Approved by the Board of Trustees

July 20, 2023

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Board Meeting

July 20, 2023

# ESTABLISH THE CENTER FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT AS A PERMANENT CENTER, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment as a Permanent Center, College of Education

**Funding:** No impact anticipated

The chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, with the advice of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Education to establish the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) as a permanent center.

The Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment was established in 2011 as one of five College of Education strategic priorities. Since that time, CREA has demonstrated international growth and prominence in its educational and intellectual footprint and community engagement outreach efforts.

CREA founding director Professor Stafford Hood’s conceptualization of culturally responsive evaluation and assessment is built on the foundational contributions of educational researchers, learning scientists, and curriculum and assessment scholars who understood the value and benefit of culture and cultural context in understanding diverse ethnic and linguistic populations, school children, and communities. CREA’s core mission is to generate evidence for policymaking that is not only methodologically but also culturally and contextually defensible. This mission directly addresses the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign’s strategic priorities related to fostering scholarship, discovery, and innovation. As an international community of scholars/practitioners, CREA recognizes issues of power, privilege, and intersectionality in promoting a culturally responsive stance in all forms of systematic inquiry including evaluation, assessment, policy analysis, applied research, and action research. The center provides a resource in public and community engagement for organizations and individuals seeking to better understand and apply cultural responsiveness in their work. CREA seeks to produce a body of informed practitioners, published scholarship, professional development opportunities, technical assistance resources, and advocacy efforts, all of which advance cultural responsiveness across inquiry platforms and settings.

CREA’s biennial conference is a signature activity offering the opportunity to fulfill the center’s mission, facilitate international and domestic engagement, and build a scholarly community in the conduct of research, evaluation, and practice. The conference is supported by a range of sponsors such as the College of Education, Annie E. Casey Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the American Evaluation Association. The six CREA conferences have hosted 78 international presenters from 17 countries, demonstrating the center’s global reach and substantial transnational community building.

A second signature activity is CREA’s deep partnerships with Dublin City University, CREA-Hawai’i, CREA Become, and St. Mary’s University. These partnerships with organizations who share the value and commitment to centering evaluation and assessment in culture have expanded opportunities for research collaboration, knowledge exchange, and professional development.

In addition to these signature activities, CREA serves as a vital link between the academic units its core faculty represent, each of the four academic departments in the College of Education, in cultivating cross-disciplinary discussion of assessment and evaluation in the several education and education-adjacent contexts in which College of Education core faculty conduct equity and social justice work. Beyond the College of Education, CREA has active cross-collaborative linkages with units across campus. CREA also has a group of leading international and national external affiliate researchers in academic, non-profit, research and evaluation firms, industry, and philanthropic institutions representing diverse academic and technical practices that serve to expand the outward-facing CREA mission and goals. CREA affiliate researchers, in addition to primarily extending the CREA intellectual footprint through scholarly publications, work with the center by forming standing or adhoc committees. A standing executive leadership group is comprised of five to seven CREA Affiliate Researchers who are primarily involved in implementation of the center’s strategic planning, leadership, and development.

Establishment as a permanent center does not impact CREA’s funding, faculty affiliations, students, or facilities. Permanent center status is strongly supported by the dean of the College of Education, College of Education Committee of Departmental Executives, College of Education Research Committee, and College of Education Executive Committee.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further senate jurisdiction is involved.

The president of the University of Illinois System recommends approval.

This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.