



# Annual Report

2017-2018

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# Letter from the Executive Director

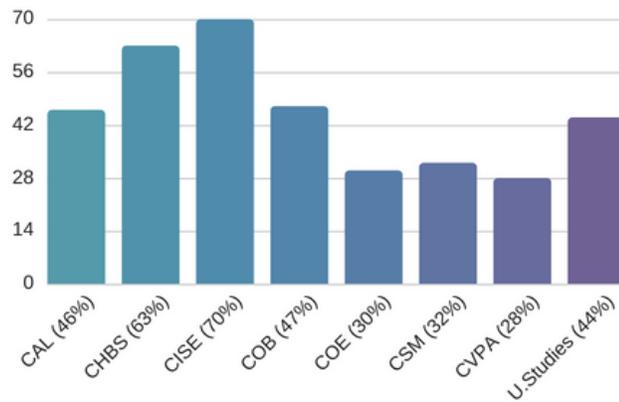
Cara Meixner, Ph.D.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and student affiliates of the Center for Faculty Innovation (CFI), I am pleased to share highlights from our 2017-2018 academic year.

The CFI came into maturity this year as a dynamic, change-oriented enterprise that provides high-level, mission-driven educational development not only to individual faculty, but also to academic units, colleges, and the university system.

Through our services, practices, personnel, and advocacy efforts, we aim to cultivate inclusive communities of peers committed to helping each other succeed, advancing individual and organization change. This report attests to the CFI's accomplishments, drawing from quantitative data augmented with qualitative comments from faculty participants.

A holistic depiction of the CFI's achievements, in addition to reflections on growth opportunities, follows in this report. We invite you to explore three areas within which the CFI focused efforts during 2017-2018: *Inclusion, Access, and Equity; Belonging and Community Development; and High Engagement Professional Development*. Also explored are the *CFI's Future Directions* (i.e., 2018-2019 and beyond).



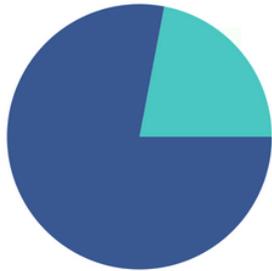
**CFI Reach within Colleges**

*This figure depicts proportional reach by College. The national benchmark for "fully developed" centers is 20% (American Council on Education, 2017). Colleges include Arts & Letters (CAL), Health & Behavioral Studies (CHBS), Integrated Science & Engineering (CISE), Business (COB), Education (COE), Science & Mathematics (CSM), Visual & Performing Arts (CVPA), and University Studies.*

## Special thanks to:

- The 767 individual faculty members who, together, partook in 103 Teaching Analysis Polls (TAPs), 55 individual consultations, 52 workshops, 36 roundtables, 11 faculty learning communities, 5 flashpoints, 6 write-on-sites, 4 institutes, 2 scholarly talks, 2 networking programs, 1 orientation, and 9 other programs. Your commitment to professional development is as laudable as it is inspiring.

According to the COACHE survey



78% of JMU faculty report  
engaging frequently with the CFI

*COACHE is the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (Harvard University). JMU has participated three times in their job satisfaction survey, with the 2016 edition eliciting a 68% completion rate from JMU respondents.*

- The CFI directors, who thoughtfully balance teaching and research within their academic units with CFI roles and responsibilities.

- The staff of Rose Library, most especially our housekeepers, who assure our physical space is accessible and inviting to our core constituents.
- The multiple offices, units, departments, and individuals across campus with whom we partner daily.
- The CFI operations team, which assures logistics of the CFI remain smooth, unencumbered, and growth-oriented.
- The faculty associates, whose grounding in teaching, scholarship, and career planning center each of our programs.



*Former Faculty Associate Jen Almjeld at the Community Engagement Networking Lunch*

## Inclusion, Access, and Equity

The CFI engages with the local, national, and global communities on issues such as [inclusive excellence](#), the changing professoriate, and diverse forms of scholarship. Notable is the framing of access, inclusion, diversity, and social justice initiatives that both center and wrap around our work. We believe richness of difference is integral to the cultivation of high-quality academic programs. Further, inclusion, access, and equity initiatives must coexist at multiple levels in order to enhance faculty's diversity capacities in teaching, scholarly creation, career planning, and leadership.



