

## CAL Diversity Council Minutes March 18, 2019

### Appointed Members:

Chair: Heather L. Scheuerman      [scheuehl@jmu.edu](mailto:scheuehl@jmu.edu)      Justice Studies

### Members:

Jennifer Byrne	<a href="mailto:byrneje@jmu.edu">byrneje@jmu.edu</a>	Political Science
Jessica B. Davidson	<a href="mailto:davidsjb@jmu.edu">davidsjb@jmu.edu</a>	History
Bill Knorpp	<a href="mailto:knorppwm@jmu.edu">knorppwm@jmu.edu</a>	Phil/Rel
Diana Galarreta	<a href="mailto:galarrdf@jmu.edu">galarrdf@jmu.edu</a>	Foreign Languages
Adrienne M. Hooker	<a href="mailto:hookeram@jmu.edu">hookeram@jmu.edu</a>	SMAD
Elizabeth Pass	<a href="mailto:passer@jmu.edu">passer@jmu.edu</a>	WRTC
Lisa Porter	<a href="mailto:porte2ll@jmu.edu">porte2ll@jmu.edu</a>	Soc/Anth (SP19)
Mary Thompson	<a href="mailto:thompsmx@jmu.edu">thompsmx@jmu.edu</a>	English
Isaac Woo	<a href="mailto:woocw@jmu.edu">woocw@jmu.edu</a>	SCOM

### Sitting Members:

Robert Aguirre      [aguirrrd@jmu.edu](mailto:aguirrrd@jmu.edu)      Dean of CAL

In attendance: Heather L. Scheuerman, Jennifer Byrne, Jessica B. Davidson, Bill Knorpp, Diana Galarreta, Adrienne M. Hooker, Elizabeth Pass, Lisa Porter, Mary Thompson, Isaac Woo, Robert Aguirre, and David Owusu-Ansah (invited).

### 1) The Chair made various announcements:

- The last meeting of the CAL Diversity Council will take place on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup> and will focus on in-house planning for next year.
- The February meeting of the Diversity Chairs Council did not occur due to inclement weather.
- Jennifer Byrne will be replacing Mark Richardson as the representative for the Political Science Department. Mark wishes the Council success in its important work.

### 2) The Chair reviewed Council activities undertaken to discuss hiring best practices to increase diversity within faculty searches. The Council met on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss these issues. From that meeting, the Council decided to invite David Owusu-Ansah to today's meeting, examined the possibility of creating a Qualtrics survey to receive faculty feedback, and suggested that the Council investigate empirical research on hiring best practices in other areas, i.e., corporate.

Prior to moving forward with certain of these suggestions, however, the Chair highlighted that the Council needs to examine what JMU already does in regard to hiring best practices. The [Faculty Handbook](#) states that "The Office of Equal Opportunity's *Faculty Recruitment Handbook* shall guide all faculty searches conducted at the university" (p. 25). Heather Scheuerman thus reported on the following documents that can be found via this link: <https://www.jmu.edu/humanresources/recruitment/faculty-recruitment/index.shtml>: 1) [Recommended Strategies for Expanding and Retaining a Diverse Faculty](#); and 2) [Faculty Recruitment Procedures and Recommended Strategies for Expanding and Retaining a Diverse Faculty](#) (FRP). Several excerpts from these documents were read that highlighted broadening the search and practices in creating the advertisement. The Chair also asked for clarification regarding the recent request from the Dean to examine hiring best practices. The

Dean would like to optimize faculty diversity and excellence. He encourages faculty to give suggestions of what they would like to see regarding search procedures, as he is not interested in standardizing all aspects of the process.

- 3) Discussion ensued. The Council understands every position is unique, which enables “recruitment steps and diversity enhancement strategies that are employed for a particular search [to] be customized for the particular circumstances” (FRP, p. 3).

