

Report of the VIMS 2019 Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Executive Summary

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force was established by the Dean and Director in late December 2018. There were five elements in the charge to the Task Force: (1) Identify, analyze, and update issues that are most important in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion as produced in the detailed 2016 Diversity Report and Action Plan; (2) Recommend, on the basis of this work, the high priority and high value actions that are achievable and measurable for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, noting recent steps that have already shown positive outcomes; (3) Ensure that one component applies specifically to hiring underrepresented minority faculty at VIMS; (4) Engage Chon Glover, Chief Diversity Officer at William and Mary (W&M), as a resource when needed, and utilize ongoing work by the VIMS Diversity and Inclusion (Dive-In) Committee, recognizing that they are responsible for long-term implementation; and (5) Keep the Dean and Director informed of progress, and complete and submit a report to the president, provost and chief diversity officer no later than June 30, 2019.

The VIMS DEI Task Force used the nine goals established in the 2016 Diversity Action Plan as a framework for this report. The approach was to highlight briefly what has been accomplished since 2016, then provide recommendations for moving forward. Given that there was a recent VIMS-specific diversity survey (2016) and a W&M-wide survey that included data specific to the VIMS climate (2018), the VIMS DEI Task Force elected not to plan, distribute, or execute an additional formal survey for meeting its charge. Rather, the Task Force used comments and recommendations from informal survey data, together with the 2018 W&M climate survey, to assess campus climate as it relates to DEI. Focus on the nine areas established as goals in the 2016 Diversity Action Plan resulted in 26 specific recommendations in the following pages of this report.



Background and Institutional Context

Institutional Mission, Goals, and Principles of Community

The mission of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science is to seek and broadly communicate knowledge in marine and coastal science to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation and the world through research, education, and advisory service. Our goals are to: (1) make seminal advances in the understanding of marine and coastal systems through research and discovery; (2) translate research findings into practical solutions to complex issues of societal importance; and (3) provide new generations of researchers, educators, problem solvers, and managers with a marine-science education of unsurpassed quality. Our success in achieving these institutional goals requires an open, diverse, and inclusive environment, one that supports the growth, creativity and development of faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Our mission and institutional goals are most effectively accomplished when every member of the VIMS community acknowledges and adheres to the following *Principles of Community*:

- We believe that diversity and inclusion are critical to maintaining excellence.
- We recognize and appreciate the roles and contributions each member of the community brings to the success of VIMS.
- We welcome, support, engage, and celebrate the broad range of backgrounds and experiences in our community.
- We affirm our individual and collective responsibility for creating and fostering a respectful, cooperative, inclusive, and equitable campus environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.
- We treat all members of the VIMS community, as well as collaborators, work groups, stakeholders and the public, with civility, respect, and courtesy.
- We value honesty and integrity and are committed to lawful and ethical behavior.
- We are personally responsible for our actions, how we treat others, and the way in which we do our jobs.

Diversity Statement

As an academic institution created to serve the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia, we are committed to enhancing diversity and inclusion within VIMS, W&M, and the field of marine science. Our commitment to diversity is underpinned by the above *Principles of Community*. We recognize that diversity goes beyond ethnicity and gender to include differences in sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, cultural identity, age, religion, political and ideological viewpoints, physical and cognitive ability, and more. We are committed to embracing these differences, to overcome historical circumstances and social structures that have produced imbalances in power, privilege, and opportunity, and to facilitate thinking in new ways about how to structure our institution for an increasingly diverse and inclusive future.

Diversity Goals

Beginning in late summer 2015, VIMS engaged in a year-long self-study and “campus conversation” on diversity and inclusion. As part of the process, we documented key aspects of diversity on our campus, examined a broad range of institutional processes, structures and procedures that may enhance or limit diversity and inclusion, and researched best practices for

supporting and enhancing diversity and inclusion at academic institutions and in the workplace. These efforts have allowed us to better understand our campus climate, to document where we are in our efforts to achieve diversity and inclusion, and to identify areas for improvement (VIMS Diversity Report, September 2016). Using our own findings and the recommendations of the President's Task Force on Race and Race Relations (April 2016), we developed the following overarching goals to enhance diversity and inclusion at VIMS.

- I. Ensure an inclusive, welcoming, safe, and supportive work environment by establishing and enforcing policies that are informed by and promote the above *Principles of Community*.
- II. Effectively communicate the commitment of the VIMS leadership to increasing diversity and inclusion in our institution and in the broader field of marine science, and to creating a working environment at VIMS that is free of harassment and discrimination.
- III. Attract, develop, and retain increasingly diverse administrators, faculty, students, and staff.
- IV. Develop leadership at multiple levels that is itself diverse, builds the capacity for open and candid conversations on diversity and inclusion, and ensures that, whenever possible, institutional policies, processes, and procedures facilitate diversity and inclusion.

As an institution with a strong tradition of public outreach and education that goes beyond the traditional role of an academic institution, we identified an additional goal:

- V. Reach an increasingly diverse audience with education programs and outreach services.



