

# **Engaging the Nashville Recommendations:**

**Navigating the Inclusive Astronomy Wiki at AAS**

Adam Burgasser, Kim Coble, Jessica Mink  
on behalf of the IA2015 Organizers

# Outline

- **Conference philosophy: intersectional approach**
- **Recommendations: expectations for implementation**
- **Navigating the twiki**
- **30 min for Q & A**

**Come to the roundtable discussion on Saturday: 4:15 – 5:30!**

# Inclusive Astronomy 2015

## Conference At-a-Glance

June 17 - 19, 2015

Vanderbilt University

160 astronomers, sociologists, policy makers and community leaders convened to discuss intersectional barriers and solutions to success in astronomy.



### Core Organizing Committee:

**Carolyn Brinkworth** (National Center for Atmospheric Research), **Adam Burgasser** (University of California, San Diego), **Kim Coble** (Chicago State University), **Jedidah Isler** (Vanderbilt University), **Jessica Mink** (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory), **Nick Murphy** (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Harvard University), **Dara Norman** (National Optical Astronomy Observatory), **Jane Rigby** (NASA Goddard Space Flight Center), **Keivan Stassun** (Vanderbilt University)

Presentation videos, posters and toolkits: [vu.edu/ia2015](http://vu.edu/ia2015)

Recommendations: [bit.ly/1JXIOzZ](http://bit.ly/1JXIOzZ)

Twiki: [bit.ly/2r3nidq](http://bit.ly/2r3nidq)

# Resources from IA 2015

IA 2015 videos, posters and toolkits: [vu.edu/ia2015](http://vu.edu/ia2015)

**INCLUSIVE ASTRONOMY 2015**  
June 17-19, 2015  
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee

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**Meeting Presentations**

Click [here](#) to view meeting materials.

Click [here](#) to watch videos of presentations.

# Accomplishments

- IA2015 Vision Statement endorsed by American Astronomical Society
- AAS hosting [web platform](#) for development and sharing best practices for adoption and implementation of recommendations by the community
- Recommendation for [proper use of the GRE](#) endorsed by AAS and implemented by several graduate programs
- Formation of AAS Working Group on Accessibility and Disability ([WGAD](#))
- Regular discussions of inclusivity research in the departments of IA2015 attendees and others (similar to journal club)
- Discussion of IA2015 content at other community/society meetings, e.g. International Astronomical Union, American Geophysical Union, American Association of Physics Teachers

# Endorsement and Adoption

- Institutions publicly endorse vision statement
- Identify short-term, medium-term and long-term goals based on recommendations relevant to the institution and people at the institution
- Develop and commit to individual, group, and institutional plans

# Community

- Institutions annually report on progress:
  - Twiki as a living document
  - Successes
  - Challenges
  - Post toolkits for specific recommendations
- Semi-annual sessions at AAS meetings to further develop recommendations and assessments, and share experiences of implementation
- Departmental site visits to gauge the climate for people with one or more marginalized identities, and ensure that these site visits are intersectional

# Structure of Recommendations

For Full Listing: bit.ly/1JXIOzZ	Short (1 - 3 yrs)	Medium (3 - 5 yrs)	Long (5+ yrs)
<b>Barriers to Access</b>	Develop, publicize, and follow clear criteria for hiring and evaluations. De-emphasize student teaching evaluations as they have been shown to be systematically biased. <b>RBA3S</b>	Develop and provide astronomical information using multiple modes of access, with each mode being as accessible as possible. <b>RB2M</b>	Research and develop methods and assistive technology to make astronomy accessible to disabled students and astronomers. <b>RB1L</b>
<b>Inclusive Climates</b>	Adopt and publicize clear anti-harassment policies and procedures, including highly transparent reporting avenues. <b>CIE1S</b>	Establish identity support networks within and across STEM departments and connect to university-level resources. <b>CIE2M</b>	Develop and support astronomy education research groups who investigate teaching and learning in astronomy through the lens of inclusivity and intersectionality. <b>CIE1L</b>
<b>Policy &amp; Leadership</b>	Make information about the processes and procedures to obtain leadership roles in astronomy clear and more accessible. <b>PPL-other</b>	The decadal survey should address issues of policy making and leadership diversity imbalances as recommendations that can be acted upon by policy makers. <b>PPL3M</b>	Funding of research (e.g., grants) is also tied to metrics on diversity and inclusion of underrepresented and disenfranchised groups. <b>PPL3L</b>
<b>Inclusive Practice</b>	Do your homework. Educate yourself on the extensive history of oppression against marginalized groups in your own culture and the culture you find yourself in. <b>CIP3S</b>	Respond promptly when astronomers publicly engage in racism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, and/or ableism. <b>CIP-other</b>	Develop long-term institutional plans for equity and inclusion, which should be public and include annual progress reports on organizational accessibility. <b>CIP2L</b>



