by the end of the calendar year.

For now, a priority is to provide accessible and safe physical space to ISSI's graduate student community. The quality of the current space is poor, and is inaccessible to members of our community with disabilities. We look forward to meeting with affiliated graduate students along with Dean Raka Ray and Vice Provost for Graduate Studies Lisa García Bedolla in order to find the best physical space possible for the students and preserve their community.

Linda Haverty Rugg
Associate Vice Chancellor for Research

Randy H. Katz
Vice Chancellor for Research