

University of Mary Washington

James Farmer Multicultural Center Advisory Committee

Academic Year of Fall 2022 - Spring 2023

Meeting Date: August 31, 2022

Meeting Location: Zoom

Members in Attendance: Melissa Jenkins (COE), Marisa Martinez-Mira (Chair, Modern Languages and Literatures), Sarah Morealli (Secretary, Earth and Environmental Sciences), Marion Sanford (JFMC Director), Sayan Sarkar (COB), Alicia Tisdale (Assistant Director of Financial Aid, USC representative), Desmond Villalba (Chemistry and Physics)

Members Absent: Two student representatives will be chosen by our next meeting

Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 3:33 pm

Meeting Business:

1. Approval of Minutes: The minutes associated with the April 22, 2022 online meeting were approved.
2. Welcome to new members: We welcomed two new faculty members (Sayan Sarkar and Desmond Villalba) and our new USC representative (Alicia Tisdale) to the committee.
3. JFMC Director's Report: Dr. Sanford provided an update on several JFMC programming events. A brief description of each program is provided below. More information can be found within the *James Farmer Bulletin*.

a. Cultural Programming Updates:

The Cross-Culture BBQ, cosponsored with SEED (Students Educating and Empowering for Diversity), took place during the first week of classes and experienced a high turn-out. This event is similar to Club Carnival; however, it focuses on the 22 cultural and social justice clubs affiliated with UMW.

Latino Identities Month (September 15th -October 15th) is the first cultural celebration of the year. Throughout the celebration, there will be numerous events including a performance from the band De Tierra Caliente on September 22nd at the Underground.

UMW's observance of **Disability Awareness Month** will begin on October 1st. We have had programs educating about disability culture since 2010, but in the last 3 - 4 years, the celebration has been more collaborative with sponsorship from the ODR, the DiversAbility Club, and the Talk to the Hands Club.

Marion also expressed great pride in the students who have been working throughout the summer to help plan these cultural programs for the fall semester.

b. Social Justice Initiatives

This year, the theme for the **Human Rights Film Series** is "Uncomfortable Truths in American History." The film series will consist of four documentaries (two each semester) and associated discussions.

There are two **Social Justice Teach-Ins** scheduled for the fall semester thus far: the Black-Brown Dialogue on the Shared Immigration Fight (September 20th, featuring a former DACA student) and the Call to Civic Action-The Urgency of Now (October 4th featuring Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger). The

Call to Civic Action Teach-In is not meant to be political in nature; instead Congresswoman Spanberger will discuss the importance of civic engagement and voting at all levels of government.

The Social Justice Leadership Summit, which was postponed last spring due to inclement weather, has been rescheduled for Saturday, September 17th from 10 am - 5 pm. This event features numerous sessions lead by UMW faculty and two guest speakers: Mary Bauer (Executive Director of ACLU) and Judge Burnett (Civil Rights Movement Activist).

c. Diversity and Inclusion

The **ASPIRE Banners** are back up on campus. Student leaders pushed to have these banners reinstated, demonstrating how important the ASPIRE values are to the campus community.

On September 13th, the ODR office will facilitate a **Disability Etiquette Training Workshop**. More information will be available soon.

d. RISE Peer Mentoring

The RISE Peer Mentor Program helps first-year students adjust to college by pairing them with upper-class mentors. Although the program focuses on the mentorship of underrepresented students, any first-year student who feels they can benefit from the program may apply. Currently, there are 43 mentees and 24 mentors.

Thus far, three RISE-based events have been scheduled: the Meet and Greet (took place on August 23rd), Academics 101 Workshop (September 7th), and the Skate Night (September 26th). These events are offered to the mentee for free.

e. Diversity Peer Educators/Farmer Fellows

This program teaches students how to facilitate training sessions based on diversity and inclusion. Currently, there are 10 Farmer Fellows, which will hopefully increase to 15 over the next few years. Last year, the Farmer Fellows conducted 31 diversity sessions and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. This year, they've already conducted 18 diversity sessions to FSEM students with more sessions scheduled throughout the fall semester.

Recruitment for the next cohort of Farmer Fellows will start soon. Students who are interested in joining the program should contact Marion. Becoming a Fellow requires commitment: there are weekly training sessions throughout the spring and bi-weekly training sessions during the summer.

4. Old Business

- a. Students' ability to add their **preferred names on Email/Banner/UMW ID card** is now available. The next challenge is getting the EagleOne system to "synch" with Banner so a student's preferred name appears on computer systems when a student swipes their UMW ID Card.
- b. The **Safe Zone Program's** new interim director is Mindy Erchull (Psychology Dept). Marisa sent Mindy an introductory e-mail asking how the JFMC-FAC can help with the Safe Zone's mission.

5. Future Meetings: For the Fall 2022, JFMC FAC will meet on Wednesday September 28th from 3:30 - 4:30 and Wednesday, November 2nd from 3:30 - 4:30.

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm.