

CAL Diversity Council Minutes October 15, 2018

Appointed Members:

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

Members:

Liam Buckley	bucklelm@jmu.edu	Soc/Anth (FA18)
Jennifer E. Byrne	byrneje@jmu.edu	Political Science (FA18)
Jessica B. Davidson	davidsjb@jmu.edu	History
Bill Knorpp	knorppwm@jmu.edu	Phil/Rel
Diana Galarreta	galarrdf@jmu.edu	Foreign Languages (FA18)
Adrienne M. Hooker	hookeram@jmu.edu	SMAD
Elizabeth Pass	passer@jmu.edu	WRTC
Mary Thompson	thompsmx@jmu.edu	English
Isaac Woo	wocw@jmu.edu	SCOM

Sitting Members:

Robert Aguirre aguirrrd@jmu.edu Dean of CAL

In attendance: Heather L. Scheuerman, Liam Buckley, Jennifer E. Byrne, Jessica B. Davidson, Bill Knorpp, Diana Galarreta Adrienne M. Hooker, Mary Thompson, Isaac Woo, Robert Aguirre, and Meg Mulrooney (invited).

1) Heather Scheuerman summarized a few announcements regarding CAL Diversity Council business. A sign-up sheet for composing minutes and attending the Diversity Chairs meetings in the Spring of 2019 will be disseminated at the November meeting of the Council on Monday, November 28th. Gratitude was expressed towards those individuals who volunteered this semester.

2) Isaac Woo discussed an event affecting the Korean and East Asian community at JMU that occurred on Monday, October 1st. This event encompassed JMU Dining Services posting a photo of Ramen Bar at D-Hall (see below). This image was problematic because it reflects the rising sun flag that the Japanese military used during World War II. This symbol of Japanese imperialism represents various violent and sexual atrocities that were committed throughout the late 19th century and World War II (see [Link](#)). The true extent of the physical and sexual victimization that occurred during this time period is unclear and ranges from the military's use of comfort women (see [Link 1](#) and [Link 2](#)) to unethical human experiments (see [Link](#)). Several Korean faculty members sent emails to Dining Services and the image was taken down the next day from D-Hall and Dining Services' facebook page. Although Dining Services apologized to those faculty and was appreciative of being educated about the history and meaning surrounding this symbol, a formal statement was not made.

Nevertheless, this incident reflects a teachable moment, as many members of the campus community, especially students, were unaware that this event occurred and/or its significance. Moreover, this flag is still used by the Japanese navy and is present on Japanese uniforms as a source of national pride. It was discussed that a flashpoint, spearheaded by Dr. Woo, could be

created to educate the campus community on how symbols reflect and come to represent human rights abuses and affect various groups differently.



3) Members of the Council discussed a forthcoming Faculty Senate resolution that will be voted on at the Senate’s November meeting. This resolution is to “expand the use of Faculty Senate Treasury funds. For years we have made funds available for bereavement purposes (typically for donating to a charity of the family’s choice or to purchase flowers for the family) for members of the JMU community or their families who pass away. The new motion, if passed, would allow for using Faculty Senate Treasury funds to make gifts to families (e.g. a gift card) who are expecting new members through birth or adoption)” (Faculty Senate Communications).

Some concerns were raised regarding this proposed initiative and are summarized as follows:

- a) Some departments already take a collection for departmental members and the Senate may be replicating what other departments may already be doing.
- b) This resolution has too narrow of a focus and detracts from the need for quality, affordable daycare, lactation spaces, and recognition of spousal leave (rather than maternity leave), and issues relating to eldercare.
- c) Some members argued that the resolution has a pronatalist bias, while others remained unconvinced and still others offered no comment.

The committee came to no consensus on the matter and tabled it for discussion at a further meeting.