# Full Recommendations

What should I do with this long list? [bit.ly/1JXIOzZ](http://bit.ly/1JXIOzZ)

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***Inclusive Astronomy 2015 Recommendations***  
***(or the “Nashville Recommendations”)***  
Final Version for AAS Council Endorsement of Vision Statement

**Executive Summary**

In June 2015, 160 astronomers, sociologists, policy makers and community leaders convened the first *Inclusive Astronomy* meeting at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, TN. The goal of this meeting was to discuss the issues affecting people of color; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, genderqueer/genderfluid, agender, intersex, queer, questioning, or asexual (LGBTIQA\*) people; people with disabilities; women; people disenfranchised by their socio-economic status; and everyone who holds more than one of these underrepresented identities in the astronomical community. A key focus of this meeting was examination of issues of intersectionality: the well-established conceptualization that racism, sexism, heterosexism, transphobia, and ableism are often linked (e.g., that women of color are faced with the intersection of racism and sexism).

The following recommendations emerged as some of the first steps towards our shared goals, through the synthesis of prior work<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>, input from community members, consultation with expert practitioners, and discussions and workshops during the conference itself. All guidelines and recommendations in this document should be interpreted in a way that benefits historically underrepresented groups.

The recommendations presented here cover the four broad topical areas that the conference addressed, namely:

1) Removing barriers to access - This topical area addresses academic barriers to

# AAS Twiki

Endorse the vision, then engage with the more manageable twiki in areas most relevant to you and your organization: [bit.ly/2r3nidq](https://bit.ly/2r3nidq)



The screenshot shows the AAS Groups Wiki interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the AAS logo, the title 'AAS Groups Wiki The hidden AAS community', and a 'Log in' link. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the text 'Find' and a magnifying glass icon. The main content area features a blue header for the article 'Inclusive Astronomy: The Nashville Recommendations'. A light blue note box is present, containing the text: 'Record your individual and/or organizational commitments to implement specific Recommendations on the Inclusive Astronomy Recommendations Followers List'. Below the note, there is a paragraph of text stating: 'AAS Council has formally endorsed the Inclusive Astronomy Vision Statement below, and has endorsed the use of this wiki as a mechanism for the community to engage with te recommendations. See: <https://aas.org/media/press-releases/aas-endorses-vision-statement-inclusive-astronomy>'. The article title 'Executive Summary' is followed by a paragraph: 'In June 2015, 160 astronomers, sociologists, policy makers and community leaders convened the first Inclusive Astronomy meeting at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, TN. The goal of this meeting was to discuss the issues affecting people of color; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, genderqueer/genderfluid, agender, intersex, queer, questioning, or asexual (LGBTIQA\*) people; people with disabilities; women; and everyone who holds more than one of these underrepresented identities in the astronomical community. A key focus of this meeting was examination of issues of intersectionality: the well-established conceptualization that racism, sexism, heterosexism, transphobia, and ableism are often linked (e.g., that women of color are faced with the intersection of racism and sexism)'. Another paragraph follows: 'The following recommendations emerged as some of the first steps towards our shared goals, through the synthesis of prior work<sup>1, 2, 3, 4</sup>. Women of color in astronomy and astrophysics. Seeking Solutions: Maximizing American Talent by Advancing Women of Color in Academia, National Academies Press, Washington D.C. , input from community members, consultation with expert practitioners, and discussions and workshops during the conference itself. All guidelines and recommendations in this document should be interpreted in a way that benefits historically underrepresented groups.' The final paragraph states: 'The recommendations presented here cover the four broad topical areas that the conference addressed, namely:'. This is followed by a numbered list of four items: 1.) **Removing barriers to access** - This topical area addresses academic barriers to educational access, such as the use of GRE scores in admissions decisions, financial barriers to graduate school application, stereotype threat, and accessibility issues that impede the ability of all students to directly participate in learning environments. 2.) **Creating inclusive climates** - In order to maintain diversity at astronomical institutions, it is necessary that the environment be inclusive. This topical area addresses microaggressions, how to honor diversity without tokenization, effective and accessible teaching methods, and effective mentoring. 3.) **Improving inclusion and access to power, policy, and leadership** - This topical area provides astronomers with strategies on how to play a role in decisions affecting the astronomical community and how people in power can be more inclusive in their decision making. 4.) **Establishing a community of inclusive practice** - This topical area provides techniques for astronomers to take active rather than passive measures to ensure that their groups, events and institutions are inclusive.

