

Committee/Task Force Midyear and Final Report Native American Land Acknowledgement Working Group

Membership

Chair: Carole Nash

Members: Carlos Aleman, Tim Bloss, Ed Brantmeier, David Daniel, H Gelfand, Rubén Graciani, Jamie Haverkamp, Laura Henigman, Gilpatrick Hornsby, Brent Lewis, Scott Milliman, DaNae Peterson, Erin Phillippi, Brian Sullivan, Elizabeth Wislar, Catherine Zeman, Terra Daniel

Charge:

- Calling together CFI, CVPA, Student Affairs, and any other unit on campus that has constructed a land acknowledgment statement to discuss why/how they did this work, how they use their statement, and what they hope it will achieve.
- Considering creation of a draft university-wide Indigenous and Enslaved Peoples Land Acknowledgement Statement.
- Consulting with the Virginia Indigenous tribes/nations, as well as Indigenous scholars who have studied Native American diaspora, to better understand what these issues mean for contemporary Indigenous communities.
- Beginning intentional exploration of potential Native American curriculum, hiring, and programming at JMU.
- Examining interest in the creation of a Native American studies minor, which is a traditional starting point for curriculum development.
- Examining interest in creation of a Native American studies minor, once we commit to a broader initiative.

Summary of Current Semester Activity:

- Completed: Gathered Land Acknowledgement Statements from units listed and discussed the rationale/need. Reviewed statements from other Virginia public universities. Discussed the combination of Native American land acknowledgement statements, enslaved peoples' acknowledgement, and statement of harms based on exclusion. Will take this up in the fall.
- We have not yet started the discussion of a university-wide land acknowledgement/enslaved peoples' statement.

- Informal consultations are underway with the Monacan Nation, Patowomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia, Rappahannock Indian Tribe, and American Indian and Indigenous Community Center (Virginia Tech) to gauge the immediate and long-term concerns in Virginia. These discussions also include a donor from the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge who is interested in supporting a series of summits on the role of higher education in supporting Native American studies/students with an emphasis on Virginia.
- We have begun discussions of curriculum/hiring/programming and have made the recommendation that the University create a position for a Tribal Liaison to lead this work.
- We have not yet begun the discussion of a Native American Studies minor or a broader initiative.

Future Work Planned:

- The Working Group requests a change in the charge, specifically items two and four, and the addition of seven:
 - Item two: “Consulting with Native American communities on the creation of a JMU Land Acknowledgement Statement”
 - Item four: “Collaborating with Native American communities to explore curriculum, hiring, and programming at JMU”
 - Item seven (new): “Investigate with the Provost the creation of the position of Tribal Liaison to develop formal relationships with native American communities and work with faculty/administration on curriculum and programming efforts at JMU.”
- Summer 2022:
 - Meetings with Tribal Liaisons from other universities to understand the scope of their position, compensation, and support.
 - Continued work with the Provost on the question of a Tribal Liaison position for JMU.
 - Continued meetings with the Blue Ridge Community Foundation donor and members of the American Indian and Indigenous Community Center at Virginia Tech.
 - Planning for programming for Native American Heritage Month (November).

- Fall 2022:
 - Continued work on Tribal Liaison position.
 - Inventory of courses taught at JMU that focus on Native American and Indigenous studies.
 - Planning for first summit on Native Americans in Virginia Higher Education.