The 2016 Diversity Action Plan outlined nine goals to enhance DEI at the VIMS. These goals are to: (1) Establish Diversity and Inclusion Committee; (2) Enhance Awareness and Communication; (3) Modify Recruitment and Hiring Practices; (4) Expand Minority Student Recruitment Efforts; (5) Diversify Internal Committees; (6) Diversify VIMS Foundation Board; (7) Diversify Public Outreach Efforts; (8) Additional Opportunities; and (9) Benchmark Diversity and Inclusion.

About the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

The VIMS DEI Task Force was established by VIMS Dean and Director John Wells in late December 2018 to examine best practices and provide the VIMS Administration, W&M Chief Diversity Officer Chon Glover, W&M Provost Michael Halleran, and W&M President Katherine Rowe with recommendations on ways to improve DEI at VIMS, specifically, and W&M, generally. The VIMS DEI Task Force and similar groups representing all schools at W&M, was charged with developing and recommending tangible and immediately implementable products aimed at increasing diversity in faculty hiring and fostering a diverse and inclusive campus climate. It was intended that the VIMS DEI Task Force would work closely with the Dive-In Committee, formalizing many of the initiatives started by that committee, while also developing new strategies for furthering and maintaining DEI at VIMS. The VIMS DEI Task Force, a short-term ad hoc committee, serves as a complement to the Dive-In Committee, who will be charged with implementation of recommendations as approved by Dean and Director Wells.

Approach by Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

The VIMS DEI Task Force investigated the VIMS campus climate through various opportunistic surveys of faculty, staff, and students and also used the nine goals established in the 2016 Diversity Action Plan as a framework from which to make recommendations for improving DEI at VIMS. Regarding each of the nine goals, the VIMS DEI Task Force Report recognizes the accomplishments made since 2016, and provides recommendations to move forward. Included is a brief explanation of each recommendation, a proposed plan for implementation, and caveats that need to be considered when planning to effect change.

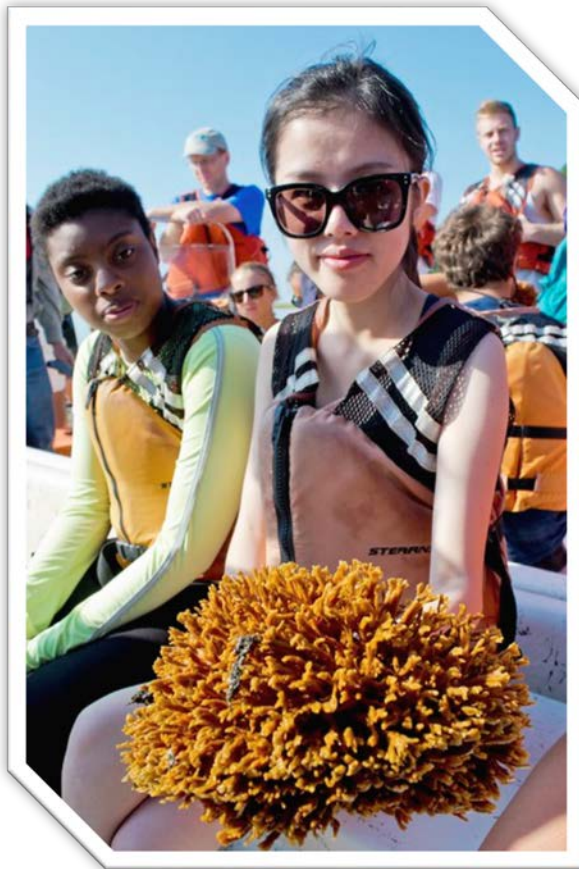
The VIMS DEI Task Force Report was completed with input from the eight DEI Task Force Members, external reviewers, and VIMS Administration. Given that there was a recent VIMS diversity survey (2016) and a W&M-wide survey that included data specific to the diversity climate at VIMS (2018), the VIMS DEI Task Force elected not to plan, distribute, or execute an additional broad-scale survey for its purposes. However, they took advantage of opportunities to collect informal thoughts and opinions on issues of DEI at VIMS. These opportunities were targeted so that all VIMS constituents were represented. The VIMS DEI Task Force Report summarizes the data collected from these disparate sources.

Task Force members met weekly to discuss each of the nine goals from the 2016 Diversity Action Plan, record progress, and develop possible additional actions and recommendations. Subgroups were formulated to further vet recommendations through research and conversations with the VIMS community. The DEI Task Force reconvened with the results and recommendations outlined in this report. Also incorporated is a summary of comments and recommendations received from four external reviewers.

Comments from Survey Data

Campus Climate

The core of the questionnaires delivered during training sessions (for members of faculty search committees), Allyship Workshop (presented by Roxie Patton – Associate Director, Center for Student Diversity), All Hands Meeting (for staff in the Department of Facilities Management), and online surveys (for students as well as Professional and Professional Faculty) reveal mixed, but strong indications of the climate for diversity issues on the VIMS campus. Most open-ended comments on informal questionnaires suggest satisfaction with VIMS, though suggestions and ideas for improvement for climate were solicited.



For the questionnaire for facilities staff, 82.5% of respondents (n = 27) answered positively to the question, “Do you feel welcomed and included in the VIMS community?”, with two respondents answering both “yes” and “no”. In response to both the questions, “Do you feel you are treated with respect by your supervisor?” and “Do you feel you are treated with respect by others?”, 92.6% of respondents answered positively, with an additional four individuals answering both “yes” and “no”. Some example responses to the question, “What can we do differently to make you feel more welcome and included in the VIMS community?” include:

I enjoy the Dive-In socials – it gives the community a great chance to meet others that you wouldn’t normally get a chance to.

I think improving in recognizing and promoting professional skills is important.

And to the question posed to facilities staff, “How can we at VIMS make our campus a safer and more welcoming place for people of all backgrounds, experiences, and identities?”, some example responses include:

I believe [supervisors] should be required to participate in diversity and inclusion training. I don’t think my supervisor is aware of the importance of such values.

Provide advancement and training for all people; team building exercises as a group/department; address issues when they arise.

With regards to the questionnaires given to faculty search committees, two of the post-training questions related to information and perceptions gained during the training, and one was more open ended, relating to campus diversity issues. Sample responses to the question, “How can we at VIMS continue to promote diversity?” include:

Black out names/genders on applications at first; be more aware of microaggressions throughout conversations, especially when conducting interviews; make [bias] training required for all search committees before the job ad is released.

Training faculty on how to create inclusive learning environments both as teachers and as advisors.

Work to bridge gaps among the different departments (i.e., facilities, admin, faculty) with social events and workshops.

Hire faculty and staff of color and support the people of color already here at VIMS and make them feel valued and part of the community.

Participants in the Faculty Search Committee training modules and the Allyship Workshop were encouraged to take the Harvard Implicit Association Test prior to attending the training sessions. As a result of this suggestion, 73.7% and 56.2% of groups, respectively, had taken one or more of the available modules of Harvard Implicit Association Test at the time of the workshop. Faculty Search Committee training participants (n=15) took between one and six modules. The most frequent modules were Gender in Science and Race modules. For the Allyship Workshop participants, Race, Gender in Science, and Gender in Careers were the most frequent implicit association tests that were taken.

The results from VIMS employees of the University-wide climate survey require further analysis and consideration. However, upon a first pass through, it is clear that VIMS has made progress as it relates to DEI initiatives. Positive and negative open-ended comments included:

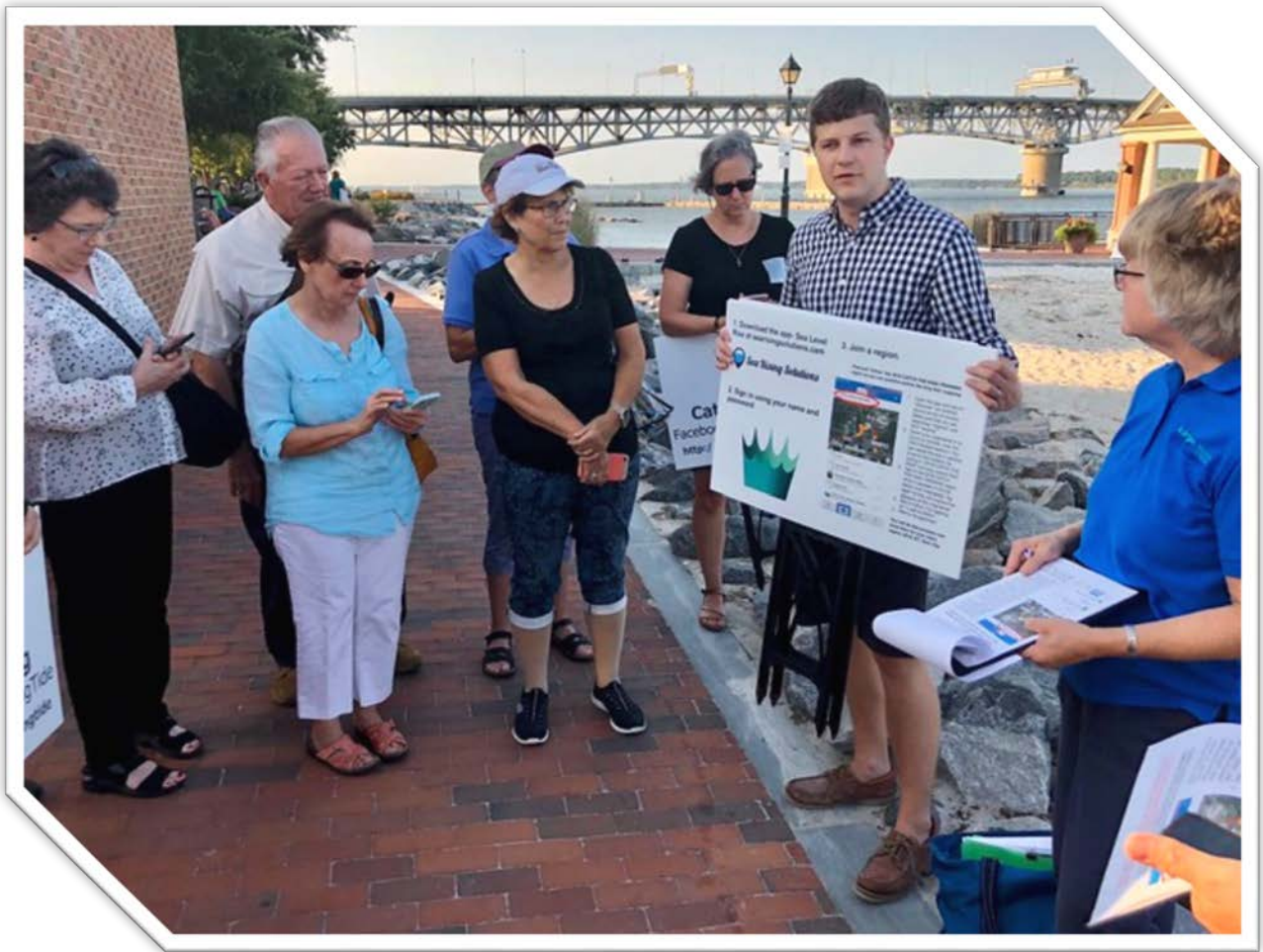
I believe that the increased emphasis on diversity and inclusion is a very good thing. However, I also feel that in the process of trying to include others outside W&M, those of us that are already here are often left out/excluded/not appreciated for our diversity.

