

Resolutions for Consideration at June 12th meeting of the UFC.
Submitted by Kristin Marsh, At-Large, 2020-23

(1) Support for the Black Lives Matter movement

Whereas, the University of Mary Washington seeks to uphold our ASPIRE Community Values, including Accountability, Scholarship, Institutional Integrity, Inclusive Excellence, Respect and Civility, and Engagement;

Whereas, UMW President Troy Paino has shown important support for Black Lives Matter and UMW's students of color in his conversations with students, in his participation in the SGA-led protest march on Friday, June 5th, and in the commitments he has made to social justice on campus and in the community in his "I Stand With You" message of June 5th;

Whereas, the senseless, brutal death of George Floyd at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer, with no intervention from three police bystanders, has brought fresh trauma on black communities who have suffered racist injuries throughout history and across social locations and institutions;

Whereas, the nearly nine-minute video documenting Floyd's murder set off a wave of protests across the country, not simply because of this one horrendous act, but in recognition of the exhaustion and frustration built up over years and decades of struggle against race oppression that has been met with little to no change;

Whereas, recent weeks of mostly peaceful protest across the country and in the Fredericksburg community have been met with more police retaliation, including use of teargas, rubber bullets, and undue physical violence;

Whereas, UMW is located in Fredericksburg, VA, on a stretch of U.S. Highway 1 named after the President of the Confederacy, an insult to black community members' humanity, and in a state and city that continues to commemorate Columbus Day, an insult to indigenous people's history and humanity; and

Whereas, the U.S. higher education system has long reflected a racist society, falling far short of the inclusiveness required to serve all students equally;

Therefore, UMW faculty hereby resolve that we stand in support of the Black Lives Matter Movement, including the movement's calls for police reform and social justice reforms across all social spaces and institutions, including at UMW.

(2) Review of the Mutual Aid Agreement

Whereas, five UMW officers joined the Fredericksburg City Police on the evening of Sunday May 31st, under the command of the City Police Department, thereby implicating UMW in Fredericksburg City Police violence against protesters;

Whereas, according to Chief Hall's June 1st message to the UMW community, the job of the University Police is "to ensure the safety of ALL UMW campus members and guests;"

Whereas, the University community has been instructed to direct any questions about law enforcement actions on May 31st to the City Police Department's Public Information Officer;

Whereas, President Paino, in his message of June 5th, committed the University to a full and independent investigation of the role of UMW police in the events of May 31st and has engaged city officials on the question of police response that evening; and

Whereas, UMW many students of color and Black Lives Matter supporters have called for renegotiation of the Mutual Aid Agreement between UMW Police and the City Police Department;

Therefore, UMW faculty hereby resolve that the University administration, in consultation with student leaders and the UMW Police Chief, should thoroughly review our Mutual Aid Agreement, including examination of related protocol, and should negotiate any needed reforms to the agreement and its activation.

(3) Implementation of Stronger Policies to Ensure Inclusivity

Whereas, the University of Mary Washington, a predominantly white institution, serves a community with a fraught race history and has at the core of its mission a commitment to providing equal educational opportunity to all students;

Whereas, students of color on our campus have repeatedly expressed their experiences of marginalization and invisibility in our classrooms, in our curriculum, and in relation to our faculty;

Whereas, the President's University Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion Report of 2017 recommended much needed reforms, some of which have been implemented but many of which remain unfulfilled;

Whereas, a fully inclusive campus is always a work in progress and continual vigilance is required to ensure a welcoming and supportive campus climate;

Whereas, the UMW Board of Visitors, at its meeting on June 10, 2020, resolved "that the Board is committed to rooting out any practice within our community that stems from implicit bias, systemic racism or is contrary to our Statement of Values," and

Whereas, racial justice is complex work, especially under current severe budget strain and the difficult context of COVID-19, that nevertheless is critical to the integrity of our institution;

Therefore, UMW faculty hereby resolve that the University administration and faculty governance committees should take necessary steps to ensure immediate attention to the following priorities:

- *More general curriculum available to all students on Black History, the Civil Rights Movement, etc. Students of color need to see themselves and their histories reflected explicitly in the curriculum. Courses, indeed full programs, need to be dedicated to centering the histories and experiences of people of color.*

- *Dedicating faculty lines for greater racial diversity; and strengthening the priority of diversity in our faculty search procedures to guarantee hiring of faculty of color, especially black faculty, so that students can more readily see themselves represented in their faculty and throughout different departments & majors at the university. There has long been a principle of “target of opportunity” at UMW, which allows us to prioritize hiring that furthers our community values and our mission.*
- *Implementing required training for all faculty on race-sensitive pedagogy. Faculty serving on search committees are required to take “implicit bias” training. But this request goes beyond asking faculty to recognize that everyone holds biases that they are unaware of. Training for faculty on non-racist pedagogy can help avoid re-traumatizing students of color, thereby laying the groundwork for much more active mindfulness on the part of faculty.*

Submitted: km 6/11/20