

School of Education Diversity Report December, 2015

In December of 2012, the diversity committee for the School of Education submitted a status report regarding diversity efforts at our school. The report focused on professional development opportunities, curriculum reform, recruitment, and international engagement. Since then, the Provost (Michael Halleran) and the Chief Diversity Officer (Chon Glover) have requested an update to that report to include (a) the School of Education's statement on diversity; (b) recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and graduate/professional students; (c) climate; (d) curricular offerings; (e) inclusion efforts; (f) programming; and (g) professional development. We will describe each category in depth, but overall, our efforts here at the School of Education have resulted in the following:

- A substantial increase of diversity in faculty and students;
- The initiation of a climate survey, which a doctoral student has created and distributed to students, staff, and faculty;
- Moving forward on substantially more curricular offerings and programming to reflect our commitment to diversity;
- Taken steps to make our building more inclusive; and
- Added to our professional development to reflect our commitment to diversity.

School of Education's Statement of Diversity

Diversity connotes distinctiveness, uniqueness, and interconnection among and between human beings. It denotes racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage, national origin, socioeconomic status, age, gender, sexual orientation, philosophical, religious, and spiritual beliefs, as well as physical, social, and intellectual attributes and abilities.

The faculty, staff, and students of the School of Education value inclusiveness and equity of opportunities for diverse learners. We promote attitudes and beliefs that foster faculty members' and students' understanding of self and diverse others through curriculum, instruction, research, and focused learning activities. These values also guide our internal governance as well as our partnership with educational institutions and other community agencies. Advocacy for diverse learners informs instructional, clinical, and policy decisions with the purpose of impacting our students and the constituents they will serve.

Recruitment and Retention of Faculty, Staff, and Students

Recruiting talented individuals from a diversity of backgrounds to join our School of Education as a student, staff, or faculty member is a top priority. Since December 2012, our efforts have produced promising results--our student body progressed from a low of 11% students of color in 2009 to 23% in 2015.

Last year, we began a strategic plan for the entire School of Education, and one of the subcommittees created from this strategic plan was one on diversity. As a part of this subcommittee's efforts, we will be revising admissions procedures to attract more student diversity. For example, our current application (across program areas) includes a fairly standard essay that does not speak to issues of diversity at all. However, we are initiating a change in those requirements across program areas so that all application materials will ask applicants to describe how their own career and educational goals align with and extend the School of Education's mission regarding addressing issues of diversity and equity in education.

Climate

Without a school climate of openness, acceptance, and inclusion our School of Education would not be able to flourish. Our work in the past three years in improving the overall climate

has focused on a number of initiatives. For example, we have designed and distributed a survey for all staff, students, and faculty to respond to, which will allow us to get a baseline assessment of people's sense of the climate at the School of Education. In addition, this survey will allow us to get numbers on the kind of diversity that is represented here at the School of Education

We recognize that there is a difference between an intended culture and members' perceived understanding of the School of Education climate. Following the racially insensitive events which took place on the campus of William & Mary, the creation of the Task Force on Race and Race Relations, and, given the ongoing discussions regarding the importance of a diverse student population, one of our doctoral students studying higher education designed a climate survey. Questions that contributed to this survey design included, "How do members of the School of Education identify themselves regarding multiple aspects of diversity (e.g., gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.)?" "To what extent does the School of Education show its appreciation of diversity in its actions?" and "To what extent are the School of Education members satisfied with the climate?" As a strategic planning initiative, we have distributed this survey and plan to collect data throughout the fall 2015 semester. Data analysis will occur in spring 2016.

In addition, Gail McEachron, Rebecca Beasley, April Lawrence, and Amanda Johnson are collaborating with Jennie Davey (Swem, Special Collections), Ashley Atkins (Pamunkey Tribe) and Danielle Moretti-Langholtz (Anthropology) to design a Virginia Indians Exhibit in the Learning Resource Library. The exhibit is a work in progress and is adjacent to the Hulon Willis exhibit. The exhibit has already received attention by a visitor from Literacy for Life who asked if she could create an exhibit based on her personal artifacts from Korea. We are exploring how we might support this spontaneous desire to share cultural traditions and material

culture in a way that is open to the public in a dynamic fashion as well as continue to maintain the Virginia Indian and Hulton Willis exhibits as permanent collections for students and faculty.

