



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
2020-21 Institutional Report





LETTER FROM THE CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

As the inaugural chief diversity officer at Furman, I am proud to support the work of the Diversity, Equity, 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

Our terms as chairs began in the midst of a pandemic and a long-overdue national and international racial reckoning. One year later, this righteous battle toward racial and social justice persists, regardless of what consumes the current news cycle. Our primary goals as co-chairs were to support the work of subcommittees, listen and learn from campus stakeholders, and determine what next steps are needed to integrate the work being done across campus and by subcommittees. We learned that many students, academic departments, administrative units and alumni were having important conversations about increasing diversity and supporting historically underrepresented groups. Participating as ex-officio members of the Black Life at Furman Ad Hoc Committee in fall 2020 further enabled us to identify and explore trends and gaps across campus. Many of these centered on existing silos and lack of communication across the institution. This made it difficult to foster collaboration and accountability at all levels. We are however, thankful for the efforts made to combat these issues and move us to a more centralized and effective way of operating. We also identified opportunities to educate each other, collaborate, and work constructively toward a more thoughtful and inclusive community. We look forward to implementing initiatives in the coming year, humbled by the diligence and passion of colleagues and the work that remains ahead of us.

Sincerely,

Lisa Knight, Ph.D.
Professor of Religion, Asian Studies, and Anthropology

Deborah Allen, M.Ed.
Director, Center for Inclusive Communities

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



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)

Initiatives:

Due to the late approval of budgets and a decreased budget due to the pandemic, the mini-grant application window was not opened this year. We reached out to everyone who was not able to complete their grant in 2019-20 to see if they wanted to complete it this year. Two groups decided to decline the grant, and one asked to defer to 2021-22.

- Awarded one new mini-grant “Policing Black Bodies: Meet the Authors.” Anyone that reached out with questions about mini-grants for 2020-21 was sent information about applying when we realized that two groups were declining their funding for 2019-20.
- Awarded the 2020-2021 Dr. Cherie Maiden Invitational Award for faculty to Dr. Nick Radel.
- Awarded the 2020-2021 Meritorious Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award for staff to Robyn Andrews.
- Awarded the 2020-2021 Rosa Mary Bodkin Award for students to Queen Trapp.

Future Goals:

Move the mini-grant application window to open earlier in the fall semester.



Dr. Nick Radel with President Elizabeth Davis, Robyn Andrews, Queen Trapp.

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 recommendations 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 Michael Svec (Education)

Initiatives:

FRAT committee worked with Provost Ken Peterson and Dean Jeremy Cass, along with CDO Michael Jennings, to create faculty recruitment/hiring policy and procedures recommended by FRAT (2019-2020); the final approved policy and procedures are as follows:



Expectations

- All full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty in departments conducting national searches for full-time positions must be fully trained in diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices at least every three years.
 - Part-time or full-time non-tenure-track faculty who are invited into departmental search processes must also complete the requisite training.
- No faculty search can commence before all department members have been appropriately trained within the acceptable time frame.
 - Chairs can submit position requests before such training has been completed and/or certified.
 - Position descriptions cannot be approved by both the academic department and the Dean of Faculty before such training has been completed and/or certified.
- FRAT will continue to provide the training materials.

Responsibilities of the Chief Diversity Officer

- The CDO will house and maintain an up-to-date list of viable trainers and maintain records of faculty participation in the requisite training.
- The CDO will evaluate the list of approved searches provided by the Dean of Faculty and alert the Dean of Faculty of individuals or departments that require training (whose previous training occurred more than three years from the time of the search).
- The CDO will facilitate yearly train-the-trainer sessions in concert with FRAT, including at least one make-up session to be held each year.

Responsibilities of the Dean of Faculty

- The Dean of Faculty will alert the CDO of those full-time, tenure-stream searches that have been approved for a given academic year.
- The Dean of Faculty will assist the CDO to communicate with department chairs about deficient training needs.
- The Dean of Faculty will ensure that proper training has occurred before final approval of and publication of a proposed job ad.
- The Dean of Faculty will coordinate with department chairs on the nature of their candidate pools and will solicit the assistance of the CDO in evaluating such pools if concerns become apparent.



- The Dean of Faculty will communicate to a department any concerns about a given candidate pool and the corrective steps that must be taken in order to result in more appropriate candidate pools.
- The Dean of Faculty will ensure compliance with such directives and will cancel searches that do not embrace the standards to which we aspire.

Ongoing DEI search training and interviews:

- Recorded updated training video and posted to Box for use by departments and faculty.
- Led one live DEI training session that included members from 3 departments, and retrained one department.
- Facilitated 22 Faculty Candidate Interviews by DEI-representatives in Spring 2021.

Future Goals:

- Focus on faculty retention efforts.
- Include on DEI website a clear presence for faculty/staff affinity groups.
- FRAT facilitate or co-facilitate an anonymous survey of pre-tenure faculty each fall and spring.
- Add to departments' statement on tenure and promotion the key professional organizations in their field along with those organizations' diversity and inclusion statements.
- Increase mentoring and social networking.
- Create a mechanism for FRAT to interact with pre-tenure faculty, including providing resources.
- Seek mechanisms for positive faculty feedback separate from formal evaluations and to include broader contributions beyond department-based.