*Conversations following the White Supremacy, Confederate Monuments, and Free Speech in Charlottesville Flashpoint event.*

Programmatically, the CFI continued in 2017-2018 to provide and support professional development initiatives related to access, inclusion, diversity, multiculturalism, social justice, and equity. These offerings included, but were not limited to:

- **Preparing Faculty to be Inclusive Teachers**-The piloted institute was supported by the CFI, Madison Matters (the lab formerly run by Dr. Matthew Lee), as well as a \$4,000 IDEA grant from the Office of Access and Inclusion. Eight faculty members from multiple colleges participated. A comparison of pre- and post-assessment data indicates that faculty members' confidence in employing instructional strategies related to diversity and inclusion (e.g., intervening when a student uses a microaggression) increased as well as their understanding and application of key concepts (e.g., "privilege" and "universal design for learning"). Participants reported especially appreciating the opportunity to connect with other instructors who are committed to inclusive teaching.

"The single most important takeaway [from May Symposium] related to embracing the notion of "inclusive excellence" as FOUNDATIONAL to student learning and success. Without IE, sense of belonging is compromised -- and the overall learning environment suffers."

- **May Symposium**-Dr. Tasha Souza, known for her work in social justice education within the field of educational development, kicked off the CFI's 17-18 programming year with a keynote entitled, "Inclusive Excellence at JMU: Creating an Environment that Values and Supports All Learners." A mid-fall follow-up survey to those attending her talk highlighted innovative ways

that faculty applied what they learned. Faculty reported they had: **engaged in reflection** (e.g., "I am definitely more conscious of how my experience and positionality is not relatable to all members of my classroom."), **transformed policies or practices** (e.g., "[My unit], that summer, set strategic planning goals that related to 'inclusive excellence.'"), **adapted new strategies** (e.g., "I have tried to become more sensitive to representing minorities in my image choices for PowerPoints."), or **changed behavior altogether** (e.g., "I've changed one small, but perhaps significant, way that I address my students—I no longer say 'guys' to refer to the entire group."). May Symposium 2017 attracted 175 participants.

- **Flashpoints**-The CFI's commitment to issues surrounding equity and inclusion also guided five campus-community dialogues, which ranged from inquiry into the #metoo movement to discussions on free speech and white supremacy, inclusion on campus, disability legislature, and civic engagement in Harrisonburg's downtown. Panelists included faculty as well as community members, like Mr. Steven Thomas, a known community activist who directs the Northeast Area Association in Harrisonburg.
- **Reading Groups**-The CFI coordinated two reading groups on diversity in higher education, including one on [Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum's \*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?\*](#)
- **Toolboxes**-The CFI shared several [Teaching Toolboxes](#) focused on diversity, such as "Disability Disclosure in the Classroom" and "A Quiet Revolution: Teaching Introverted Learners." At present, 200+ faculty subscribe to the Teaching Toolbox.

- **International Visiting Scholar**-The CFI warmly welcomed Dr. Susan Song, a visiting educational development practitioner-scholar, from the community of Wuhan, China, for a one-year residency.

**Of note**, the CFI also made considerable strides toward integrating principles of inclusive excellence into its operations and logistics. For instance, we created nametag templates for signature programs wherein program participants can self-identify their pronouns. Further, inclusive excellence principles, ranging from gender inclusive restrooms to sign language interpretation, informed the planning of varied initiatives. In addition, the CFI website was converted to a responsive template, which applies inclusive excellence principles of accessibility to web design.



*Faculty Associate Sarah Brooks (far left) moderates the discussion at the Living in Community: The City and Future of Harrisonburg flashpoint event in September.*

## Belonging and Community Development

Integral to living the mission and realizing the vision of the Center for Faculty Innovation is our commitment to cultivating a sense of belonging for each member of the JMU faculty community. This entails an attention not only to the content of our programs, services, and advocacy efforts but also to the means, methods, and places within which professional development opportunities are offered.

