

# James Farmer Multicultural Center Faculty Advisory Committee Minutes

November 20, 2019

4:00 pm

## Members Present:

Dr. Marion Sanford – Director of JFMC;  
Dr. Suzie Kim (Art History) – Chair;  
Dr. Alexandra Dunn (Business) – Secretary;  
Dr. Melissa Wells (Education);  
Dr. Mehdi Aminrazavi (CPR);  
Dr. Veena Ravishankar (Computer Science);  
Anushah Hassan (Student representative);  
Nehemia Abel (Student representative)

Absent: N/A

Approval of minutes – The minutes were presented from the previous meeting on October 2, 2019 and approved unanimously.

Student Representative Updates – There were no updates from students. Their most recent Multicultural Leadership Council (MLC) meeting was cancelled due to the threat on Monday, 11/18. They will meet next on Monday, 12/2.

- JFMC FAC chair, Suzie Kim, asked the students to let the MLC membership know that the JFMC FAC is open to feedback and ideas from students.

## Director's Report –

- Since our last meeting, the JFMC successfully wrapped up five (!) cultural programming celebrations.
  - These celebrations include 1) Latino Identities Month, 2) the Gender and Sexual Minorities and Allies (GSMA) Cultural Celebration, 3) the Asian Cultural Celebration, 4) the Jewish Cultural Celebration, and 5) the Native American Cultural Celebration.
  - After each celebration, Dr. Sanford meets with the groups to debrief and talk about what went well and how to improve future events. Dr. Sanford had just met with the JSA student leadership earlier this afternoon to debrief their celebration.
    - The Hillel Center will be open next semester. There will be a library, study area, full Kosher kitchen, a space for conferencing, etc. There will also be a full-size apartment. This is super exciting for the Jewish community and the UMW community as a whole!
- **Cultural programming:**
  - Kwanzaa Celebration
    - The Fall semester concludes with the Kwanzaa celebration on Tuesday, December 3 at 6:00 pm in Chandler Ballroom.

- All the plans are in place and the program is finalized.
- Spring semester:
  - The first celebration of the spring is the UMW Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. This is a week-long celebration from January 19, 2020 to January 25, 2020.
    - Events include: MLK Jr Kids Day (Sunday, 1/19), a documentary screening (Tuesday, 1/21), keynote speaker, Dr. Chavis Jr. (Wednesday, 1/22), a student activity geared towards students expressing their own dreams through various forms of media and art (1/23), and the MLK Jr. Day of Service (1/25).
    - The UMW MLK Day of Service provides students a way to give back to their community to honor the legacy of Dr. King and his commitment to strengthening communities. Many different service projects, which will be donated to various agencies in the Fredericksburg area, will be available for students to complete. Afterwards, a discussion will take place regarding service, civic engagement, and inclusivity.
    - Our JFMC student representative, Nehemia Abel, will be introducing the keynote speaker, Dr. Chavis.
    - More information about the events for the MLK Jr Celebration can be found here: <https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-celebration/>
  - The major programming event of the Spring is the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Multicultural Fair! The Multicultural Fair is on Saturday, April 4, 2020.
    - JFMC is seeking sponsorships for the event as well. More information about sponsorships can be found here: <https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/fair/sponsorship/>
- **Social Justice initiatives:**
  - The Social Justice Fall Break trip was a success! A total of 44 students, 20 community members, and five faculty and staff went on the trip.
    - The community members were able to teach and discuss what it was like to have lived the different experiences during the civil rights movement when the Freedom Rides were taking place. The students were able to share with the community members about their perspectives as well. Opening this event up to the community was a success and JFMC hopes to continue this in the future.
    - The exciting thing about the group was the diversity among group members. There was diversity in age, race, and gender!
  - The second night, everyone got together to discuss what they had experienced. It was extremely powerful and emotional. Students learned about some of the dark truths of America's history, but also about resiliency, hope, and power. One JFMC student representative, Nehemia Abel, described the experience as life-changing.

- Students and community members submitted journals reflecting on their experience. A few weeks after the trip, the group had a reunion to talk through their cognitive processing of the events, what the experience was like, and what people are doing with the information they learned on the trip.
- The group is also meeting with President Paino to talk informally about the success of the event. We hope to continue this as a social justice fall break trip option well into the future.
- **Farmer Legacy Council plans for Centennial Celebration**
  - The Social Justice Trip was the soft launch of the celebration.
  - On January 13, a celebration of Dr. Farmer's birthday will be held. This event will officially start the year-long celebration.
  - The committee is working on a calendar for events for the entire calendar year (January 2020 – December 2020) to celebrate Dr. Farmer.
    - For example, a few members from the Farmer Legacy Committee traveled to DC to meet with Congressman John Lewis recently. Congressman John Lewis was one of the original 13 Freedom Riders. The committee invited him to campus for parts of the celebration and is waiting for him to confirm.
- **RISE Peer Mentoring program**
  - The group recently had a social activity (bowling) and completed the third workshop of the series on Tuesday, 11/19.
  - There is one more activity at the end of the semester to meet and discuss how they are doing after one semester at UMW. The group will discuss what they learned during their first semester and how they can build on that to have even more successes in the spring.

New business --

- The committee set dates for future meetings in Spring 2020. The dates are as follows:
  - Wednesday, February 5 at 4:00 pm
  - Monday, March 9 at 4:00 pm
  - Wednesday, April 1 at 4:00 pm
- An agenda item for the spring will be discussing diversity training for faculty. Faculty will give feedback about what kind of training they would like to see, how they would like the content to be delivered, and how to facilitate difficult conversations in the classroom.
- A question was asked about changing the name of Trinkle Hall to Farmer Hall. This recommendation was already sent to the BOV.

**Next meeting:**

Wednesday, February 5 at 4:00 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.