

University of Mary Washington

James Farmer Multicultural Center Faculty Advisory Committee

Academic Year of Fall 2021-Spring 2022

Meeting Date: September 8, 2021 at 4 pm

Meeting Location: Zoom

Members in Attendance: Mehdi Aminrazavi (Classics, Philosophy, and Religion), Anna Bedal (Student representative), Marisa Martinez-Mira (Chair, Modern Languages and Literature), Sarah Morealli (Secretary, Earth and Environmental Sciences), Marion Sanford (JFMC Director), Dan Wolfe (COB), and Zahraa Mohammed (Student representative)

Members Absent: Melissa Jenkins (COE)

Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm

Meeting Business:

1. Approval of Minutes: The minutes associated with the April 2, 2021 online meeting were approved.
2. Welcome to new members: The committee welcomed the two new student representatives (Anna Bedal and Zahraa Mohammed) and three new faculty members (Sarah Morealli, Dan Wolfe, and Melissa Jenkins) to the committee. Dr. Sanford took a moment to highlight that both Anna and Zahraa are exemplary student leaders.
3. JFMC Director's Report: Dr. Sanford provided an update on several JFMC programming events. A brief description of each program is provided below:

Cultural Programming Updates:

- a. Cross Culture Fair: took place on August 26th and was a great success with over 300 students in attendance.
- b. Latino Identities Month (Sept 15-Oct. 15): This celebration will contain a range of events including a Latin jazz concert, speakers, movies, and an immigration panel. The keynote performance is a Latin Grammy-nominated band, El Caribefunk, on Sept. 16th on Ball Circle (rain location: Chandler Ballroom C).
- c. Multicultural Fair: For the past two years, the JFMC was unable to hold the Multicultural Fair due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The JFMC hopes to hold it this year, but it needs to determine how the event will conform to COVID-19 protocol if it needs to be conducted indoors.
- d. Disabilities Awareness Month in October: The kick-off event is Intersectionality International on October 4th at 3 pm in Lee Hall (Rm. 411).

Social Justice Initiatives

- a. Human Rights Film Series: This will be a series of 4 films (two each semester) and associated discussion. Each film/discussion will focus on different aspects of human rights including law, policies, and the criminal justice system.
- b. Teach-In Initiatives: There are three Teach-In sessions this fall. Each session will focus on a different topic and be moderated by a speaker or panel of experts.
 - a. Immigration News (Sept. 21)
 - b. Voter Suppression (Oct. 5)
 - c. Femicide (Nov. 29)
- c. Social Justice and Leadership Summit: This event will take place from 9 - 5 pm on March 12th. Five faculty facilitators will run concurrent sessions to a group of approximately 100 students. Organizers are interested in opening the summit to high school students (like last year); however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event must follow the established mandates and guidelines.

Diversity and Inclusion Updates

- a. Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) Search: The search committee has invited 4 candidates to participate in on-campus interviews. Each interview will include an open forum in which faculty, staff and students can ask questions and provide feedback. It is important to note that the University created a new structure for the CDO position: this new structure will require ODR, the Safe Zone, the Title IX office, and more to report to the CDO.
- b. DEI Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence: All higher education institutions must develop and submit a 5-year DEI Strategic Plan to the Commonwealth as part of the OneVirginia plan. We will likely hear more about this 5-year once the CDO is selected.

RISE Peer Mentoring Program

RISE is a peer mentor program in which upper-class students help new students transition to UMW. This year, there are 33 upper-class mentors and 61 mentees (the largest mentee cohort in the program's history). Recently, RISE hosted a successful Meet and Greet (Aug. 24) and a Stress/Time Management workshop (Sept. 7). Next, RISE will take students to see a Fredericksburg Nationals baseball game.

Diversity Peer Educations/Farmer Fells Program

This program, which officially launched in the spring of 2021, provides social justice training on diversity, equity, and inclusion for students. Education is conducted through peer-led sessions, workshops, and activities. Since its launch, the program has conducted 22 diversity and inclusion sessions. Evaluations suggest that the program has a significant impact on advancing the education and awareness of diversity and inclusion at UMW.

4. Old Business

- a. *James Farmer Bulletin*: This is a weekly newsletter meant to spread awareness about JFMC programming to the UMW community. Since the JFMC and JFMC FAC do not have access to send the *Bulletin* to all faculty and staff, only approximately 100 people have opted-in to receive the newsletter. Perhaps a faculty member on the Committee could send the newsletter to all faculty (this was done in the past). If a staff member is permitted to join the Committee, perhaps they can send it to all staff members. Information from the *Bulletin* is already sent to all students weekly via *Sammy D. Eagle Newsletter*.
 - b. Helping Students from Afghanistan: Right now, the University knows of at least 2 students from Afghanistan who still have family in the country. How can we (the University, the CIE, JFMC and JFMC FAC, and faculty) support these students/families and provide resources? The University will consult the Commonwealth's guidelines to see how it can help.
 - i. Recently, a student's family has relocated from Afghanistan to Triangle, VA. They are looking for housing in Fredericksburg and need resources. Once more information is known, the Committee is interested in sending a campus-wide e-mail to solicit support from the UMW community.
5. Future Meetings: The JFMC FAC will meet again during the week of Oct. 4-8. Dr. Martinez-Mira will e-mail the Committee with more information on future meetings.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah A. Morealli