

James Farmer Multicultural Center Faculty Advisory Committee Minutes

October 9, 2020

Online Meeting

Members Present:

Dr. Marion Sanford – Director of JFMC;
Dr. Melissa Wells (Education – Chair);
Dr. Alexandra Dunn (Business) – Secretary;
Dr. Suzie Kim (Art History);
Dr. Mehdi Aminrazavi (Classics, Philosophy, & Religion);
Dr. Marisa Martinez-Mira (Modern Languages & Literature);
Makayla Ferrell (Student representative);
Andy Chen (Student representative)

Absent: N/A

Approval of minutes: The minutes were presented from the previous meeting on September 11, 2020 and approved unanimously.

Student Representative Updates: No report

Director's Report:

- **Cultural programming:**
 - *All of these events will be held virtually during Fall 2020. Participants will fill out a registration form to receive the Zoom link. All information is posted to the JFMC website.*
 - Latino Identities Month – September 15 – October 15
 - Sabor Latino was held virtually – live cooking demonstrations and a variety of other events were all held throughout the month
 - Dining services will offer the Latino melting pot lunch next week
 - Disability Awareness Month Celebration – October 2020
 - Implementing many events in collaboration with ODR, Best Buddies, Talk to the Hands, and Diversability clubs
 - This was the first time for this type and level of collaboration. It was also the first time it was included as part of the JFMC overall cultural awareness series.
 - Events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/disability-awareness-month/>
 - Keynote speaker - Matthew Doyle; Thursday October 15 at 5:00 pm on Zoom
 - Gender and Sexual Minorities and Allies Celebration – October 19 – 24
 - Rockin' Reunion theme – highlight contributions and achievements of the LGBTQ community

- Events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/gsma-celebration/>
 - Keynote speaker – Rosemary Ketchum; Wednesday, October 21 at 6:00 pm
 - Working with PRISM (student group) for the GSMA programming
 - Asian Cultural Celebration – October 26 – 31
 - Working with ASA student group on planning events
 - Events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/asian-cultural-week/>
 - The first speaker, Dr. Rabson, will be discussing Asian marketplaces
 - Keynote performance live on Zoom - Thai Nattasin DC; Wednesday, October 28 at 7:00 pm
 - Taste of Asia is still occurring, just with a safe COVID twist – will incorporate all elements of Taste of Asia (cooking classes, performances, etc.)
 - Jewish Cultural Celebration – November 2 – 6
 - Events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/jewish-cultural-awareness-week/>
 - Native American Cultural Celebration – November 9 – 13
 - Events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/native-american-cultural-celebration/>
 - Kwanzaa – Tuesday, December 1 at 6:00 pm
 - Information can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/kwanzaa/>
- **Social Justice initiatives:**
 - *All of these events will be held virtually via Zoom.*
 - Social Justice & Leadership Summit – Saturday, October 10 from 12:00 – 5:00 pm via Zoom
 - 93 students (including James Farmer Scholar program students, James Monroe High School students, and Gladys P. Todd Germanna program) students
 - Greg Palast, investigative journalist – main guest speaker
 - Jessica Machado, director of disability resources – afternoon speaker
 - Concurrent sessions with four faculty members facilitating
 - Human Rights Films Series
 - Theme: Protests and movements taking place in different identity groups in the United States

- More information can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/jfmc-human-rights-film-series/>
 - Two films offered per semester (for the fall term, the second film is, “Awake: A Dream from Standing Rock” is being held on Tuesday, Nov. 17 at 5:00 pm)
 - Been working with Center for Community Engagement to help students understand the voting process
 - Sponsoring a program at 6:00 pm on October 19 to help students understand the electoral process and how your vote contributes to deciding how the electoral college votes
 - Hope it motivates students to go vote!
 - Four social justice teach-ins scheduled so far
 - “Know Your Rights” – Tuesday, November 10 at 6:00 pm
 - Member of ACLU will be talking with students about the voting process
- **RISE Peer Mentoring program:**
 - Two workshops & a social event has occurred
 - Good participation from students and students are coming to cultural events

Old Business:

- Dr. Wells & Dr. Sanford put together a Google form inviting faculty to sign-up to be on a JFMC listserv
 - After 24 hours, already 77 faculty members have signed up!
 - Hoping this listserv creates awareness of important events; we want faculty AND students to get more interested
 - Hoping faculty will also want to start cosponsoring more events
- Other marketing event updates
 - Marion had a conversation with Anna Billingsley of University Relations. University Relations has agreed to do whatever they can do to help with press releases, electronic announcements to online media sources, etc.
 - University Relations is going to continue brainstorming how to market events and get more people aware of the events
 - JFMC is also asking students to use their own social media to spread the word about events

New business:

- Campus climate during election season & bias incidents
 - Patriot Front stickers on campus once again
 - Concerns about how this impacts our new students of color – some have never encountered a situation or environment where they felt targeted or unsafe

- Uncertainty about who and where the stickers are coming from creates a level of anxiety and makes them question if UMW is a good fit for them
 - How can we help students be prepared emotionally for how to navigate through these issues?
 - JFMC office is available as a safe space to discuss emotions and feelings
 - Need to uphold ASPIRE values and make sure students feel safe on campus
 - Suggestion:
 - A “what to do if...” or “how to report things” guide
 - Guidelines about:
 - How to speak up or when to speak up if you see something
 - Information on what is free speech versus intimidation
 - Information about how to you express opinions without attacking people – how do you have civil discourse?
- A question arose regarding will there be any discussion around COVID-19 and Asian Americans during the Asian Cultural Celebration?
 - It was shared that the JFMC can have a conversation with ASA about adding something in to discuss it during the Asian Cultural Celebration week or at some other point in the semester
 - Emphasized that the point is not to focus on where COVID-19 came from, but how to get rid of it
 - A suggestion was offered to get a global, interdisciplinary faculty perspective on this through discourse analysis, linguistics, history, etc.
- Exploring restorative practices at UMW
 - It was shared that Dr. Sabrina Johnson is partnering with other offices to promote our bias reporting and responding to bias incidents on campus.
 - Faculty & staff will be getting information on restorative practices
 - Focus: allow for individual who has been harmed or offended to have a voice and agency in how the information is shared with the person who did the offending
 - Not meant to be punitive; meant to be educational, form relationships, and keep the community strong
 - Requires a skilled facilitator to lead the session – need individuals who are willing to be a part of it and be available when these types of cases come up

Announcements:

- Dr. Aminrazavi – Program at UMW called Religion & Dialogue
 - Panel discussion will be held on October 28 from 7-9 pm
 - Beyond the Ballots: Role of Religion in the American Political Landscape

Next meeting:

- Friday, November 13 at 3:00 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm.