

CAL Diversity Council Minutes Feb. 15, 2017

Appointed Members:

Chair: Frances Flannery	flannefl@jmu.edu	Phil/Rel
Members:		
Elizabeth Pass	passer@jmu.edu	WRTC
Erica Cavanagh	cavanaek@jmu.edu	English
Stephen Chappell	chappesx@jmu.edu	History
Michael Davis	davismk@jmu.edu	SCOM
Yenisei Montes de Oca	monstesyx@jmu.edu	Foreign Languages
Alexandra Vilela	vilelaam@jmu.edu	SMAD
Heather Scheuerman	scheuehl@jmu.edu	Justice Studies
Liam Buckley	bucklelm@jmu.edu	Soc/Anth
Jennifer Byrne	byrneje@jmu.edu	Political Science

In attendance: Flannery, Scheuerman, Davis, Montes de Oca, Vilela, Chappell, Pass, Buckley, Cavanagh, Jeffrey

Regrets: Byrne

1) We shared and discussed the statement from UVA on travel ban:

UVA Resolution on the Recent Executive Order

The President's recent executive order banning entry to the United States of citizens from seven predominately Muslim countries, as well as refugees from all countries, is a moral outrage. It threatens lives and divides families, including those of students, staff, and faculty of the University of Virginia. It also threatens the basic values of inclusiveness, equality, and respect for human dignity that we stand for as a university in the public trust. Rather than addressing legitimate security and safety concerns in a responsible and measured way, this drastically overbroad policy needlessly harms decent and talented people who have already been strictly vetted and who pose no demonstrable risk. Despite recent court orders staying parts of the order, much of it remains in effect, and it is therefore an active threat to refugees, immigrants, and Muslim-Americans, including those in our community. We condemn it unequivocally.

We condemn it not only as an offense to human decency and the Constitution, but also because it harms our ability to do our jobs. We are scientists and engineers, physicians and lawyers, historians and philosophers, and business innovators and public servants. We come from all corners of the world to this great University to learn and share knowledge. We depend in turn on communities of learning across the world to enrich our own scholarly endeavors. This discriminatory executive order imperils these relationships, even as it threatens our students and

shames our nation.

We call on all faculty to contact their legislators and ask them to condemn this executive order and to urge the President to withdraw it.

As faculty we stand with our students and colleagues who might be harmed by this order, and we resolve to defend their rights and safety to the best of our lawful ability.

2) May symposium update -

Heather Scheuerman (Justice Studies) and Mike Davis (SCOM) have offered to lead a May symposium session on “Facts Matter” to help faculty teach vetting of news sources and to help sort out facts from fiction regarding diversity issues.

3) Members raised the question as to whether the issue of conducting an external, comprehensive climate study is emphasized at the Diversity Council Chairs meeting. Mike Davis and Elizabeth Pass have been attending these (Frances Flannery cannot attend because of Diversity Dialogue facilitator trainings). They will bring it up directly at the DCC.

4) Madison Caucus expressed support for the letter written to the Provost by this committee and wants to know how they can support us and also whether we will give it to the next Provost or other Diversity Councils. The CAL diversity council will pass it on to the next Provost and loop back to the Madison Caucus.

5) Justice Studies raised the issue of whether diversity related subject guides on the library's website are as robust as they should be (e.g., <http://guides.lib.jmu.edu/diversity>). Despite having diversity content, is this content being made prominent and easily accessible for the multiple audiences who look at these guides (students, faculty, prospective students and faculty, etc.) and for multiple purposes (research and whether scholarly sources on diversity can be found at JMU)?

The Justice Studies department is working on this issue relating to its own subject guide, but you may wish to examine your own department's or other discipline-related subject guides to see if diversity content is being adequately represented. Professor Daisy Breneman welcomes suggestions/comments in regard to building diversity subject guides, particularly Disability Studies.

6) Elizabeth Pass (WRTC) raised the question about whether JMU has an official response or guide for responding to crisis situations related to

diversity concerns, especially in the classroom. Dean Jeffrey indicated that he will obtain the language of what already exists, but that he does not think that there are protocols for handling situations within the classroom setting, such as when a student engages in discriminatory speech.

This segued into a discussion about whether or not anti-LGBTQIA language from campus preachers who obtain a permit to stand outside of Carrier Library and preach. Dean Jeffrey and others pointed out that free speech is protected, but hate speech is not; however, hate speech is defined as speech that directly incites violence. This is difficult to enforce.

An earlier correspondence, forwarded to the members of the committee in the agenda, noted concerns from Mary Thompson, the Women's and Gender Studies Coordinator about the preachers' speeches, sometimes marked by the misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia. The March meeting will follow up on this.

7) Flannery announced a Lobbying for Humanities Advocacy opportunity March 13-14 in DC. Jeffrey indicated that individuals interested in attending should contact Department Chairs to see if travel to the workshop would be supported. The committee discussed the importance of pending cuts to the NEA and NEH.

8) Elizabeth Pass will attend the DCC for March 22.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances Flannery
