

Forum on Inclusive Excellence Summary Comments

Roughly 600 Comments were received from 28 Tables and divided into the four Inclusive Excellence areas.

Access and Success

Recruiting

- Examine bias in faculty/staff recruiting and hiring, noting that people in positions of authority represent majority perspectives
- Involve more members of the campus community in recruiting underrepresented students: colleges, departments/schools, NCR campus, and (particularly underrepresented) alumni, faculty, and students.
- Fund more scholarships: other universities have more; and student debt load is a concern
- Inventory and develop more recruiting initiatives with HBCUs. Examine bias against HBCU students
- Support existing pipeline programs and build new ones, particularly pre-high school initiatives. We have model pipeline programs (CEED, Achievable Dream, Virginia CAREER Views, Math Corps)

Retention

- Provide trained mentors across the board for faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students, and inventory existing mentoring models (CEED, Departments – Music, etc.)
- Facilitate access to childcare for faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students
- Give attention to overloading faculty of color with assignments related to diversity
- Identify a safe place for faculty to report bias or discrimination
- Support family needs (partner benefits, partner placement, parental leave, childcare)
- Promote a more supportive, inclusive environment for international and domestic graduate students
- Understand and support the needs of different cultures and nationalities (language, transportation, research restrictions)
- Promote advising, support, transition and inclusion for new students from underrepresented groups

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

- Recognize strengths and resources: current generation more open to difference; common book project; International Street Fair; Division of Student Affairs diversity dining programs, dialogues, music, and programs/services
- Broaden the concept of a "Hokie" to include diversity and difference
- Promote recognition by predominantly white faculty, staff, and students of the value of engaging with diverse populations; take positive steps to cross cultural boundaries; and build greater sophistication regarding cultural differences
- Increase the number of events/activities that are connected and purposeful; provide opportunities for intercultural collaboration: master calendar; weekly diversity email for students.
- Recognize family needs: family-oriented social events; childcare; and the needs of post-docs and graduate students as parents and family members
- Listen/hear/understand stories and experiences of people of color: respect for faculty of color authority and expertise; feeling unwelcome; building walls; being singled out as representatives of race in the classroom; needing a safe space for dialogue, and to air complaints and frustrations.
- Survey international communities; avoid survey exhaustion; facilitate better distribution and engagement around climate survey results
- Specific needs: Women's Caucus, Transgender health Clinic, funds for Special Collections LGBTQ Oral History Project
- Plan further dialogue around the model: to promote change, increase communication and build relationships among groups; and as an addition to existing events, such as the International Street Fair
- Recognize the role of extracurricular conversations: between peers, in residence hall dialogues, lounge meetings, Mentors for Violence, and MPS Intergroup Dialogue. Could these be extended to the classroom environment?
- Bring other groups to the table to engage in meaningful dialogue
- Engage the local government/community to support an increasingly diverse populace. The demographics of the local area could be regarded as a limitation, but there are also strengths (town/gown, YMCA, Dialogue on Race)

Education and Scholarship

- Build incentives and emphasis on inclusion and diversity in academic programs and the curriculum: in majors, the classroom, curriculum for liberal education, and first year experience
- Recognize the role of Africana Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Judaic Studies, Race and Social Policy, diversity minors, inclusive and international pedagogy, study abroad experiential learning, common book, in advancing inclusion and diversity in the curriculum
- Expand experiences such as study abroad to students who cannot afford it
- Encourage and promote the scholarship of diversity, especially by underrepresented and women scholars. Legitimate the role of inclusion and diversity as priorities, in promotion & tenure, and on FARS
- Acknowledge and understand the limitations facing faculty and graduate students in conducting their scholarship.
- Examine equity in hiring, pay, and promotion for scholars from underrepresented groups
- Recognize faculty expertise and scholarship in diversity and inclusion (and organizational change)
- Engage people at the college and department level where they spend most of their time
- Promote training:
 - At all levels, for university leadership, department heads, faculty, staff and students
 - On the model, for mentoring and advising, for search committees, on inclusive pedagogy, and about best practices within the university
 - With outside speakers and experts
 - For the Diversity Development Institute to be encouraged, incentivized, required, funded, expanded, recognized as part of the FAR

Institutional Infrastructure

- Promote accountability: "Score card" for the board of visitors; consequences when diversity goals are not met; for recruitment; for Principles of Community; on performance measures; for the model and metrics; from offices/people not present at the forum; for climate; in performance evaluation (FARS and P&T); at all levels, from the top
- Provide resources to demonstrate investment in inclusion and diversity: dedicated resources for colleges, new diversity personnel, existing and new initiatives, awards and incentives, faculty development, course releases, new course development, speakers, programs such as the LGBTQ oral history project, more cultural centers
- Create real and measurable outcomes for initiatives on inclusion and diversity based on planning and goals, data, and measures such as FARS and Promotion & Tenure
- Communicate and disseminate information regularly: internally to the model; about existing inclusion and diversity programs, diversity data and climate survey results; newsletter, website, and social media
- Clarify the model and provide greater understanding. There was concern about lack of involvement from CEOD. There is hope for more participation and dialogue around the model. There was also concern that the inclusion coordinators and council members have full time jobs, for which inclusion and diversity would be an add-on
- Address concerns about lack of representation in the model: scholars of inclusion and diversity, undergraduate and graduate students, staff, community members, caucuses, other colleges, and non-white individuals and groups
- Consider concerns about the lack of a central hub, central support, and a centralized function to address campus wide issues
- Engage others who need to be involved in the dialogue: students, males, and other who are not as engaged with inclusion and diversity. The forum was viewed as encouraging and positive
- Plan more forums and follow through on the comments from this forum to demonstrate that the conversation was genuine
- Engage the existing infrastructure, including caucuses, student organizations, college diversity committees, university development, and multicultural alumni associations
- Demonstrate a more visible and intentional commitment to inclusion and diversity at all levels, beginning at the top