# Commit to Specific Recommendations

## Sign-up form and follower's list

**AA**  
**S** **AAS Groups Wiki** The hidden AAS community

[Click here to go back to the Summary Recommendations](#)

### Sign up to commit to specific recommendations

Post a comment (using the comment button below) with the specific information requested.  
Please include your email address and a link to the policy, if possible.  
A moderator will review your submission and add it to the table.

Individual or Organization	Recommendation Number	Date Committed	Date Completed	Contact Person	Details of Implementation
Vanderbilt University Physics & Astronomy	RBA1S	1/27/2017	1/27/2017	<a href="#">Keivan Stassun</a>	Astrophysics program
Vanderbilt University Physics & Astronomy	RBA1M	2/17/2017	2/17/2017	<a href="#">Kelly Holley-Bockelmann</a>	<a href="#">Fisk-Vanderbilt Masters-to-PhD Bridge Program</a>
Williams College	CIE2S	4/27/2017	4/27/2017	<a href="#">Karen Kwitter</a>	Beginning with the class of 2021 (incoming first-years in Fall 2017) Williams College has instituted an option whereby students can be known on campus by a name other than their legal name.
Princeton University	RBA1M	04/28/2017	04/48/2017	<a href="#">Jeremy Goodman</a>	The Department of Astrophysical sciences at Princeton University runs a two-year post-baccalaureate program. More information is at <a href="http://web.astro.princeton.edu/academic/post-baccalaureate-program">http://web.astro.princeton.edu/academic/post-baccalaureate-program</a>

[Click here](#) for an up-to-date list of GRE requirements by institution.

# GRE Requirements

See link to special page for GRE status:

Physics GRE requirements for US/Canadian Astronomy Programs

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help

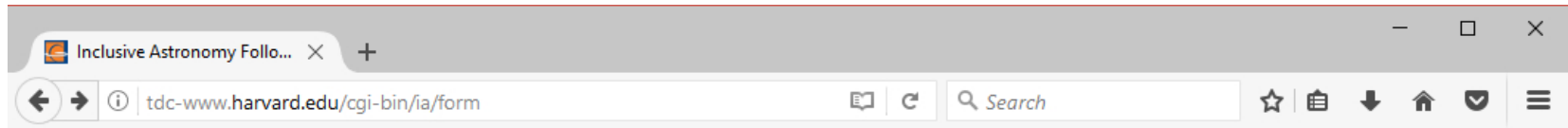
View only

The following programs are sorted by Physics GRE score acceptance policy, where the programs that have completely abandoned the Physics GRE are listed on top and those with increasingly less-progressive policies are listed towards the end (otherwise listing is alphabetical). The AAS council's recommendation is "that graduate programs eliminate or make optional the GRE and PGRE as metrics of evaluation for graduate applicants," but the author of this spreadsheet believes all deprecations of the test are positive developments and should be encouraged. For more info on the rationale for such a change, please see the links below the table.

Please send e-mails to [guillochon@gmail.com](mailto:guillochon@gmail.com) to propose edits to this list.