"The [scholarship residency] has been an optimal balance of continuation of scholarship building, exploring writing with expert consultation, networking with colleagues sharing similar interest, and learning to grow as a scholarly teacher with relaxation. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend the colleagues in this writing community for taking the initiative to use this tremendous valuable opportunity of professional development. We are very fortunate here at JMU, in a community facilitated with various kinds of professional development events and programs that help us grow in many aspects."

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*Small group presentations during jmUDESIGN*

- **jmUDESIGN**-This high-impact course design institute, offered in partnership with 4-VA in the Student Success Center's EPIC classrooms, is an intensive, 5-day summer institute that guided 23 faculty through the instructional (re)design process. As evidenced in this quotation, the impact of jmUDESIGN extends well beyond improving one's course or teaching practice: "Collaborating with professors from diverse backgrounds provided different perspectives on course redesign...It is refreshing to know

that I am not alone and can communicate with others who have the same passion for teaching."

- **Scholarship Residency**-This three-day retreat, offered each fall and summer with a community of faculty scholars, transpires at Mountain Valley Retreat Center for faculty seeking renewal with their scholarship. The program intentionally creates an alternative space for faculty renewal and connection to a community of JMU scholars and the natural world of the Shenandoah Valley. In addition to impressive amounts of productivity, faculty report an increased sense of belonging to JMU and gratitude for the support that JMU provides them through this program. During 2017-2018, 37 faculty partook in this program.
- **Mentoring Initiatives**-The CFI continued its successful mentoring program for applicants to SCHEV's Outstanding Faculty Awards, who receive intensive coaching and peer support throughout the application process. As in the previous year, two JMU faculty (Drs. Mark Gabriele, Biology, and Tom Moran, Kinesiology) received these prestigious awards in 2018. Mentoring also played a pivotal role in the New Faculty Academy: 50 new faculty participated in monthly workshops and mentoring meetings with 40 established JMU faculty. A Madison Career Fellows group for senior faculty created a peer-mentoring environment for professors about building an academic legacy. A group of 11 faculty completed career portfolios in collaboration with experienced faculty mentors.
- **Community Engagement Networking Lunch**-In partnership with Outreach & Engagement and Community Service-Learning, the CFI offered a campus-community luncheon that attracted 46 participants, with many community organizations represented (e.g., United Way, New Directions, Harrisonburg Health and Rehab Center, Habitat for Humanity, Head Start, Harrisonburg City Schools, Boys and Girls Club, etc.). This opportunity spurred partnerships rooted in reciprocity, connecting community organizations to academic courses and vice versa.

