



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
2018-19 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

This past year, Furman made new strides to realize the institution’s commitment to being “a person-centered community, emphasizing the prime worth of persons and encouraging concern for others.” While the Diversity and Inclusion Committee played a role, institutional change requires the collective efforts of all. Accordingly, we know this report does not capture everyone’s work. We still thank you for positively contributing to our campus.

Although it is important to celebrate progress, it is equally necessary to acknowledge that the work of becoming a diverse, inclusive, and equitable institution is a continual process. We hope you will join in these efforts in the years to come.

Respectfully,

Sarah E. Worth, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy

Neil E. Jamerson
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.



AWARDS & GRANTS

Charge:

Continue selection process of committee’s awards and grants. Award presentations will be moved from graduation to convocation in 2019. Committee will select Rosa Bodkin Award for students this year as well.

Committee:

Judy Bagley (Incoming Chair); Shaniece Criss; Megan Dodgens; Courtney Firman; Brian Goess (Outgoing Chair/Spring sabbatical); Emily Zeytoonjian

Initiatives:

- Received nine applications for mini-grants and awarded \$5,400. 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:
 - Building the clarinet studio music library by purchasing musical scores and relevant materials to study interpretation of Contemporary World Music;
 - The Riley Institute’s Emerging Public Leaders program for high school students;
 - Training for Bridges to a Brighter Future’s peer mentors;
 - Filming the stories of Furman’s religious minority students and alumni by the Office of Spiritual Life;
 - Initiating the Paladin Conversation Partners to promote language practice between non-English speaking and English speaking individuals;
 - Photoshoot supplies for a new LGBTQ+ Furman website, “Out at Furman,” which launched here: <https://www.furman.edu/diversity-inclusion/institutional-commitment/out-at-furman/>
 - Presenting the film, “in Search of Israeli Cuisine,” which was a joint effort between the Jewish Student Association, Culinary Club, Department of Middle East and Islamic Studies, Office of Spiritual Life and the Greenville Jewish Film Festival.
 - The Riley Institute’s Advance Team hosting Mr. Ray Hinton who shared his experience in the criminal justice system and his efforts to bring about reform.
- Selected 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. The honorees are:
 - Faculty: Assistant Professor of Sociology Dr. Claire Whitlinger;
 - Staff: Post-Baccalaureate Fellow of Social Justice and Community Engaged Learning Emilee O’Brien; and
 - Student: Furman junior Erik Ortiz.



In addition to receiving an honorarium, the winners will be formally recognized during Furman’s Fall Convocation, which takes place in late August.



FACULTY RECRUITMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND TENURE

Charge:

Continue supporting department chairs and Michael Jennings in the interviewing process for new hires. Make recommendations on exit interview process for faculty. Collaborate with staff sub-committee to report on the feasibility and desirability of faculty/staff affinity groups on campus. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Committee:

Robyn Andrews; Teresa Cosby (Chair); Kate Kaup; Nick Radel (ex officio); Paul Thomas; Kevin Treu.

Initiatives:

- Conducted 13 workshop trainings on inclusive hiring practices for the following academic departments conducting searches this year: Art, Asian Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Director of Bands, Economics, Health and Exercise Sciences, History, Latin Studies, Library, Math, Modern Languages, Politics and International Affairs, and Psychology. Moving forward, the training will be updated and departments who have been trained will not have to repeat if the training occurred within the last calendar year.
- Interviewed 44 faculty candidates. The purpose of faculty interviews is to impress upon the candidates Furman's commitment and valuing of diversity, to assess the candidates' commitment to diversity and to provide an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions of a faculty member who is not affiliated with the department they are interviewing with or administration about topics they want the interviewer to keep confidential. Moving forward, these interviews will be thirty minutes with that time split between the committee and Michael Jennings.

INTERNATIONALIZATION AND GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

Charge:

Complete selection process for faculty fellowship. Meet with Housing & Residence Life, Office of Spiritual Life and other appropriate campus partners to prepare a report on the desirability and feasibility of creating an international village that brings together students studying away, language houses, international students and students committed to interfaith work. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Committee:

John Armstrong; Connor Bradley (Co-Chair); Betsy Craig; Nancy Georgiev (Co-Chair); Brad Harmon; Lane Harris.





