

AWARENESS & COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

- Cheryl Beverly - Learning, Technology & Leadership Education, College of Ed.
- Alysia Davis - Director of Student Engagement, Honors College
- Barbara Hetzel - Associate Director, Title IX Office
- Kylie Mirabella - Alumna, Graduate Assistant
- Hannah Robinson - Alumna, Former Employee
- Xaiver Williams - Student
- Kerri Wilson – Admissions



Charles May, Leadership Council

TITLE: Planning — Beyond the Task Force on Racial Equity

PROBLEM:

Both internal and external audiences tend to think of task forces and committees as “all talk.” This echoes skepticism about racial equity work and presents a communications (perception) problem as well as an organization/procedure (reality) problem for the TFRE and for JMU.

RECOMMENDATION:

Now that we are well into the work of this new task force, the Awareness and Communication Working Group recommends that we promote both a perception and a reality of the TFRE as a task force that not only walks—briskly!—but also [prioritizes](#) transparency and accountability. Specifically:

FOR TRANSPARENCY: For key constituencies to have a positive impression of the racial equity work being done at JMU, they need to know what it is, and they also need to know that there are plans for follow through, even if those plans might change. Therefore, we recommend that the task force leadership begins sharing those evolving plans and whatever goals have been established. (If those plans and goals are not yet in development, we recommend those discussions begin post-haste.) Further, we recommend (and would fully expect) that this communication will be delivered from the center out, such as the co-chairs first, working group co-chairs next, working group members next, on-campus constituencies next, then the wider JMU and external/community members last.



Silvia Garcia Romero, WG CC



Khalil Garriott, WG CC



Karen Risch Mott

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FOR ACCOUNTABILITY: We also recommend that TFRE leadership determine and share the principles and processes by which the work of this task force will be measured and then carried forward. Examples: Where does the responsibility for follow through reside? How will our work be shared both internally and externally? If there is to be no final report, what will there be? Might all recommendations be aggregated? Status on each shared? Tallies made? What plans are ongoing/already in existence for racial equity work after the task force concludes its [work](#) ?

RATIONALE:

Clear, early and ongoing communication builds audience perceptions of openness, eagerness and seriousness about racial equity. It can strengthen trust and confidence in JMU's commitment, as well as ensure that working group members are aware of how the work they begin will be meaningful and sustained beyond their service with the TFRE.

SUCCESS:

We'll know what TFRE leadership intends to happen after the task force concludes its work. We'll know how to ensure both transparency and accountability.

A fully formed communication plan will define key constituencies and important channels, establish a timeline with milestones for distribution, provide messaging, anticipate challenges, and identify those responsible for implementing the plan -- with an emphasis on ensuring its sustainability over time.