... the college seems to not have made a genuine commitment to hiring diverse faculty, and seems to be hung up on traditional metrics of success. It would be well served to take the example of other institutions and think outside the box a bit on this.

Hire qualified faculty of color regardless of the need in a specific discipline. We are more in need of underrepresented faculty than we are over-subscribed in any particular discipline.

There is a lot of good talk about improving diversity and inclusion, but workshops/talk tend to be attended by those who are already on board. W&M tries to be diverse - but they are not inclusive. ...A true diverse organization that breeds inclusivity, is one that is diverse from the top down.

Review of the campus climate resulted in 26 recommendations from the VIMS DEI Task Force.



Task Force Recommendations

The VIMS DEI Task Force used the nine goals previously outlined in the 2016 VIMS Diversity Action Plan to frame the recommendations being presented herein. The degree of difficulty in implementing specific recommendations under each of these nine goals varies considerably.

1. Establish Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

The Dive-In Committee was successfully formed in December 2016. In large part, since the development of the Dive-In Committee, efforts have been directed towards creating trust, open discussion, dialogue, and awareness among the diverse VIMS community, which serves as the necessary foundation upon which successful efforts will move forward. Although the Dive-In Committee has been quite active and highly visible at VIMS, there is the perception that the activities of this committee have been somewhat isolated in the broader University community.

1A. Develop a W&M Diversity Group that includes representatives from each school.

The group should include two or three members from each school (e.g., Diversity and Inclusion Committee Chair, someone from Senior Administration), W&M Chief Diversity Officer, and the Provost (or designee) with plans to meet semiannually. To fully capture the mission of this group, it is important that the members have common goals and aligned ideals.

Explanation. The goal of these semiannual meetings would be to discuss activities across the university and increase coordination among the schools. A charge for each meeting could include both a review of the accomplishment(s) of each school since the prior meeting and discussion of current/future goals, with the expectation that specific, actionable activities be presented. This group could also promote a seminar series centered on diversity in higher education, including at least one marine scientist speaker from an underrepresented background. The speaker could possibly conduct one-on-ones with the VIMS community.

Implementation. The implementation of these meetings would fall under the auspices of the W&M Office of Diversity & Inclusion, following the model of the “diversity boot camps” that have been held in the past, one of which is planned for September, 2019.

Nine Goals from 2016 Diversity Plan

1. Establish Diversity and Inclusion Committee (p. 8)
2. Enhance Awareness and Communication (p. 9)
3. Modify Recruitment and Hiring Practices (p. 11)
4. Expand Minority Student Recruitment Efforts (p. 16)
5. Diversify Internal Committees (p. 18)
6. Diversify VIMS Foundation Board (p. 19)
7. Diversify Public Outreach Efforts (p. 20)
8. Additional Opportunities (p. 23)
9. Benchmark Diversity and Inclusion (p. 25)

Caveats. These meetings are relatively low-budget (e.g., provide lunch). Meetings would require attendance and active engagement. W&M and VIMS administrators would have to demonstrate commitment through financial support and visibility.