4) Meg Mulrooney presented her research regarding campus history and its relation to diversity. This presentation included the following information:

- a) From 1909 to about 1930, *Shendo Land*, written in “Negro dialect”, was the unofficial alma mater of the State Normal School for Women, which JMU served as from 1909 to 1938. This song’s lyrics were set to the tune of Dixie and composed by Dr. John Wayland, for whom Wayland Hall was named.
- b) There was a deep and abiding reverence for the Old South at this segregated institution. For instance, black face was used, field trips were taken to confederate

- monuments and battlefields, and a Robert E. Lee Literary Society existed. Evidence can be found in Special Collections: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/speccoll/>
- c) The “lost cause” narrative was promoted in the curriculum. This narrative puts forth that: 1) the South’s cause, or states’ rights, for the Civil War was the just cause; 2) the only reason the South lost was due to the North’s superior manpower and industrial strength; 3) soldiers of the confederacy were honorable and good Christians; and 4) slavery was a benevolent institution.
 - d) The State Normal School for Women, renamed Madison College in 1938, also preserved existing hierarchies of race and gender by teaching graduates to be teachers and homemakers. However, it should be noted that many women alums eschewed traditional gender norms after World War II.
 - e) In the 1960s and 1970s, white men were admitted. In 1966 the first Black woman was admitted under the freedom of choice plan. Black enrollments increased slowly because the state’s policy of “massive resistance” to school desegregation lasted in Virginia until 1978. At the time, like every other public institution of higher education in Virginia, Madison College was not in compliance with federal desegregation mandates from 1954-1978.
 - f) In 1971, Ronald E. Carrier becomes the institution’s fourth president. He instituted the first affirmative action plans for faculty and staff in 1973-4 and for students in 1978. His vision was to make the College into a comprehensive, co-educational multiversity. In doing so, Carrier wanted to change the psychology of the campus and there was a push to have 40% of an incoming cohort of students reflect men by 1980. Thus, in spite of the predominance of women, campus culture became transformed into a masculine culture with the addition of football and fraternities and new academic majors like business.
 - g) In the 1980s, the Black Student Alliance advocated for more resources for minorities and for the recognition of the national holiday of Martin Luther King Day. In 1983 Virginia incorporated MLK Day into Lee-Jackson-King Day. The Black Student Alliance was also concerned about the drop in admissions of minorities.
 - h) After a student protest, led by Chris Jones, a former mayor of Harrisonburg, JMU recognized MLK Day in 1999 (see [Link](#) describing debate for the official observance of MLK Day at JMU). This led directly to the development of diversity initiatives at JMU.

The History and Context Committee is charged with making the campus community aware of the institution’s complex history and how the past shapes the work of the Task Force on Inclusion. JMU’s focus on diversity, like that of other institutions, has shifted away from race to a more expansive definition of diversity, including diversity of thought and political identification.

A discussion ensued about the plurality of the meaning of diversity and its relation to this idea of a diversity regime, or “a set of meanings and practices that institutionalizes a benign commitment to diversity, and in doing so obscures, entrenches, and even intensifies existing racial inequality by failing to make fundamental changes in how power, resources, and opportunities are distributed” ([Thomas](#) 2018: 141).

How does JMU define diversity? Although JMU has the [Office of Access and Inclusion](#) and a recent Taskforce on Inclusivity has been created, meaningful headway regarding diversity, access, and inclusion, will be difficult to make if the history of JMU is not acknowledged and clearly articulated. For instance, some define diversity differently on campus and others focus specifically on inclusivity. Moreover, moving away from race equity issues often leads to the adoption of tolerance for groups who have traditionally enjoyed a privileged status.

In addition, even though there has been an increase in Hispanic, multi-racial, and bi-racial students, the African American student population at JMU has remained rather stagnant. For instance, 19.6% of the population of Virginia is African American. While Old Dominion University overrepresents African American students, with 31% identifying as Black/African American, JMU underrepresents this demographic group with 4.68% identifying as Black/African American. For demographic data, see: <https://www.jmu.edu/about/fact-and-figures.shtml>

Information regarding campus history and its relation to diversity will be incorporated into a forthcoming website. However, more public opportunities for the discussion and presentation of this information are needed to educate better the campus community on this topic and how diversity is articulated at JMU.

Due to time restraints, the Council will revisit this discussion at a forthcoming meeting.

5) Liam Buckley volunteered to serve as the representative for the October Diversity Chairs Council meeting. This meeting, however, did not take place.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather L. Scheuerman