



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
2019-20 Institutional Report



FURMAN
UNIVERSITY



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

As the inaugural chief diversity officer at Furman, I am proud to support the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The committee has worked enormously hard to push Furman ahead as we seek to engage the institutional change necessary to support our efforts at building a diverse and inclusive community. As we move forward in the advancement of our diversity and inclusion efforts, I look forward to working with the committee in Furman’s continuing effort to become an institution that “embraces diversity as an implicit value and as an explicit practice in all of its endeavors.”

Sincerely,

Michael E. Jennings, Ph.D.
Chief Diversity Officer
Professor of Education

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Each year, we report on the work the Diversity & Inclusion Committee has embarked upon in the past year – admittedly this year was faced with significant, unexpected challenges due to COVID-19. Our goal has never been to acclaim how far we have come knowing that our marginalized colleagues and students face how far we have to go each and every day. Rather, we have hoped to raise awareness of the influence we can all exert to create a more inclusive and equitable Furman within our various domains of campus. It would be unfortunate to say that the @BlackatFurmanuni Instagram as well as events around the nation have highlighted the important work to be done on our own campus. Students, faculty, and staff from marginalized communities have been sounding that bell for an exhaustingly long time. It just sounds louder now.

As our terms as chairs come to a close, we would leave you with what our conversations around campus have highlighted as next steps. Furman must assess how strategies we employ change campus climate and culture over time, there must be accountability for change across all units and levels, an integrated approach must be undertaken so that what is happening in one area of the University does not conflict with other areas or (better yet) supports other areas, and there must be policy and systemic changes rather than relying solely on educational approaches.

Respectfully,

Natalie The, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Health Sciences

Neil E. Jamerson, J.D.
Assistant Vice President for Student Development

This report attempts to provide a snapshot of the gains made across campus and beyond related to diversity and inclusion. It is not an exhaustive list.



LETTERS FROM SUB-CHAIRS

The killings of African-Americans by police and white people who felt justified, have spawned outrage, protests, and conversations throughout the world, the country, and within the local community. Although senior leadership has addressed the Furman community during this time, subsequent actions by Furman community members including the invitation for white employees to participate in the reading and discussion of “White Fragility,” and the establishment of an Instagram account “blackatfurmanuni” where students, alumni, faculty, and staff are invited to share personal accounts of micro-aggressions and racist acts perpetrated against them by Furman community members, accentuate the earnestness to address the culture at Furman.

The subcommittee has not met since the requirement to work from home. This report is a summary of its work through March. What the subcommittee discussed during the 2019-20 year is embryonic, and given our current environment, will not suffice even if completely executed. Attainment of what must occur – a complete culture shift to actually value “the inherent worth of individuals in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust and civility” – can only occur by accounting for demonstrated inclusive behaviors of all members of the Furman community, increasing resources dedicated to this evolution, and purging those within the Furman community who refuse to adhere.

Sincerely,

Kristen Davis, J.D.
Employee Relations Manager
Staff Recruitment, Advancement, and Training

The LGBTQ+ Sub-Committee has been closely following the evolving national dialogue on racial injustice—and, in a related vein, we feel great anguish over the pain expressed in recent postings by current and former students on social media about racially offensive remarks and actions they have encountered during their Furman experience. We know that Furman can and must do better.

Having met regularly prior to the campus shutdown triggered by COVID-19 (and online since then), our sub-committee remains hopeful that our initiatives (and the support they have received) are making Furman a safer and more inclusive environment for all students, faculty, and staff who identify as LGBTQ+. We view the fight against LGBTQ+ discrimination as inseparable from the fight against racism and the broader goal of an inclusive community for all. We look forward to continuing these efforts so that the Furman community can be truly reflective of the wider local and national community in which we play a vital part.

Alexander Francis-Ratte, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Asian Studies
LGBTQ+ Affairs

Scott Henderson, Ph.D.
Professor of Education
LGBTQ+ Affairs

This report attempts to provide a snapshot of the work across campus and beyond related to diversity and inclusion. It is not an exhaustive list, as there are numerous contributions by individuals and groups across campus that are not formally part of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Additionally, more work is to be done to standardize metrics for counting historically underrepresented populations. The report accepted a broad definition that included race/ethnicity, country of origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, age, and more.



