

James Farmer Multicultural Center Faculty Advisory Committee Minutes

March 19, 2021
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);

Absent:

Makayla Ferrell (Student representative);
Andy Chen (Student representative)

Approval of minutes: The minutes were presented from the previous meeting on February 19, 2021 and approved unanimously.

Student Representative Updates: No report

Director's Report:

• **Cultural programming:**

- March 2021: Women's History Month Celebration
 - The events are going to highlight strong women who have been able to get messages across in various ways and have refused to be silenced
 - More about the events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/womens-history-month/>
 - The keynote speaker is Dr. Mecca Jamilah Sullivan. She will speak on Monday, March 22 at 6:00 pm
 - The registration link can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/womens-history-month/event-registration-womens-history-month-keynote-mecca-jamilah-sullivan/>
 - Doing a second session on Tuesday about creative writing as an African American queer writer and what it takes to get a book published
- March 30, 2021: Passover Seder
 - Individuals who register can pick up pre-prepared food and meet over Zoom for the Seder
 - Those interested can register here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/passover/>
- April 5 – 8, 2021: Islamic Cultural Celebration

- Did not get to have the celebration last year due to COVID, so we are excited to have this event this year!
 - More about the events can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/programs/islamic-cultural-celebration/>
 - Tuesday, April 6 – The Art of Henna event is happening in a hybrid version! MSA members and eight students at a time can participate – this is the first event of the whole year that will have a face-to-face component! In-person event registration is here:
<https://umw.presence.io/form/the-art-of-henna-class-event-registration>

- **Social Justice initiatives:**
 - The Social Justice and Leadership Summit was held on Saturday, March 13 from 12:00 – 5:00 pm
 - The theme was “Keep That Same Energy”, which makes reference to building on past themes from the summit such as continuing the pursuit of justice and taking action.
 - 115 students registered – UMW students, James Monroe High School, Massaponnax High School, and James Farmer Scholar Program students attended
 - JFMC is in the process of gathering feedback and evaluations from attendees

- **RISE Peer Mentoring program:**
 - Completed two workshops this semester – internships and study abroad was last week
 - Saturday, March 20 – gathering at the Bell Tower with up to 25 students to do a historic downtown cultural walking tour
 - Dean Rucker will lead students visiting various sites downtown
 - First outdoor event with students together all year!
 - End of year gathering will take place virtually on April 19
 - In the process of recruiting for new peer mentors
 - Current mentors want to continue and current mentees have expressed interest in becoming mentors
 - The application can be found here:
<https://students.umw.edu/multicultural/rise-peer-mentoring/>

- **Farmer Fellows – new and exciting initiative!**
 - Identified 10 sophomore and junior students who will be diversity peer educators
 - Currently meeting every Thursday for two hours for eight weeks
 - Learning facilitation skills by leading sessions and learning content at the same time
 - Students will be confident, skilled leaders who will be able to facilitate sessions with students on diversity-related topics

Old Business:

- Email for faculty and staff regarding James Farmer events has been prepared and sent forward to the next level to get mailed out to faculty soon.
 - Also, they are exploring approval steps where JFMC will have access to the all faculty and staff listserv so they can send emails themselves
- Staff representation update – UFC minutes reflect that the motion was passed

New business:

- Anti-Asian hate crimes response
 - University made a statement on Friday, March 19 and JFMC posted a statement on their social media sites on Wednesday, March 17
 - Dr. Sanford reached out to the executive board of the Asian Student Association and met with the group on Wednesday, 3/17
 - They talked about the incidents in Atlanta, GA on Tuesday, as well as the increasing number of attacks on Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders since the beginning of the pandemic. The students shared their thoughts, perspectives and concerns about these issues.
 - She also met with the student leadership of the Muslim Student Association to see how they are feeling and listen to any concerns shared
 - Asian-American community feels like they are an invisible minority and people are not paying enough attention to what is happening in the news
 - Dr. Kim will share information with our committee that she has sent out to students to educate and also help with how to have conversations with friends who are Asian-Americans

Announcements:

- Mehdi Aminrazavi has organized a one-day event on March 30 called Religion, Democracy, and Violence. It is a panel discussion from a variety of religious leaders that will talk about the relationship between these ideas.

Next meeting:

- Friday, April 2 at 3:00 pm via Zoom

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39 pm.