Initiatives:

- Determined that an international or global village is feasible within Housing & Residence Life; however, discovered several obstacles that would need to be weighed carefully. The final recommendation was that the international village could serve Housing & Residence Life well by providing single-semester housing for study away students, increasing the visibility of the language houses, offering a welcoming community to international students and providing roommates for exchange students. However, no decision was made to move forward until additional student input as well as input from faculty and staff working on related efforts could be engaged in dialogue about the concept.
- Selected Dr. Chirinjev Peterson as the faculty fellow. She will work directly with the Center for Inclusive Communities and report to Deborah Allen. The Rinker Center may also request consultation or collaboration on projects involving the international community of students, staff and faculty. Projects proposed by Dr. Peterson in the fellowship interview process included:
 - Launching a Furman faculty and staff host family program for incoming international students to expand students' options beyond Greenville-based community programs;
 - Expanding ambassador/conversation partner program; and
 - Conducting focus groups on identified needs of international students.



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.

Committee:

Scott Henderson (co-chair), Alex Francis-Ratte (co-chair), Adi Dubash, Kelsey Hample, KC Cox, and Ben Efirid.

Initiatives:

- Used an “Out at Furman” t-shirt initiative to forge greater community among Furman’s LGBTQ+ faculty and staff.
- Designed and coordinated the successful launch of a new webpage highlighting Furman’s LGBTQ+ faculty and staff, which can be found at <https://www.furman.edu/diversity-inclusion/institutional-commitment/out-at-furman/>
- 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.
- Made several recommendations to improve resources serving LGBTQ+ faculty, staff and students, including meeting with the Director of the Center for Inclusive Communities regarding Safe Zone training/materials and the Assistant Vice President for Student Development regarding the Bias Incident Response & Support submission portal.
- Selected a student to receive the Chuck Evans LGBTQ+ Scholarship (\$5,000 annually).
- Robyn Andrews created and curated the library’s LGBTQ+ resources webpage.



STAFF RECRUITMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND TRAINING

Charge:

Work with Michael Jennings on status of committee’s recommendations regarding staff hiring and training practices. Collaborate with faculty sub-committee to report on the desirability and feasibility of faculty/staff affinity groups on campus. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.

Committee:

Robyn Andrews; Kristen Davis (Chair); Ben Efird; Linette Reyes-Berberena; Ron Thompson.

Initiatives:

- Offered a variety of professional development opportunities in conjunction with campus and external partners on topics related to diversity and inclusion, including piloting Human Resources’ civility workshops, offering the Center for Inclusive Communities’ Safe Zone Trainings (Gender and Sexuality 101 and Visible Ally 201) to all staff, and offering PRISMA Health’s conscious leadership training. Proposed all staff members complete Implicit Bias training.
- In conjunction with the Office of Human Resources and University Communications, continued the development of a recruitment prospectus to post with positions featured on the employment website that provides 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, Living in the Upstate, etc. to advise of the local community.
- Made several proposed changes to staff recruitment, including that hiring managers review demographic composition of their respective department/unit/division before posting positions, requiring hiring managers and search committee members attend Inclusive Hiring Practices training, asking candidates for positions at the professional level and above to provide a statement emphasizing work or educational experiences related to diversity and inclusion, and scheduling meetings between finalists for positions at the professional level and above with the Chief Diversity Officer or his designee to provide an evaluative assessment to the hiring manager.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND PERSISTENCE

Charge:

Complete an initial list of dashboard data related to Furman’s underrepresented students that would be helpful in guiding administrative decisions around recruitment, retention and persistence. Other work as the sub-committee sees fit.



Committee:

Allyson Brown (Chair); Rob Carson; Brian Goess; Omar Mayar.

Initiatives/Resolutions Undertaken (This information will appear in end-of-year report to campus):

- Revised Diversity & Inclusion website to include link to the Institutional Assessment and Research page so prospective students and families would have accurate information about the demographics of the Furman student body.
- Edited the Diversity & Inclusion brochure used by the Office of Admissions to highlight data regarding career preparation and post-graduation placement of historically underrepresented students.

SHORT LIST OF CONTACT INFORMATION

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