Curricular Offerings

We are currently planning to expand and deepen our curricular offerings that deal specifically with issues of diversity, equity, and access regarding education. For example, a University Teaching Project effort led by Jeremy Stoddard, and included Jason Chen, Jacqueline Rodriguez, and Steve Hanson allowed our School of Education to develop a proposal for a new education concentration or interdisciplinary education minor that will be submitted to the provost in the Spring of 2016. This proposal deals with three areas: (a) global issues in education, (b) race and policy in education, and (c) inquiry and social justice in education. Each of these concentrations is directly aligned with our efforts to expand our curricular offerings to address diversity, and also leverage not only the strengths at the School of Education, but also the strengths of faculty across many disciplines on campus.

Inclusion Efforts and Programming

We have made significant progress on making the building more inclusive and welcoming for transgender individuals. After much consultation we are underway to transform a bathroom on the second floor of our School of Education building to be a gender-neutral bathroom--one in which any individual can use the bathroom in complete privacy.

Our student leaders are active participants in campus-wide climate initiatives and diversity and inclusion programming. The Graduate Education Association and the Inclusion and Diversity Committee (comprised of 10 students), governed by graduate students for graduate students, continue to develop and administer programs at the School of Education that promote an acknowledgement and understanding of diversity in our community. The Profiles of

Diversity webpage (<https://education.wm.edu/about/diversity/profiles/index.php>) highlights the diversity of students and faculty here at the school and their points of view of the climate and culture within our community. The profiles from this webpage will be displayed on a first-floor bulletin board in the building so that visitors and those in our community can see a visual representation of the School of Education's efforts to promote diversity.

We have had several panel discussions where faculty members and students have shared their research and service projects that relate to diversity and inclusion. We also had an event at the beginning of this year that we plan to continue where we asked students, faculty, and staff to think about what else defines them besides being a member of the School of Education community. We used a hashtag in the hopes of connecting this idea with social media (#andIalSOE: the SOE connects with School of Education).

The Inclusion and Diversity subcommittee will also hold another forum in tandem with the GEA where international students will share their thoughts on recent global events and what it means to be a Muslim student at the School of Education. The purpose of this constructive forum is to allow these doctoral students to share their experiences as Muslim students, explain their needs as international students, and discuss what they believe the School of Education and its students, faculty, and staff can and should do to support international students who may experience racism or misconceptions within and/or outside of the School of Education community.

The School of Education is proud to have also invested resources in establishing a Holmes Scholar Program in partnership with the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE). The program is co-directed by two, diverse School of Education faculty, one of whom is an alumna of the program. Holmes Scholars are high achieving students who are

from traditionally under-represented backgrounds pursuing doctoral degrees in education. Scholars are selected based on their achievements and their commitment to equity and diversity. William and Mary Holmes Scholars enjoy the benefit of mentorship at the collegiate and national level, professional development opportunities, and enriching peer relationships. Through Holmes's affiliation with AACTE, William and Mary scholars are invited to present their research at the AACTE annual conference as well as participate in the AACTE Holmes Scholars Summer Policy Institute and the AACTE Day on the Hill where they advocate for equity in education nation-wide.

Professional Development

Professional development opportunities that individuals at the School of Education have created include a recent grant that three doctoral students won from William and Mary's Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. The grant is the IDEA grant (Innovative Diversity Efforts Award), and will provide \$1,500 to create professional development opportunities for pre-service teachers at the School of Education. Emphasis will be placed on culturally responsive methods and approaches for teachers, counselors, and school leaders. The workshop will be held in March, 2016, and will include keynote speakers and workshops focused on working with diverse learners and families. The goal is to teach participants to leverage individuals' strengths, and move away from a deficit model of teaching.

Other initiatives include the Gifted Center's Camp Launch, which brings high-ability students from low-income backgrounds to William and Mary's campus during the summer. The institute trains teachers and camp counselors to interact with diverse learners who are also highly academically advanced. The camp is funded by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. The vision for this camp is to facilitate the optimal development of all gifted children.