AWARDS & GRANTS

Charge:

Continue selection process of committee's awards and grants.

Chair:

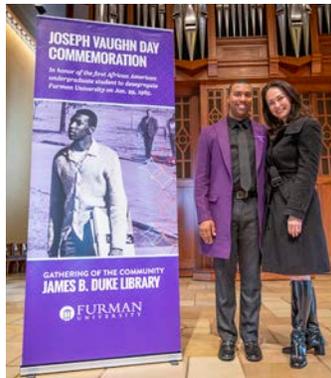
Judy Bagley (SOAR)

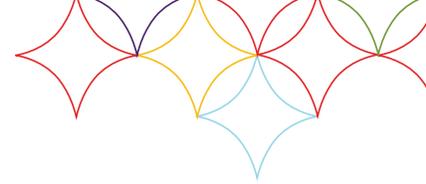
Committee:

Shaniece Criss (Health Sciences), Megan Dodgens (Riley), Courtney Firman (Housing & Residence Life), Joseph Merry (Sociology), & Emily Zeytoonjian (student)

Initiatives:

- Received twenty-five applications for mini-grants and awarded \$5,399.08. The mini-grant program is designed to promote and enhance one or more diversity themes, including climate, access, education, policy and assessment. This year, mini-grant funds supported:
 - Supporting Neurodiversity;
 - Contributing a Community Reception for Joseph Vaughn Day;
 - Enhancing LGBTQ Support;
 - Pathways to Education Careers for a Diverse Nation;
 - Developing Culturally Unique Messaging for Students of Color Around the Concept of Failure & Resiliency;
 - Chinese New Year Festival;
 - Empowered Employment: Finding Your Voice;
 - Jewish Week; and
 - Faculty Funding for Completion of Quality Matters Digital Accessibility Course: Addressing Accessibility and Usability.
- Typically, the committee would also select D&I Meritorious Award for Faculty and Staff as well as the Rosa Bodkin Student Award winner. The awards are presented annually to individuals who have demonstrated an emerging or sustained commitment to advance Furman's value of diversity, inclusion and multiculturalism on campus. Because of the pandemic and freeze on funds and events, the awards were not issued this year.





FACULTY RECRUITMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND TENURE

Charge:

Continue supporting department chairs in the interviewing process for new hires. Streamline training and interview processes to maximize efficiency. Develop recommendation for addressing retention issues of underrepresented faculty. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Chair:

Paul Thomas (Education)

Committee:

Jenny Colvin (Library), Marta Lukacovic (Communications), Tina Schwebach (Human Resources), Onarae Rice (Psychology), and Kevin Treu (Computer Science)

Initiatives:

- Moved the organization of assigning D&I trainers for departments to designated administrator (Dean, CDO, etc., TBD), where a current list of trainers will be housed, and department training/retraining of trainers will be managed.
- Informed chairs to contact the designated administrator (above) concerning training needs.
- Formalized that all departments that have not received D&I training must complete training prior to hiring process.
 - Re-training is required for departments hiring at any point after 3 years from initial D&I training.
 - Re-training will be the responsibility of department chairs (who will be trained in the “train the trainer” trainings), who will also request from the designated administrator an outside facilitator for the re-training.
- “Train the trainer” sessions provided once each academic year as a responsibility of FRAT in conjunction with designated administrator.
- Training sessions for faculty who are unable to attend (or were not yet hired) will be provided once each academic year and will be coordinated by the designated administrator and FRAT.
- All D&I training and re-training materials will be provided and updated by FRAT.
- On-going revision of training materials
- Trained 13 academic departments and interviewed approximately 44 candidates.





INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Charge:

Define and facilitate an affinity group consisting of international faculty and staff to support the Furman community. Serve as a bridge to engage the Furman community with the broader Greenville international network. Promote professional development opportunities for faculty and staff related to internationalization. Collaborate with other entities on campus, including but not limited to, Rinker Center, Center for Inclusive Communities, etc. to supplement their work on behalf of internationalization. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Chairs:

Lourdes Manye (Modern Languages & Literature)

Committee:

Connor Bradley (Inclusive Communities), Nancy Georgiev (Rinker) Bhuket Oztas (Politics & International Affairs), Chirinjev Peterson (Business & Accounting), Santiago Quintero (Modern Languages & Literature)

Initiatives:

- Collaborated with Min-Ken Liao to organize three International Faculty Affinity Group social gatherings (Sept 20, Oct 11, and Nov 8).
- Met with Diane Boyd (FDC) to discuss and share goals prior to the two events that Diane facilitated: 1) a professional development workshop for faculty on “Detecting and Preventing Bias in Student Opinion Surveys,” which took place on February 13, and 2) an information session on visa process with Meredith Green and Sharen Beaulieu to be included in the April Chairs meeting.
- Gathered more information on other universities practices regarding internationalization, and visa process for international faculty.
- Assessed different options and budget sources for a Furman International Community event.
- Met with Meredith Green and Don Kaade (General Counsel), Sharen Beaulieu (HR), Dean Suzy Summers, and Diane Boyd (FDC), to coordinate efforts and recommend initiatives for international faculty that our subcommittee discussed this year:
 - Create a document for in-coming international faculty on visa-process information, with a timeline of when they are evaluated by their department chair and when documents should be submitted to the immigration lawyer; General Counsel will create a one-page document that can be distributed to incoming international faculty, which is separate from the Faculty Hiring Procedures for Tenure-track Positions document that is currently made available to department chairs.
 - Use the study away website as home base for international faculty; Human Resources will facilitate to have a link for “International Faculty” from the Human Resources page to the Study Away and International Education page
- Met with Candice Chan, Dean of International Students Admission to discuss international students recruiting and invite her to a meeting to give a presentation to the committee. Candice presented at our March 19th zoom meeting.
- Recommended to the Chairs of the D & I committee that Candice Chan be invited to be a member of the International Affairs Sub-committee for the following year.





LGBTQ+ AFFAIRS

Charge:

Advise on matters pertaining to LGBTQ+ issues, including, but not limited, to policy development and revision, recruitment, and employee education. Promote inclusion of current scholarship on LGBTQ+ issues in the curricular and co-curricular offerings. Explore opportunities for officially recognized affinity group within employee ranks as well as web presence. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Chair:

Scott Henderson (Education) and Alex Francis-Ratte (Asian Studies)

Committee:

KC Cox (Facilities), Adi Dubash (Biology), Ben Efird (Rinker), Kelsey Hample (Economics), and student members from Furman Pride Alliance.

Initiatives:

- Hosted a table at the Healthy Sexuality Fair held in Furman's Watkins Room on October 31.
- Provided support and faculty participation in two LGBTQ+ related CLPs in the fall ("Making Room, Not Excuses: Women's and LGBTQ+ History on Campus" on September 26 and "Screening/Discussion of the Film Mala, Mala" on October 3).
- Met with Chuck Evans (alumnus donor) and Erin Wissing (Furman Development Office) to discuss: 1) changes that have been made to Furman's financial aid policies and 2) the need to revise the terms of Mr. Evans's bequest to Furman.
- Received approval from Mr. Evans (see above) to investigate possible non-scholarship uses for his annual donations and his bequest.
- Met with Ethan Johnstone of South Carolina's Pride Link organization to begin discussing possible collaborations between Pride Link and Furman.
- One of the subcommittee's co-chairs began serving on the Spiritual Wellness Sub-Committee of the Wellness Committee of the Strategic Plan (Committee) in order to provide an LGBTQ+ perspective/input.
- Drafted, submitted, and received approval for use of a D&I mini-grant for the purpose of undertaking a two day fact-finding trip to the LGBTQ+ resource centers at Wake Forest University and Elon University (postponed due to COVID-19).
- Conducted and analyzed the results of an informal campus survey to determine the degree to which various campus offices/divisions were addressing/meeting the Campus Pride Index criteria. In connection with this, we tentatively identified the top 2-3 most important initiatives we could implement fairly quickly.
- Coordinated participation during the visit by Dr. Cary Costello (UW-Milwaukee) for his CLP on March 20, "Sex and Gender Have Never Been Binaries" (cancelled due to COVID-19).
- Submitted feedback and suggestions for Furman's Strategic Diversity Plan with LGBTQ+ issues in mind.