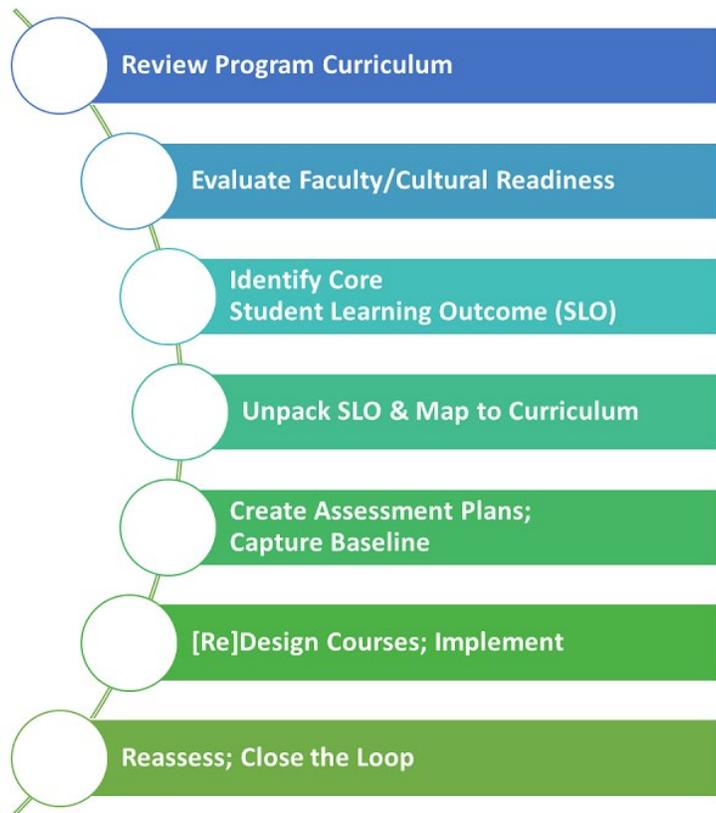


*Peer discussion during the Community Engagement Networking Lunch*

## High Engagement Professional Development

Complementing a suite of one-time workshops, roundtables, scholarly talks, and consultations are high engagement professional development activities. Often referred to as the CFI's "signature" programs, these boundary-spanning initiatives range from small and large-scale conferences (led by faculty for faculty) to intensive residencies and year-long communities. Inherently varied, the initiatives featured below are frequently touted by participants as transformative, inspiring, and career-affirming.

- **Learning Improvement by Design (LID)**-LID is a three-year curriculum design and innovation process co-led with the Center for Assessment and Research Studies (CARS). Academic programs are selected through a competitive RFP process; the current client, Physics, worked this year to redefine core student learning outcomes (SLOs), create a high-quality assessment instrument, collect baseline data, and refine the curriculum.



*Learning Improvement by Design (LID) process*

- **Engaged Teacher Scholars (ETS)**-The ETS program offers faculty support in creating and sharing evidence-based teaching and learning scholarship (e.g., SoTL - Scholarship of Teaching and Learning). Embedded as scholar-mentors within their respective colleges, 5 faculty scholars catalyzed conversations about teaching and learning scholarship with their disciplinary colleagues.

“I want to say that working on the API [Academic Portfolio Institute] is one of the reasons I got [a job promotion]. The ability to talk about myself in ways that translated to others and highlighted what I had done in ways that aligned with the university mission was a large part of the reason I was selected!”

- **Academic Portfolio Institute (API)**-The API, recently renamed *Review and Renew Your Career Institute*, engaged 11 faculty in the week-long process of crafting faculty portfolios. This experience is anchored in a mentoring model with substantive peer review and feedback.

- **January Symposium**-121 faculty took the time to focus on scholarship skill development during this one-day conference. Feedback offered by a faculty participant aptly captures symposium learning outcomes: “I think the topics covered by the program was [sic] very strong and speak directly to faculty needs [regarding] writing, research methods and theorizing teaching. I was impressed with the caliber of sessions shared...and I think participants were willing to take risks.



*Executive Director Cara Meixner co-facilitating a session during New Faculty Orientation*

## Future Directions

Annually, the CFI partakes in a strategic planning process that aligns with University priorities, past years' assessment and evaluation results, and our 3-year (i.e., 2017-2020) strategic plan. Continuing our legacy of programs that place faculty in the center, as participants and as facilitators, our aims for the 2018-2019 academic year are noted below.



*Faculty Associate Michael Deaton leads at table group during May Symposium's networking breakfast*

1. We will enhance the CFI's capacity for inclusive excellence, focusing on initiatives that value and promote equity-mindedness, inclusion, and justice.
2. We will foster inclusive communities that enhance scholarly productivity through high engagement practices
3. We will support integrated career planning across stages of the career, emphasizing mentoring skill development and inclusive mentoring programs.
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5. We will explore and investigate the impact of professional development on JMU faculty, through a needs assessment and program evaluations.

“As a part-time faculty, I can scarcely believe my good luck that these kinds of benefits and opportunities [May Symposium] are given to me just as much as the tenure-track faculty. It helps me to feel connected to JMU and like part of the big picture.”

*We are grateful to the JMU faculty community for its support of and contribution to the initiatives shared in this report. To learn more about the CFI, please visit our website ([www.jmu.edu/cfi](http://www.jmu.edu/cfi)); as always, we welcome comments and feedback in person or through our e-mail address ([cfi@jmu.edu](mailto:cfi@jmu.edu)). Have a wonderful year!*