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:

Candice Chan (Admissions), Buket Oztas (Politics & International Affairs), Mehmood Mallick (University Communications), Santiago Quintero (Modern Languages and Literature), and Nancy Georgiev (Rinker).

Initiatives:

- Collaborated with Meredith Green, General Counsel, and Don Kaade, Associate General Counsel, to create a document that can be distributed to incoming international faculty on visa-process information. The “International Tenure-Track Hires” document is to be shared with international faculty and department chairs and will be updated as necessary.
- Collaborated with Min-Ken Liao, Faculty Director, Faculty Development Center (FDC) International Faculty Affinity Group, to create a list of international faculty and staff at Furman.
- Revised the International Affairs Sub-committee charge to better align with the sub-committee’s goals and priorities.
- Seek Information about International Students on campus this academic year.
- Exploring the possibility of creating a future InternationalAffairs webpage similar to the one set up by the LGBTQ+ Affairs Subcommittee.

Future Goals:

- Create International Affairs webpage similar to the LGBTQ+ Affairs Subcommittee.
- Partner with Sharen Beaulieu (Human Resources) to create a link for “International Faculty” from the Human Resources page to the Study Away and International Education page (in coordination with Nancy Georgiev).
- Explore the development of a list of International Faculty and staff.
- Celebrate the Furman International community during Orientation week, as well as small events during the year connecting Furman international community to the Greenville community.
- Explore and secure a budget and resources for the events above.
- Increase support for international students on campus in coordination with the Center for Inclusive Communities.
- Continue coordinating efforts and initiatives to support international faculty with Meredith Green (General Counsel), Sharen Beaulieu (Human Resources), Diane Boyd (Faculty Development Center), and the Dean of Faculty.
- Continue collaborating with Min-Ken Lao (Faculty Director, FDC) and Diane Boyd (FDC) to facilitate the Affinity Group for International Faculty as a social gathering.





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 Riley Hughes '22

Initiatives:

Regrettably, the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on campus significantly limited the number of issues we could address and/or activities we could undertake. (For example, we were unable to utilize the D&I mini-grant we had received for the purpose of taking a two-day fact-finding trip to the LGBTQ+ resource centers at Wake Forest University and Elon University.) Nevertheless, we were able to accomplish several important tasks during the 2020-2021 academic year:



- The two subcommittee chairs reviewed and provided feedback (February 4) on the “Diversity and Equity” section of the Shi Institute’s Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System report.
- The two subcommittee co-chairs met with Allison Foy, Leo Fackler, and Patrick Bridges on March 22 to discuss the creation of an LGBTQ+ alumni affinity group. As a result, an alumni Meet & Greet has been scheduled for the morning of October 23 (Homecoming), and an existing unofficial Facebook group has now been made an official outreach group for the Furman Alumni Association.
- The subcommittee provided support and faculty/student participation for a Zoom conversation on April 21 with Furman alumna Kim Jackson, the first LGBTQ+ identified individual to be elected to the Georgia State Senate.
- One of the subcommittee members participated as a panelist for a Clemson University transgender Zoom webinar on April 7. He also gathered information about Clemson’s LGBTQ+ center.

Future Goals:

- Identify possible uses for the short- and long-term funds provided by Chuck Evans (with the latter possibly designated for an LGBTQ+ center at Furman).
- Undertake a two-day trip to Wake Forest University and Elon University for the purpose of gaining firsthand information about their LGBTQ+ centers.
- Continue to identify and act on criteria for potential rating of Furman’s LGBTQ+ campus climate by the Campus Pride Index, with possible partnering with the Shi Institute.
- Pursue ongoing dialogues with the Admission and Development offices to determine how best to recruit prospective LGBTQ+ students and use alumni donations to improve the campus climate.
- Provide assistance with updating Furman’s housing policies in regard to LGBTQ+ students.
- Investigate the possibility of hosting a Lavender Graduation Ceremony.

- Request (if possible) an audit of Furman’s supply chains to determine the vendors’ positions/policies regarding LGBTQ+ issues.
- Maintain diversity among the subcommittee’s members.
- Plan a future campus-wide day of LGBTQ+ visibility by designing, printing, and distributing T-shirts in support of LGBTQ+ community members.

STAFF RECRUITMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND TRAINING (SRAT)

Charge:

Work with Michael Jennings on status of committee’s recommendations regarding staff hiring and training practices. Work with HR to revise staff evaluations, especially with an eye to incorporating more DEI values and other measurements that better reflect staff work and Furman values. 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 Efird (Rinker), Danielle Hernandez (McAlister), and Linette Reyes-Berberena (Faculty Development Center)

Initiatives:

- Asking Staff AC to amend its bylaws to formalize appointment of one of its members to SRAT.
- Providing DEI-EEOC-related training to search committees (through Senior Employment Specialist in the Office of Human Resources).
- Cultivating a list of organizations that serve interest of historically underrepresented communities in order to broaden the pool of candidates for open positions.

Future Goals:

- Support divisions as necessary to implement initiatives in Strategic Diversity Plan.
- Research the operations of similarly situated institutions to discern appropriate number of FTEs to execute initiatives.
- If approved by the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, transition the Senior Employment Specialist to SRAT (from FRAT) to facilitate initiatives and in particular the recruitment initiatives, and allow the Employee Relations Manager to roll off of the subcommittee.



SHORT LIST OF CONTACT INFORMATION

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furman.edu/cdo

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



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