

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

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WORKING GROUP CO-CHAMPION

Rick Larson, larsonrd@jmu.edu

Recommendation Title: Allies for Racial Equity Training

Problem Statement/Issue:

In the book, From Equity Talk to Equity Walk, the authors attempt to answer questions such as, what does it mean to perform equity as a routine practice in higher education? And, what makes individuals equity-minded? In addition, the book posits that often, our ways of “doing” higher education continue to produce racial inequality in education outcomes and they illuminate the human and structural obstacles that block the path toward racial equity and the responses that equity-minded practitioners can make to overcome them. (McNair, Bensimon, & Malcom-Piquex, 2020)

It makes sense that individuals helping to ensure racial equity on the JMU campus know the answers to the questions above (and more), understand how to mitigate racial inequality in education outcomes, and can identify obstacles to the achievement of racial equity.

Given that JMU is a predominantly white organization, it is imperative that white people and other community members at JMU support efforts that ensure racial equity, can understand the issues noted above, and can help respond in ways to help overcome obstacles to success.

There are many community members at JMU who are supportive of racial equity and want to be vocal allies for that cause. However, they do not necessarily possess the confidence, skill, knowledge, or ability to respond properly, nor do they know how to overcome obstacles. The problem is that without confident, knowledgeable, and skilled allies for racial equity, it will be less likely that JMU will succeed in its efforts to achieve racial equality.

WORKING GROUP LEADERSHIP



Rick Larson,
Leadership Council



Cannie Campbell
Working Group-Co-Chair



Venus Miller, WG CC



Chervon Moore, WG CC

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that training and other resources be developed and administered that will provide ways the JMU community can become empowered to be vocal allies in the fight for racial equity. The training should, at a minimum, include:

In-person and instructor-led training that teaches allies for racial equity:

- How to address challenges
- How to facilitate and participate in difficult conversations so that some of the burden of advocating for racial equity can be reduced for the minority JMU faculty and staff
- Describe a definition of equity
- Describe what equity looks like in practice
- List obstacles to racial equity in higher education
- Describe ways obstacle to racial equity can be and have been overcome
- And more....

The development of a web presence that includes resources for allies for racial equity that includes

- Access to training
- Written resources including appropriate definitions
- Links and other resources external to JMU
- News
- Programming including community events
- Coaching opportunities
- And more...

A method of “bringing the allies for racial equity programming to the people”

- Develop an “allies for racial equity” program that could be shared in departments as requested
- Establish a program like or in partnership with the existing “White Accomplices Knowing Experiences Underlying Racism (“Wake Up”) book club

- To help allies for racial equity better understand white identities and experiences to enhance capacity to support the racial equity cause

Steps required:

- 1) Submit the recommendation to the LC for feedback.
- 2) Rewrite the recommendation based on feedback.
- 3) Affirm approval by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) through the TFRE process.
- 4) Identify an implementation champion in conjunction with the appropriate Vice President.
- 5) Establish a small advisory group to assist with prioritization and the development of various assets aimed at teaching people how to be allies in the fight for racial equity.
- 6) Develop a prioritized plan.
- 7) Implement the plan.

RATIONALE

- Given that JMU is a predominantly white organization, it is imperative that white people and other community members at JMU support efforts that ensure racial equity, can understand the key issues, and can help respond in ways to help overcome obstacles to success.
- This recommendation, along with the steps/interventions associated are important because there are simply not enough people of color to get the work done without the assistance of a cadre of allies for racial equity. The steps include the use of an advisory group to help ensure greater buy-in for any approach that might be recommended or undertaken.
- This recommendation is a long-term solution because the problem of enhancing racial equity will be with us for a long time and we will forever have new community members and employees arriving who could benefit from the learning suggested by the recommendation.

SUCCESS

We will have achieved success if:

- 1) An implementation champion creates training, coaching opportunities, and other resources to assist allies for racial equity.
- 2) Racial equity allies describe a greater level of confidence, knowledge, skill, and ability dealing with challenges, difficult conversations and discussions related to racial equity at JMU.
- 3) There is active participation in the learning programs created for allies for racial equity.