Program	Department †	Physics GRE*	Policy	Verified (by)	* Key:
Cal State Northridge <sup>m</sup>	Phys. & Ast.	N	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Barranco)	N = Does not accept PGRE
Michigan <sup>f</sup>	Ast. & Astrophys.	N	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (E. Rauscher)	O = Optional reporting
New Mexico State	Astronomy	N	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Jackiewicz)	R = Reporting recommended
San Francisco State <sup>m</sup>	Phys. & Ast.	N	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Barranco)	Y = Still required
UT Austin <sup>f</sup>	Astronomy	N	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (C. Casey)	
Vanderbilt	Astrophysics	N	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Guillochon)	<sup>a</sup> = Alternative requirement if PGRE not reported
Alabama	Phys. & Ast.	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Bailin)	<sup>c</sup> = Considering relaxing policy
Alberta	Ast. & Astrophys.	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (N. Ivanova)	<sup>d</sup> = Department ignores PGRE, but school requires
Arizona	Astronomy	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (E. Cangi)	<sup>e</sup> = "Exceptions" made
Arizona	Planetary	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (A. Springmann)	<sup>f</sup> = Offers fee waiver
Appalachian State	Phys. & Ast.	O		N	<sup>m</sup> = Masters only program
Bowling Green	Phys. & Ast.	O		N	<sup>n</sup> = No fee to apply
Brandeis	Physics	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (E. Cangi)	<sup>o</sup> = Online policy not yet updated to reflect current status
Caltech <sup>f</sup>	Planetary	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (H. Ngo)	<sup>r</sup> = PGRE weight reduced in evaluation or a wide range of scores have been adm
Case Western Reserve	Astronomy	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (C. Mihos)	<sup>u</sup> = Allows unofficial reporting
Central Florida	Physics	O		Y (A. Springmann)	
Clemson	Phys. & Ast.	O		N	Fraction of programs with each policy:
Denver	Phys. & Ast.	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Hoffman)	
Eastern Michigan	Phys. & Ast.	O		N	
Florida Inst. of Tech <sup>f</sup>	Ast. & Astrophys.	O		Y (E. Perlman)	
Georgia State <sup>fu</sup>	Astronomy	O		Y (M. Bentz)	
Harvard <sup>o</sup>	Astronomy	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Guillochon)	
Indiana Univ.	Astronomy	O		Y (E. Mills)	
Johns Hopkins	Planetary	O		Y (S. Horst)	
Kansas State	Physics	O	<a href="#">URL</a>	Y (J. Guillochon)	
McGill	Astrophysics	O		Y (D. Haggard)	

# Adding Your Efforts



## Inclusive Astronomy Follower Entry

Using this form, you can add an entry to the [Inclusive Astronomy Followers List](#).

First, chose a category:

<a href="#">Remove Barriers to Access</a>	Address academic barriers to educational access, such as the use of GRE scores in admissions decisions, financial barriers to graduate school application, stereotype threat, and accessibility issues that impede the ability of all students to directly participate in learning environments.
<a href="#">Create an Inclusive Environment</a>	To maintain diversity at an astronomical institution, it is necessary that the environment be inclusive. Develop processes to deal with microaggressions, honor diversity without tokenization, use effective and accessible teaching methods, and maintain effective mentoring.
<a href="#">Inclusion and Access to Power, Policy, and Leadership</a>	Provide astronomers with strategies on how to play a role in decisions affecting the astronomical community and help people in power to be more inclusive in their decision making.
<a href="#">Establish a Community of Inclusive Practice</a>	Implement techniques for astronomers to take active rather than passive measures to ensure that their groups, events and institutions are inclusive.

# Adding Your Efforts

Inclusive Astronomy Follo... × +

tdc-www.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/ia/formrba

## Removing Barriers to Access

**Enter information about your implementation**

<b>Contact Name</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Contact Email</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Institution</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Department</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Date Committed</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Link to Implementation</b>	<input type="text"/>		
<b>Implementation Details</b>	<input type="text"/>		

**Categorize your implementation**

Code	Short term goals/actions	Target stakeholders
<input type="radio"/> <b>RBA1S</b>	Develop and deploy best-practice, research-based tools for evaluating graduate school applications holistically and equitably: Eliminate the General and/or Physics Graduate Record Exams (GRE) for graduate school admission (see the AAS statement of endorsement), and integrate holistic measures of scientific talent into graduate admissions procedures (see, e.g., the Fisk-Vanderbilt Bridge Program toolkit for sample protocols and rubrics).	Universities, departments
<input type="radio"/> <b>RBA2S</b>	Make graduate school applications affordable: Reduce or eliminate graduate school application fees.	Universities
<input type="radio"/> <b>RBA3S</b>	Develop, publicize, and follow clear criteria for hiring and evaluations. De-emphasize student teaching evaluations as they have been shown to be systematically biased. Make hires in broad areas of research topics. Develop a common application service for job applications to reduce workload on applicants.	Universities, public and private research organizations, departments
	Recognize disability issues at the same level as minority & gender issues. AAS and other professional	

# Discussion

**How are you using the recommendations?**

**Your questions!**