2. Enhance Awareness and Communication.

VIMS has made great strides in enhancing awareness and communication of diversity and inclusion issues by instituting the Dive-In Committee in 2016. The Dive-In Committee has a small budget (\$3,086 FY 2019) for events that promote diversity and inclusion. There are many “grass roots” efforts to support participation from many members of the VIMS community. There is also dedicated support from the VIMS Administration to sustain these events and extend partnerships with the W&M Office of Diversity, Office of Student Diversity, and the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities.

In February 2018, the first quarterly Dive-In Digest was sent out to the VIMS community. In addition, the VIMS Administration has changed their monthly Faculty Digest (sent previously only to teaching and research faculty) to a VIMS Digest (sent out to the entire VIMS community). The VIMS Office of Academic Studies also sends a monthly digest to students as well as teaching and research faculty. These publications keep the VIMS community informed.

Finally, the *Principles of Community* are widely posted throughout the VIMS campus and the community is generally responsive and interested in diversity and inclusion events at VIMS and W&M campuses.

2A. Expand communication about Title IX resources.

Explanation. Although W&M requires Title IX training through Haven for faculty, staff, and students, it is important for Title IX information to be expanded on the VIMS campus through new faculty, staff, and student orientations.

Implementation. Ensure that Title IX resources are highlighted in new faculty, staff, and student orientations with semiannual dissemination of resources and reminders throughout the academic year. Increase the prominence of these reporting links on institutional webpages, ensuring that the VIMS community is fully aware of how to report incidences to VIMS and W&M personnel. It is also important for VIMS and W&M to assess and implement tangible measures to address gender-based harassment (specifically in the case of advisor-student situations) based on focus groups and survey results regarding the topic.

Caveats. Be clear on who would be responsible for the dissemination of this information on the VIMS campus (e.g, Dean and Director for new

faculty; Senior HR Partner for new employees; Associate Dean for Academic Studies for new students; and reminders through both the VIMS and Academic Studies Digest at the beginning of each academic year). Further, there must be willingness of the VIMS community to openly discuss gender-based harassment, while also acknowledging unequal power dynamics.

2B. Ensure unit leaders disseminate information obtained during monthly and quarterly meetings with VIMS Administration, to include messaging about DEI.

Explanation. It is generally perceived that unit leaders are communicating information received from VIMS Administration at their regular meetings, but it is also evident that this communication chain is broken and is not consistent throughout campus. Related to this, unit heads need to lead by example, particularly when communicating the importance of diversity and inclusion issues by attending events that support these topics as well as continually supporting and encouraging their employees to attend them. Encourage full participation on all levels.



Implementation. Unit leaders are expected to disseminate information received from VIMS Administration and create an atmosphere where their employees feel comfortable attending Dive-In Committee events (to also include events held on the W&M campus). It would be helpful if unit leaders mention these educational opportunities in their regular meetings, as this will demonstrate their support and encouragement for employees to be engaged. When unit leaders attend diversity and inclusion events, it is expected that they will share takeaways and explore opportunities to enact changes in their respective units. Encourage unit leaders to partner with the Dive-In Committee to host a Pop-Up Socials in their areas.

Caveats. Unit leaders need to be fully engaged and promote a positive attitude for the goals of DEI-related events and training, as any dismissive feelings could produce a tense environment.

2C. Include a link to Dive-In Digest in the VIMS Digest.

Explanation. Notification of the latest Dive-In Digest is currently sent out from the generic Diversity and Inclusion email account.

Implementation. Ensure that, in addition to sending the notification from the Diversity and Inclusion email account, a link is included in the next version of the VIMS Digest. Further, it is important to provide more than one medium for the VIMS community to be aware of the accomplishments of the Dive-In Committee and upcoming events. Explore distributing/posting limited copies of the Dive-In Digest throughout the VIMS campus, recognizing that not all personnel use email.

Caveats. None noted.

2D. Coordinate with Diversity and Inclusion leaders within each W&M school to highlight educational opportunities.

Explanation. Some diversity and inclusion opportunities are included in the W&M Digest days or weeks before the event.

Implementation. The Dive-In Chair can serve as the point of contact for diversity and inclusion leaders within the schools. Coordinating with a diversity and inclusion leader within each school to learn about opportunities in advance would allow early communication to the VIMS community and the ability to coordinate transportation for more people to attend, if needed. Not only will this information be communicated in the W&M Digest but also from the VIMS Diversity and Inclusion email account, Dive-In website, Dive-In Digest, and VIMS Digest.

Caveats. None noted.

3. Modify Recruitment and Hiring Practices.

The faculty and students at VIMS have limited diversity that does not represent the Nation's population. For example, in 2015, VIMS faculty comprised less than 25% underrepresented minorities and 32% female (from 2016 Diversity Report), while the US population was 37.9% minority. Although diversity is low among the faculty and students at VIMS, there is a recognized need and desire to enhance it. Hiring more diverse faculty may help attract more diverse students and would contribute to the academic environment by enhancing disparate views and approaches to our mission. Although our staff and student populations have greater diversity than the faculty (e.g., currently the student population is 65% female), additional measures in our recruitment and hiring practices would enhance efforts to increase inclusivity at all levels of the institute.

