



DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION COMMITTEE
MID-YEAR REPORT

In the fall semester of 2016, the University's Diversity & Inclusion Committee was divided into 9 subcommittees to focus on needs and opportunities related to students, faculty, staff, external partners, and the specialized functions of the committee. A list of these sub-committees as well as membership can be found on the University's redesigned Diversity & Inclusion [website](#). Below is a list of initiatives undertaken by the Committee this semester as well as a list of our future goals for the spring semester.

STUDENTS

Initiatives Undertaken

- Developed a plan for an interactive diversity program for first-year students during Fall Orientation and for a Social Justice Engaged Living Community.
- Established a ZeeMee account in Admissions, which is a free online platform for prospective students to submit 90 seconds videos of themselves as part of their application. As a company, ZeeMee places intentional focus on under-resourced high school districts to provide a way for students to share their story beyond their application. A "community" exists within ZeeMee that can allow students from diverse backgrounds to learn more about Furman as our presence grows in this community.
- Identified high schools throughout South Carolina with high percentages of African American and non-white enrollments for targeted recruitment efforts.

Future Goals

- Compile a list of faculty who self-identify as experts in specific areas of diversity, which will be published on the Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives in Student Life [website](#).
- Study climate for underrepresented students on campus.
- Leverage better financial aid packages for diverse students, first generation students, and international students.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Initiatives Undertaken

- Proposed a job description for a full-time position focused on International Student Services. The position's posting is currently planned for Spring 2017.
- Summer break storage is now available at Lakeside Housing. A room located in the basement of the Lakeside Housing with adequate space to accommodate all international student belongings was identified and set aside for free storage.
- Sought feedback from international student groups on the new Furman Trolley services.
- Partnered with Housing and Residence Life to make sure international students who are on campus over winter break have access to warm apartments, transportation, off campus activities, and food.

Future Goals

- Realize potential for the International Student Services.
- Further transportation services. Compare services provided by the Zipcar, Enterprise Car Share, and Uber University Account in light of the international student feedback and work towards implementation to support the new Trolley services.
- Expand orientation for international students focusing on intergroup relations and dialogue.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Initiatives Undertaken

- Committee worked with the Staff Advisory Council to write a proposal for funding increase for the purple envelopes (gifts for staff).
- Committee established a group of faculty who are meeting with job candidates during their on-campus interviews to 1) ask how the candidate will contribute to diversity & inclusion on campus, 2) describe our current and future resources supporting diversity & inclusion. This group had a training with consultant Bridget Newell, Associate Provost for Diversity at Bucknell.
- Committee worked with HR to standardize the language about diversity & inclusion in all faculty job descriptions. In progress to standardize forms for staff positions.
- Created a proposal to include diversity & inclusion in faculty self-evaluation forms. Proposal was submitted to Dean Peterson for approval to forward to the Faculty Status Committee.

Future Goals

- Expand purple envelope program to include Furman part-time staff and affiliates.
- Implement a standard diversity & inclusion statement in the job description for all open positions.
- Explore professional development opportunities for employees on the topics of diversity & inclusion.
- Meet with or survey tenure-track faculty to learn what can be improved based on their experiences and needs. Plan forums for spring.
- Meet with faculty from underrepresented groups to learn what can be improved based on their experiences and needs. Plan forums for spring.
- Create, support, and train a group of mentors for tenure-track faculty. Rotating positions, every 3 years.
- Create a list of diversity & inclusion criteria for job searches.
- Host a workshop for Summer 2017 for faculty about inclusive pedagogy.
- Audit majors and minors of peer institutions as they compare to Furman's current interdisciplinary minors.



COMMUNICATIONS & OPERATIONS

Initiatives Undertaken

- Audited diversity & inclusion information on website.
- Worked with Communications to create a new diversity & inclusion web presence for Furman at www.furman.edu/diversity.
- Revised the [mini-grant program](#) for faculty, staff and students for grants having to do with diversity & inclusion related initiatives.

Future Goals

- Publicize new diversity & inclusion [website](#) to the Furman community.
- Work with Communications on website version 2.0 to infuse across Furman's web presence
- Select mini-grants for awards.
- Select annual awards that recognize contributions to diversity & inclusion efforts made by a professor, staff person, and student.

ALUMNI & COMMUNITY

Future Goals

- Create an assessment tool/survey to get input from underrepresented alumni on what they need/want.
- Determine the feasibility of a minority alumni council (similar to the Black Alumni Council at Winthrop) and debate the merits of that strategy versus working to improve the diversity of our current leadership groups (alumni council, young alumni council, Paladin Club Board, Parent's Council, Advisory Council and Trustees).
- Create a resource list of external partners and stakeholders who could provide support to Furman in the area of diversity & inclusion.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Worth, Co-Chair

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