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Provost Faculty Diversity Council. Present for this discussion: Kyle Gipson, Gina MacDonald, David Owusu-Ansah, Terry Brino-Dean, Meg Mulrooney, Rhonda Zingraff, Michael Galgano, AJ Morey.

**Response to “Recruitment Procedures for Expanding and Retaining a Diverse Faculty.”**

The Council commends the Task Force for their diligent work in this crucial area. We would like to add the following observations in support of this document:

1. Recruitment of faculty must start long before the search begins; you have to get people on board long before you have a position. Requiring search committees and department heads to undergo training just as you are launching a search may not have a happy effect on the disposition of search committees. Perhaps have someone visit with the unit and facilitate a frank discussion about diversity and then keep that discussion going. In some fields attending conferences and noting interesting participants is another good way to improve the pool once a search is initiated, as well as advertising in venues that are friendly to diversity-minded candidates. The power of relationships set in motion over time can be a powerful ally in realizing our diversity goals.
2. For during the hiring process: We are considering recommending a “Diversity Interview Team” that would meet with the candidate during their campus visit, perhaps just for administrative searches, or perhaps for all faculty hires. It might be a way to highlight JMU’s commitment to diversity and get objective input about an individual candidate. The Council expects to do further research on this idea.
3. What happens after the hire is just as important as an energetic recruitment process. Some campuses create a resource group (ERG) for diversity hires, a safe time/space where new hires can gather and process their experiences (micro-aggressions, for example) without fearing they will alienate new colleagues. Even so, we note that a diversity hire may not mention uncomfortable experiences because they hesitate to indicate that JMU is less than welcoming and they don’t want to be ostracized for upsetting the JMU balance.
4. We need an external climate survey. While we understand an internally created survey is being designed in response to Title IX, that’s not the same as an objective inquiry into our environment. If diversity faculty are afraid to speak because they understand the JMU ethos of keeping up appearances, then an internal survey will not be of much assistance. Moreover, faculty who are currently not responsive to diversity or who are inclined to be skeptical will likely respond positively to data from a trusted external source.
5. We would like to see a much more vigorous diversity media presence. We don’t mean that the JMU presentation should falsify our current demography, much less our commitment. We do mean that there are many events and organizations that seem largely invisible to our official media presence. You have to work hard to find anything about diversity on JMU media, which sends an uncomfortable signal to faculty who are considering whether JMU will be a good home for them. The JMU main page, the Provost’s page, and college and department pages should be reviewed with an eye to highlighting our commitment to diversity.