To date, VIMS has instituted several diversity competency measures in its hiring practices. These measures have included diversity training for search committees

involved in hiring new faculty, a statement on diversity as part of the application materials requested from prospective faculty applicants, and advertising more broadly for new faculty positions. Further, the Dive-In Committee has recommended the inclusion of a trained Search Advocate on future search committees, and this is currently being evaluated at the level of the W&M Office of Diversity (e.g., exploration on the mechanics of instituting such a program across the university). Although these measures have been recently directed at faculty hires, they should be implemented at all levels of recruitment and hiring. Several of the below recommendations would add to diversity competencies.

3A. Require diversity training for all hiring managers and search committees.

Explanation. Few of the personnel at VIMS have received training in creating equal opportunities for prospective job applicants. Issues such as inherent gender or racial bias, microaggressions, and gender- or race-specific language often go unrecognized in the new-hire selection process.

Implementation. As with Title IX training, enhancing the visibility and need for DEI training would make significant improvements in identifying these issues. Training modules are already available for promoting diverse faculty hires. These could easily be implemented as a requirement for all personnel involved in the recruitment and hiring process at all levels (including HR representatives) with completion required before a job ad is finalized. Training would be valid for one year. Explore offering additional trainings that go beyond those for individuals serving as a search committee member. Hire someone who specializes in sensitivity training, addressing biases, and inclusive teachings.

Caveats. The modules are expensive or have had limited network access, thus putting heavy demand for recent training on a few individuals. Funding should be made available to identify suitable training modules and meld them into existing software packages used for delivery of training modules on other topics. Additional staff positions would require funding support from VIMS Administration.

3B. Request a separate diversity statement of all prospective faculty members.

Explanation. Applicants of current faculty searches were asked to address DEI in their teaching or research statement, but a separate diversity statement was not required. However not all candidates followed this instruction, and, while this absence may have been discussed or used by individual search committees in their decision process, those candidates that did not address DEI were still considered to have submitted a complete application. A separate statement is viewed as a critical component of the application materials (vs. addition of this topic in

combination with another requested statement), as this will allow the search committee to clearly evaluate applicants with regard to diversity.

Implementation. Diversity statements have become standard documents requested as part of applications for many colleges and universities. These statements are intended to describe how the applicant’s teaching, service and/or scholarship has supported the success of individuals from racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds that are underrepresented in an academic field; applicants who have not yet had the opportunity for such experience can note how their work, background, experience, and vision will further VIMS’ commitment to diversity. Utilize ‘examples of diversity’ document developed by the Dive-In Policy Sub-Committee. Continue to solicit feedback from the W&M Office of Diversity & Inclusion to ensure that all candidates are vetted appropriately.

Caveats. Possible resistance by search committees to request additional application materials.

3C. Make requirements for job listings less specific ensuring that there is not unintentional gender-specific terminology.

Explanation. Job listings for certain positions are often written with very narrow, very specific requirements that could limit the applicant pool (e.g., experience in ICP-MS required). Although this is done to show the level of training that is sought in the position and to justify the position level to human resources personnel overseeing the creation of positions, it also hinders applicants with significant experience who may not meet the very narrow standards, but who would otherwise qualify (e.g., BS or MS in Chemistry, in the above example).



Implementation. The idea is to increase the pool of qualified applicants by carefully crafting the wording of job duties and training requirements to broaden the scope of potential applicants. Simple solutions may include changing wording in job listing such that “required” training becomes “preferred” experience (e.g., Master’s degree required could be changed to Master’s degree preferred).

Caveats. Human resources personnel would need to be flexible in creating new positions or approving new hires such that salary levels and skill sets be retained at levels appropriate for

the intended work. Provide these individuals with the necessary DEI training so that they are effective in providing guidance to hiring managers.

3D. Add required diversity-related supplemental questions to job postings.

Explanation. Although PeopleAdmin already has a list of various questions that can be used to assess applicants, such as “what type of boating experience do you have”, there are no standardized questions regarding DEI available. They have to be created for each new job search.

Implementation. A standard list of questions should be developed, by the W&M Office of Diversity & Inclusion, as a separate dropdown list in PeopleAdmin. Hiring managers should be required to have at least one or two DEI questions in each job listing. This approach highlights the University’s commitment to DEI.

Caveats. Some customization to PeopleAdmin may be required. Resources from both W&M Human Resources and Office of Diversity & Inclusion would be required to develop and vet questions. Training will be needed on how to ask DEI-related questions and how to evaluate the answers, as well as the weight that is given to the responses as it can be easy to dismiss or undervalue these questions in the broader context of skills or 'fit'.

3E. W&M should have a reference document on best practices in hiring.

