



## Minutes for the Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 22, 2018

10:30am-12noon EST

CH103 or via conference call

### In attendance:

Will Alexander (Faculty, WCYA), Hal Colston (VCFA Trustee), Aldrena Corder (GD alum), Erica Hare (CFO/Exec. VP for Admin.) – *chair*, Yoly Mancilla (WCYA student), Lauren McCall (MC student), Thatiana Oliveira (Assistant Director, VA), Jericho Parms (Associate Director, MFAW) – *chair*, Tamara Perkins (Film student), Jennifer Pun (MFAW student), Jenn Renko (Program Director, GD), Jennifer Skinder (Program Director, MAT/MAADE), Valentyn Smith (W&P student), Jessica Stratton (VA student)

*Guest:* Brittany Powell (Assistant Director, MAT/GD)

### Absent:

Tasheka Arceneaux-Sutton (Faculty, GD), Rick Baitz (Faculty, MC), Ann Cardinal (Director of Student Recruitment), Tristen Click (GD student), Trinie Dalton (Faculty, MFAW and W&P), Jimmy Henderson (GD student), Samuel Kolawole (W&P student), David Markow (VP for Student Services), Cori McCarthy (WCYA alum), Liz Patton (Faculty, MAT/MA), Kristelle Ulrich (MAT student)

- *Updates:* Co-chairs reported there is a newly drafted Statement of Purpose ready for final review. Committee members discussed additional edits to include the word “equity.” A final revision has been included on the VCFA Diversity & Inclusion website.
- Co-chairs reported efforts are underway to reinstitute on site staff trainings. Erica reached out to Kathy Johnson of CQ Strategies who is working on a proposal for trainings that might supplement existing online Title IX trainings for students and faculty.
- *Review of dashboard of student/faculty demographics:* The Draft Diversity & Inclusion Dashboard in the shared Google drive now includes comparative data from the US Census as well as Institute for Higher Education Graduate School Statistics. A second tab has been included to reflect VCFA program-specific data as well.
- The Committee discussed overall observations, including how the program data is skewed in large part due to the imbalance in the larger writing programs. The Committee discussed ways to approach setting goals and highlighted the importance of expanding the range of past data in order to begin to identify patterns, etc.  
*ACTION ITEM: Co-chairs will follow up on collecting data prior to Fall 2016.*
- The Committee discussed the need to reevaluate VCFA’s approach to recruitment and expand outreach to underrepresented groups. The Committee identified two primary areas of focus as top priorities: 1) increasing the diversity of program faculty, and 2) assessing the role of and potential for scholarships to contribute to diversity in a more substantial way.
- The Committee also reviewed the importance of updating the ways in which we collect data in order to encourage greater response rates.
- *Diversity & Inclusion Survey questions:* Circling back to a previous agenda item, the Committee reviewed the question of a Diversity & Inclusion Survey that would be issued annually to students, faculty and staff. The purpose of the survey would be twofold: 1) to address a lack of

current faculty and staff data, neither of which is routinely collected, and 2) to expand our approach beyond demographics and data points to include questions that speak to the environment of inclusion at VCFA. The Committee re-expressed support for this idea.

*ACTION ITEM: Committee members will brainstorm and send 2-3 questions you'd like to see included in an annual survey to (a) all VCFA students, and (b) all VCFA faculty members. Please send questions directly to Erica and Jericho at [diversity@vcfa.edu](mailto:diversity@vcfa.edu)*

- *Update on The "Alumnx" Exhibition:* Brittany Powell, Assistant Director of MAT and Graphic Design, was in attendance to deliver an update on an upcoming exhibition, a collaboration between VCFA and the Vermont Studio Center, which will showcase alums of both organizations in a group show juried by Meg Onli, whose work and research focused on race and the intricacies of visual and cultural representation. Complete details and the call for submissions are currently posted on the [VCFA website](#).
- *New business:* Graphic Design Program Director Jennifer Renko raised the question of how best to report out as a Committee to our larger community of staff, students, and faculty. The Committee agreed that transparency and inclusion were top priorities in how we move forward with committee work, and determined that making minutes public was an important step toward those goals.

*ACTION ITEM: Co-chairs will follow up on posting Committee meeting dates and minutes to the VCFA website, and will communicate to staff and programs once those updates are in place.*