

CAL Diversity Council Minutes September 20, 2017

Appointed Members:

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

Members:

Jennifer Byrne	byrneje@jmu.edu	Political Science
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
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 Scheuerman, Jennifer Byrne, Stephen Chappell, Adrienne M. Hooker, Yenisei Montes de Oca, Elizabeth Pass, Isaac Woo, Gregory Wrenn, Chris Arndt, and Allison Fagan (invited).

1) Heather Scheuerman reported updates regarding the campus-wide Task Force on Inclusion, which focuses on best practices in the classroom; campus climate for students, faculty, and staff; and history and context. Donna Harper stated that the Task Force is to assess, in regard to diversity and inclusion: a) where we are as an institution; b) what we as an institution do well; c) what opportunities can be pursued; and d) what can be addressed. Although some items may take more than one year, this Task Force is currently envisioned as a yearlong project.

Regardless of the goals of the Task Force, Diversity Councils are expected to continue their own work regarding diversity and inclusion. The Task Force is seen as working in tandem or parallel to other initiatives. Importantly, recommendations from the 2013 Diversity Task Force and the COACHE survey have not been shelved and can be pursued independently of the Task Force.

As such, the Council will update the letter sent to Provost Benson last year that advocates for an external, comprehensive campus climate study. This letter will be sent to the Council for feedback with the goal of finalizing the letter by October's meeting.

2) The Council agreed to create a working document that details resources related to diversity and inclusion. The existing list (<https://www.jmu.edu/cal/diversity/index.shtml>) will need to be updated to reflect university and community resources. For instance, single-parent resources, mental health resources, etc. Heather Scheuerman will send out this document prior to the October meeting. The goal will be to have a completed draft to finalize by our last meeting in December. Some potential sources for these resources may include: the C3 program (Career,

Community, and Connection), Preparing Future Faculty, and the CVPA Cultural Connection Program.

3) Heather Scheuerman will contact Joe Fitzgerald to discuss putting the link to Diversity (and, by extension, the CAL Diversity Council) in a more prominent location on the University's webpage. This is meant to better assist individuals who may be applying to work at JMU or those who do not currently fall under the rubric of "students and faculty."

4) The Council agreed that it would be beneficial to have Cara Meixner and Marilou Johnson attend a future meeting to highlight the major findings of the COACHE survey. Heather Scheuerman will contact these individuals and setup a meeting.

5) Allison Fagan reported on an incident in which a student used a racial slur to re-label the study guide for the final exam in her Survey of African American Literature (ENG 260) course. This study guide was shared amongst a group of students in that class. As this incident did not reflect an issue with a single student, but a wider problem with institutional culture, a lively discussion ensued wherein the Council expressed the following:

The Council would like to see the creation of a document, at the administrative or university level, that discusses the differences between free speech and hate speech. This document should emphasize what appropriate civil discourse entails at James Madison University and highlight that engaging in uncivil discourse and hateful rhetoric violates university policies. Currently, faculty detail appropriate guidelines for classroom etiquette in their syllabi. However, there is no existing document or policy that is highlighted at the campus-level the reaffirms a commitment to tolerance, diversity, and inclusion in relation to hate speech.

Furthermore, JMU's Student Code of Conduct (policy J16-100) applies more to recurring instances directed at a specific target that create a hostile environment. The requested document should highlight how a variety of situations (e.g., one time instances that may or may not have a specific target) will be dealt with.

Moreover, the lack of administrative consequences for the student(s) involved in this incident was particularly distressing and illustrates to the university's most vulnerable populations that issues relating to diversity and inclusion are not taken seriously.

The Council will push this issue at future Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Dialogues that are being held by Newpoint Strategies.

The Council would also like to:

- a) have further information on the nature of Restorative Practices and how incidents like these relate to the Eight Key Questions regarding ethics at JMU;
- b) know the protocol of reporting these incidents; and
- c) be aware of the consequences for bias-related incidents.

It was also discussed that the Silent Witness Program at JMU may be similar to the reporting system that UVA currently uses to report issues of bias and hatred. James Robinson from the Office of Equal Opportunity will be contacted to provide more information regarding this program.

Updates regarding the negotiation of free speech and hate speech will continuously be given to Allison Fagan.

Last, it was suggested that the policy on disruptive behavior (https://www.jmu.edu/academic-affairs/_documents/policies/aapolicy-12.pdf) may be used as another way to deal with bias-related incidents.

6) Due to time constraints, items 3-5 on the agenda will be discussed at the next meeting. These items concern: INSIGHT into Diversity Magazine, Social Justice Retreat, and the Brookings Institution Study on laggard universities.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather L. Scheuerman