

DEI Task Force Meeting Minutes (1/22/19)

Present: John Wells, DaNika Robinson, Eric Hilton, Will Benton, Laur Ferris, and Rochelle Seitz
Absent: Emily Hein, Jeff Shields, and Tricia Thibodeau

D/D Wells reviewed his charge to the DEI Task Force, reiterating this is not a replacement or redundant committee to DiveIn, but a complementary ad hoc committee with a time limited scope of recommendations to him, and ultimately to President Katherine Rowe, Provost Michael Halleran, and Chief Diversity Officer Chon Glover (the College). DiveIn is a standing committee that is charged with implementation of recommendations as approved by D/D Wells.

DEI Task Force Charge

- Identify, analyze and update issues that are most important at VIMS in the areas of diversity, inclusion and equity as produced in the detailed 2016 Diversity Report. This can be accomplished through feedback from the VIMS community using, for example, additional targeted focus groups, a VIMS-specific climate survey, and formal and informal meetings with faculty, staff and students.
- Recommend on the basis of the above work the high priority and high value actions that are achievable and measurable for advancing diversity, inclusion and equity. Include discussion of any recent steps at VIMS that have already shown positive outcomes.
- Ensure that one component of the high priority and high value actions applies specifically to hiring underrepresented minority faculty at VIMS. Determine categories of excellence for sorting candidates that go beyond standard metrics for research, education and advisory service.
- Engage Chon Glover, Chief Diversity Officer at W&M as a resource when needed, and utilize ongoing work by the VIMS DiveIn Committee recognizing that they are responsible for long-term, ongoing work and the Task Force is an ad hoc committee working on a short timeline.

The DEI Task Force was further charged with drafting a report outlining tangible, achievable actions (“low hanging fruit”) due to D/D Wells on June 1, 2019, for review and submission to the College by June 30, 2019. The DEI Task Force will physically meet on a monthly basis, ensuring that D/D Wells is invited to attend. Co-Chairs will meet with D/D Wells periodically to update him, as needed.

Two Focus Areas to be Considered

- Faculty Hires
- Campus Climate

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Steps for Task Force and Possible Strategies

- **General**
 - Review 2016 Diversity Plan; identify progress/actions that DiveIn has made; highlight areas that require further exploration (demonstrating both progress and suggestions for future directions) (All Members)
 - Add the charge of DEI Task Force to the DiveIn website (Eric)
 - Bring together focus groups for discussion (informal; coffee breaks); explore using already established meetings facilitated by unit leaders with DEI Task Force members as guests to curate data (All Members)
 - Implicit bias training for VIMS Community, particularly search committees
 - Participate in upcoming Speed Friending Pop-Up (All Members)
 - Support Pop-Up at new FM building (All Members)
- **Faculty**
 - Support upcoming faculty search committee training
 - Generate a list of questions/topics that show commitment to diversity (generally) to be used as a guide for faculty search committees; these could be used for generating a measurable score (e.g., used in a rubric) to rank candidates/applicants; this could be added to the training session being scheduled with Dania and /or Chon: ask the search committee something along the lines of, What three aspects does a candidate need to demonstrate to prove their commitment to diversity?
- **Staff**
 - Attend upcoming All Hands Meeting with Facilities Department; potential survey (DaNika)
- **Students**
 - Request results of the “Are You Happy” survey (recently sent out by AJ and Gail) (Laur)
 - Informally connect with first year students (this class has been identified as the most diverse in VIMS history) to hear about their experiences (Laur)
 - Explore how we can engage with the Graduate Student Association (data collecting house party) (Laur/Tricia)

Action Items for the Next Week

- Review 2016 Diversity Plan and generate list of accomplishments, identify any areas lacking
- Write up blurb to add to DiveIn website
- Eric add his notes to Rochelle’s working document on VIMS 2016 Diversity Plan accomplishments; circulate to DEI Task Force along with copies of 2016 Diversity Report and 2016 Diversity Plan

Co-Chairs will be in touch with DEI Task Force next week. DEI Task Force Members encouraged to stay in touch with co-chairs with additional ideas.

Next Physical Meeting: Thursday February 7, 2019 at 10:00; Location: D/D Conference Room