Questions arose by what is meant by diversity. This concept can be discussed prior to the solicitation for a new hire to identify needs specific to the department. For instance, as part of best practices at JMU, departments should have a discussion about the departmental diversity climate with AUHs at a faculty meeting before the advertisement is written (FRP, p. 4). The AUH would then submit the justification for a new hire to the Dean and appoint the search chair. Moreover, faculty recruitment training should be given to each search committee member (FRP, p. 6).

The AUH must also identify “funding sources for the search process” (FRP, p. 6). There are certain locations in which the job advertisement can be posted for free. However, funds to pay for advertising the position can be a sizeable amount in certain publications. JMU has a list of locations to advertise to enhance the diversity of pools according to various demographic characteristics (See: <http://www.jmu.edu/humanresources/recruitment/recruiting/hiring-manager/diversity-advertising-sources.shtml>).

If a candidate is not appropriate for the current search, but is identified by the committee that he or she can bring value to the university, the committee should give this information to the AUH and/or Dean (FRP, p. 11).

As the AUH and Dean may justify choices of candidates, they must be in agreement regarding “the fundamental characteristics of ideal candidates and the role of the faculty member who will be in the position” (FRP, p. 11). In addition, the Dean must approve the plan to give an offer, but the AUH should handle the offer and negotiations (FRP, p. 22).

David Owusu-Ansah (joined at 4:30pm) added that the Office of Access and Inclusion should meet with search committees. A question arose as to whether departments create a list of priorities of wants and expertise within faculty or if they weight certain areas/criteria within the job solicitation. At JMU, it is recommended to develop “a selection criteria document and screening matrix” (FRP, p. 12). Nevertheless, it was discussed that there is always an area of judgment even within the strictest of rubric and that a mix of qualitative and quantitative evaluations should be given.

In addition, David Owusu-Ansah highlighted the importance of retention in addition to hiring diverse faculty. For diverse candidates to stay, the language of diversity should become part of the department, which can be facilitated by departmental discussions surrounding diversity prior to advertising a position. This also would help to combat the tendency to hire from related institutions and persons who ‘fit’ within the current climate, which would risk

perpetuating campus and departmental homogeneity. Furthermore, having these discussions can assist in identifying practical constraints associated with certain best practices. For instance, a concern was raised regarding the inability to leave certain positions open because classes needed to be filled. Discussing departmental needs and evaluating whether existing faculty could fulfill certain course requirements prior to the search may allow departments to broaden the position further than previously thought. Some suggestions also included:

- Departments having the courage to hire above themselves.
- Provide implicit bias training for all faculty.
- Have candidates compose diversity statements as part of the job application process.
- Have Diversity Councils at JMU submit IDEA grant proposals to discuss ways of enhancing diversity.
- Increase one's networks to broaden candidate pool. Having a diverse pool is the responsibility of the department.
- Be cognizant of power dynamics of the search committee. Have members of the job committee rank their choices separately and then submit these rankings to the search chair. Similarly, silent/secret ballots produce very different results and can democratize the process.
- Although diversity advocates were discussed, no agreement was reached as to how they could be implemented.

David announced that the Diversity Task Force is doing a climate study and the implicit bias training issue will be evaluated in terms of strategies moving forward. He stated that research from the JED Foundation and Steve Fund highlight that a significant percentage of underrepresented minority students leave universities with mental health issues. JMU must be cognizant of this finding and create the necessary climate that is welcoming to our students. Hence, conversation about diversity and inclusivity is needed. Last, David welcomes faculty inviting him to their departments for conversation about issues arising from hiring best practices.

- 4) Adrienne Hooker served as the representative for the March Diversity Chairs Council meeting. Key highlights are as follows:
- Disability Awareness Week is in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. For events, please see: <https://www.jmu.edu/ods/daw/index.shtml>
  - Conversation about supporting graduate students through diversity and inclusive efforts.
  - Task Force on Inclusion update: a) the Diversity Conference was well attended; b) the request for a campus climate study has been sent to the President Alger.
  - President Alger apologized to alumni, faculty, and doctoral students about Governor Northam's blackface.
  - A Deep Impact event about Paul Jennings naming will be Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at Shenandoah Hall 7pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne Hooker & Heather L. Scheuerman