Explanation. Hiring practices have changed over the years, sometimes even within a year or two. For hiring managers with few staff or limited staff turnover, it can be difficult to wade through the hiring process for a new hire. A reference document on best hiring practices and a flow chart on the process would facilitate the understanding of diversity and inclusivity.

Implementation. The W&M Office of Human Resources should develop a short reference document on best practices in hiring that includes a step-by-step flowchart to the hiring process. The document must be updated any time there is substantial change.

Caveats. Limited resources in the W&M Office of Human Resources may prohibit immediate implementation and continued revisions when process changes take place.

3F. W&M Office of Human Resources should provide training on the search committee process to include having difficult conversations, particularly as it relates to serving as a DEI advocate.

Explanation. Search committees are often comprised of small groups of co-workers that may have an unequal power dynamic (i.e., supervisor, staff, student; or full professor, associate professor, assistant professor). This can sway the discussion to “favored” candidates rather than considering other qualified candidates with equivalent experiences.

Implementation. The Dean and Director or hiring manager, who provides the search committee charge, should continually reiterate throughout the search process the importance of ensuring that all voices and opinions are heard and given consideration. The W&M Office of Human Resources could provide search committee training on how to address difficult conversations, particularly when there are power dynamics involved.

Caveats. Limited resources in the W&M Office of Human Resources may prohibit immediate implementation and continued revisions when process changes take place.

3G. Share widely and update periodically best practices for advertising.

Explanation. Targeted advertising ensures that job searches reach a broader audience and may improve the applicant pool with respect to diversity.

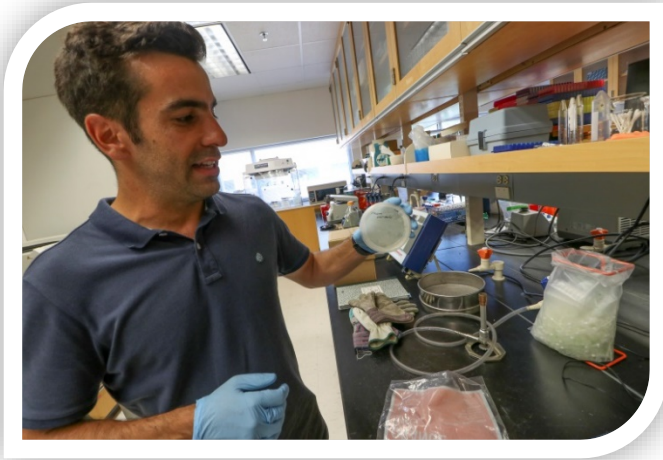
Implementation. Continue to maintain and expand a list of suggested places to advertise job postings to be used by hiring managers. The Dive-In Committee, with support from W&M’s Office of Diversity & Inclusion and Office of Human Resources, could develop such a list. Also advertise through social media sites.

Caveats. Funding constraints may limit the number of resources in which to advertise. A list of potential websites, distribution lists, and groups should be developed to facilitate more broad advertising. Continued guidance from human resources personnel would be needed and they are severely understaffed at this time.

3H. Improve diversity of search committees.

Explanation. Search committees represent a cross section of VIMS and, as a result, could have limited diversity. Improving diversity on search committees would enhance the likelihood of increasing diversity at all position levels.

Implementation. Ensure that hiring managers have exhausted all possibilities for diversifying the search committee.



Caveats. Currently, there is limited diversity at certain position levels, and therefore a truly diverse search committee would be impossible. Committee fatigue could become an issue if the same people are selected to serve repeatedly. Although the search committee may not always be diverse due to limited personnel who fit the criteria, most search committees, at least for faculty and higher-level administration positions, allow opportunities for candidates to meet with personnel throughout the VIMS community. This will

require discussions with administrators at W&M and VIMS to identify internal funding for supporting diversity initiatives.

3I. Seek new avenues to increase diversity of teaching and research faculty.

Explanation. The faculty at VIMS has limited diversity. Ensure new hires expand diversity at the faculty level.

Implementation. Explore networks that will provide more insight on how to hire marine scientists from diverse backgrounds. Research how other institutions, particularly those who have STEM-related programs, have been successful in diversifying their faculty.

Caveats. Resources are needed to support personnel, possibly in consultation with a recruiting firm, who could focus on this in-depth process beyond what has been done in the past.

4. Expand Minority Student Recruitment Efforts.

Many of the objectives outlined in the 2016 VIMS Diversity Action Plan have been met regarding initial goals to expand minority student recruitment efforts. Expanding representation of underrepresented groups provides opportunity for building an inclusive community of different perspectives and experiences at VIMS. There is strong representation of female students at VIMS (currently 65% female), including the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program (with an average of 70% female between 1997 and 2015). The Office of Academic Studies at the W&M School of Marine Science plays a pivotal role in expanding minority recruitment efforts. Recent restructuring of the office to include an Assistant Director of Academic Studies for

Admission and Student Affairs will assist in enhancing diversity efforts among the incoming graduate student body, as this is formally part of this position description.