STAFF RECRUITMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND TRAINING

Charge:

Work with Michael Jennings on status of committee's recommendations regarding staff hiring and training practices. Continue working on action items identified last year. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Chair:

Kristen Davis (Human Resources)

Committee:

Robyn Andrews (Library), Rob Carson (Athletics and Academic Success), Ben Efrid (Rinker), Danielle Hernandez (McAlister), and Linette Reyes-Berberena (Faculty Development Center)

Initiatives:

- Utilized online bias training from a third party vendor, with the intention of requiring all staff to complete online bias training as well as an in-person training. Subcommittee was communicating with prospective trainers to conduct a pilot in-person component of the training.
- In conjunction with the Office of Human Resources, along with the support of University Communications, continued the development of a recruitment prospectus – to post with positions featured on the employment website, to provide links to information on specific Furman initiatives (i.e. the Slavery Task Force, The Furman Advantage), as well as other resources such as Upstate Pride, Library Resources, Living in the Upstate, etc. to advise of the local community.
- Proposed that prior to the posting of positions, hiring managers are apprised of the demographic composition of their respective department/unit/division.
- Proposed that prior to the posting of positions, hiring managers and search committee members attend Inclusive Hiring Practices training.
- Proposed that candidates for positions at the professional level and above, provide a statement on their experiences of diversity and inclusion, with emphasis on those experiences that are work or educationally related.
- Proposed that finalists for positions at the professional level and above meet with the Chief Diversity Officer, his designee, or a small committee who will provide an evaluative assessment to the hiring manager.



SHORT LIST OF CONTACT INFORMATION

Chief Diversity Officer

Michael Jennings
*Chief Diversity Officer and
Professor of Education*
Michael.Jennings@furman.edu

Chairs of the University's Diversity and Inclusion Committee for 2020-21

Lisa Knight
*Professor, Religion, Asian Studies,
and Anthropology*
Chair of Asian Studies
Lisa.Knight@furman.edu

Deborah Allen
*Director, Center for Inclusive
Communities*
Deborah.Allen@Furman.edu

Bias Incident Response and Support

Michael Jennings
*Chief Diversity Officer and
Professor of Education*
Michael.Jennings@furman.edu

Admissions

Allyson Brown
*Associate Director for
Multicultural Recruitment*
Allyson.Brown@furman.edu

Candice Chan
Dean of International Admission
Candice.Chan@furman.edu

Center for Inclusive Communities

Deborah Allen
*Director of Center for
Inclusive Communities*
Deborah.Allen@furman.edu

English as a Second Language Services

Betsy Craig
Writing and ESL Specialist
Betsy.Craig@furman.edu

Office of Spiritual Life

Vaughn CroweTipton
*Associate Vice President for
Spiritual Life and Chaplain*
Vaughn.CroweTipton@furman.edu

The Riley Institute – Diversity Leaders Initiative

Megan Dodgens
*Director of Diversity Leadership
Strategies*
Megan.Dodgens@furman.edu

Rinker Center for Study Away and International Education

Nancy Georgiev
Director of Rinker Center
Nancy.Georgiev@furman.edu

Student Office of Accessibility Resources

Judy Bagley
Director of SOAR
Judy.Bagley@furman.edu

Title IX and ADA Coordinator

Melissa Nichols
Title IX and ADA Coordinator
Melissa.Nichols@furman.edu

University Ombudsperson

Gary Clark
Staff Ombudsperson
Gary.Clark@furman.edu

A. Joseph Pollard
Faculty Ombudsperson
Joe.Pollard@furman.edu

Victoria Turgeon
Faculty Ombudsperson
Victoria.Turgeon@furman.edu

The above report attempted to provide a snapshot of the gains made across campus within the scope of the diversity and inclusion committee's work. Initiatives took a collaborative approach and involved many constituents. It is not an exhaustive list, despite best efforts.