

CAL Diversity Council Minutes April 11, 2018

Appointed Members:

Chair: Heather L. Scheuerman scheuehl@jmu.edu Justice Studies

Members:

Stephen Chappell	chappesx@jmu.edu	History
Beth Eck	eckba@jmu.edu	Soc/Anth
Frances Flannery	flannefl@jmu.edu	Phil/Rel
Adrienne M. Hooker	hookeram@jmu.edu	SMAD
Yenisei Montes de Oca	montstesyx@jmu.edu	Foreign Languages
Elizabeth Pass	passer@jmu.edu	WRTC
Mark Richardson	richardm@jmu.edu	Political Science
Isaac Woo	woocw@jmu.edu	SCOM
Gregory Wrenn	wrenngj@jmu.edu	English

Sitting Members:

Chris Arndt arndtjc@jmu.edu Interim Dean of CAL

In attendance: Heather L. Scheuerman, Stephen Chappell, Beth Eck, Frances Flannery, Adrienne M. Hooker, Elizabeth Pass, Mark Richardson, Isaac Woo, Chris Arndt, and Susan Wheeler (wheel2sl@jmu.edu) (invited).

We thank Interim Dean Chris Arndt for his support and assistance throughout the 2017-2018 academic year.

1) Heather Scheuerman recounted announcements.

- a. Abe Goldberg, Executive Director of the Center for Civic Engagement, was scheduled to meet with the Council on March 21st, which was a snow day. As the Council was unable to meet that month, Dr. Goldberg will come to a forthcoming meeting in the Fall to discuss the campus climate component of an initiative designed to improve student political learning and participation in democracy.
- b. Heather Scheuerman informed the Council of a Parking Services policy that related to diversity, access, and inclusion on campus. Previously, individuals who had a JMU parking pass and provided documentation were limited to one temporary handicap parking pass per calendar year to park on campus. This pass would last for two weeks and could not be renewed. James Robinson, Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, and Towana Moore, Associate Vice President, worked to make the policy more accessible. Parking Services is in the process of changing this policy to make it less restrictive for those of the campus community who may experience a temporary condition that may affect campus accessibility. Updates regarding this policy will be made when available.

- c. The Council agreed to the following in terms of future leadership. Frances Flannery kindly offered to chair the Diversity Council pending other service commitments. If she cannot serve as Chair, Heather Scheuerman will remain Chair, but will institute a rotating schedule for Council members to attend the Diversity Chairs meetings and to take notes.
- 2) Susan Wheeler, Senior Assistant Attorney General and University Counsel, discussed issues relating to free speech and hate speech. Currently, JMU has a draft university policy relating to free speech, which must be amended due to current legislative changes. Governor Ralph Northam recently signed into law H. B. 344. This bill requires public institutions of higher education to have policies and materials concerning free speech protections. Information on the policy and materials is to be included on the university website, in the student handbook, and in student orientation programs. All state laws take effect the beginning of the fiscal year, which is July 1st. JMU will formalize a policy to be in compliance with this bill by that time.

Speech that is not protected includes: speech in which violence is incited, true threats, libel and slander, and intellectual property rights violations. In addition, defamation (libel or slander) involving a faculty member's reputation is a civil matter personal to the faculty member, and the university cannot seek legal recourse on behalf of the faculty member.

Current campus policy affirms free speech and also regulates disruptive behavior in the classroom (<http://www.jmu.edu/academic-affairs/documents/policies/aapolicy-12.pdf>). Off-campus student conduct that is regulated may include: "crimes of violence, sexual misconduct and/or alcohol or drug violations, as determined by the Office of Student Accountability & Restorative Practices" (see [OSARP](#)).

More information on current University Policies can be found on the University Policy Committee's website (<https://www.jmu.edu/JMUpolicy/alphalist.shtml>).

- 3) The Council ended with an informal discussion of course evaluations and the role they play in tenure and promotion. This discussion occurred in response to recent articles highlighting how course evaluations tend to favor "white, cisgender, American-born men" (see [Slate](#) and [Inside Higher Ed](#)) and questioned the legality of using these evaluations if they are biased.

CAL does not solely rely on student evaluations and uses a variety of means to evaluate faculty teaching performance in relation to tenure and promotion (<https://www.jmu.edu/cal/files/tenurepromotionguidelines.pdf>).

- 4) Due to time restrictions, the Council could not discuss forthcoming plans. The Chair would like to thank the Council and for all of its hard work, dedication, and support throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather L. Scheuerman