4A. Create recruiting pipelines through partnerships with minority serving institutions and professional societies.

Explanation. It is important to increase the presence of minority students within the W&M School of Marine Science in order to broaden the scope of scientific research and perspectives at VIMS. The presence of underrepresented minorities at VIMS is low, emphasizing the necessity to expand minority recruitment efforts. VIMS and the W&M School of Marine Science already have an established REU program funded by the National Science Foundation that makes strong efforts every year to increase representation of ethnic minorities into its incoming cohort.

Implementation. We suggest continuing to strengthen the recruitment of ethnic minority students in the REU program and at VIMS generally by continuing to build links with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), specifically Hampton and Norfolk State universities, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Successful recruitment of students from underrepresented groups could be enhanced through development of a program that delivers a quality introductory coursework for minority undergraduate students to the sciences at W&M and VIMS. This program could be modeled after the Cornell University Diversity Preview Weekend (<http://www.inclusivecornell.org/>). The aim of Preview Weekend is to introduce attendees to the scientific research programs the year before they apply to graduate school. The two-day event at VIMS would expose students from underrepresented groups to the people, facilities and opportunities that make up the scientific departments at W&M and VIMS.

Finally, we suggest re-evaluating the GRE requirement given its costs (\$208), which may be difficult for students of lower incomes to afford, and statistical evidence indicating GRE score is not predictive of student success in the graduate program. Many graduate programs across the United States are now removing GREs as an application requirement. Although the weight given to GRE scores is very low compared to other aspects of the application (letters of recommendations, GPA, etc.), we suggest reassessing the necessity of GREs in the admissions process.

Caveats. In order to remove barriers to attend, most costs for recruitment programs should be supplemented by W&M and VIMS. Limited financial (Office of Academic Studies and faculty funding) and human resources. Potential lack of student interest in VIMS may be due to its location but appropriate marketing (e.g., highlighting low cost of living relative to

other leading marine science schools) can help one to overcome this potential challenge. Equal investment should be made in recruiting and retaining students.

4B. Expand teaching methods to address varied learning styles.

Explanation. DEI should be incorporated when building a curriculum. Attention should be given to diversifying course delivery and expectations, taking into consideration that people process information differently.

Implementation. The Academic Council (AC) can review new and existing curricula to ensure that varied teaching styles are used so that all students will be successful. Department chairs should encourage faculty to take advantage of professional development opportunities to expand knowledge related to multiple teaching strategies. A new Center for Teaching Excellence is planned at W&M, and will be open to faculty and graduate students at VIMS; this will increase opportunities for faculty to attend teaching workshops. There is also the need to ensure faculty are aware of different cultural backgrounds and promote an inclusive community to support them (e.g., culturally competent).

Caveats. Limited financial, time, and human resources.

5. Diversify Internal Committees.

Of the 12 active standing committees at VIMS with administrative directives, four are made up solely of members who are elected by faculty or staff (Faculty Council, Faculty Status & Tenure Review Committee, Academic Council, Professionals and Professional Faculty Committee), and three others whose membership is determined entirely by employee position (Administrative Council, Emergency Management Team, Accident Review Committee) and, as such, the membership of these seven committees is not within the purview of the VIMS Administration.

There are three committees whose membership is determined partly by employee position and partly by appointment (Awards Committee, Diving Control Board, Parking Advisory



Committee), and two committees with all members appointed by the Dean and Director (Radiation Safety Board, Vending Commission Discretionary Committee). (Note: Data for the Dive-In Committee are not considered, as this committee is not included in these numbers as it was established at the end of 2016.)

Nine of the above committees have a membership that is majority males with only three that have membership which is more than 50% females (Professionals and Professional Faculty, Awards Committee, and Vending Commission Discretionary Committee).

In comparing change in committee composition between July 2016 (the basis of the 2016 Diversity Plan) and July 2018 (representing the current committee composition), all but one committee, the Academic Council, had essentially the same male/female composition (Academic Council changed from female-dominated to male-dominated). Most of the committees were overwhelmingly white, although this reflects in part the racial makeup of the faculty and the racial makeup of the other committees where composition is partially or entirely due to the employees' position. However, four committees showed a modest increase in underrepresented minorities between 2016 and 2018 (Academic Council, Administrative Council, Emergency Management Team, and Parking Advisory Committee).

5A. Revisit the ability to balance committees along gender, racial, and other axes of diversity.

Explanation. Most committees considered here have changed little along gender and racial lines between 2016 and 2018, and there is room for improvement. Tracking this balance should be done every 2-3 years. Data are unknown for ad hoc committees.

Implementation. When considering membership for committees, gender and ethnic diversity should be considered important criteria. Attention should also be given to gender and ethnic diversity of ranks within committees with varying power dynamics (e.g. avoid appointing all white males as the faculty representatives to a committee of faculty, staff, and students). Data for ad hoc committees need to be collected and synthesized, as these committees often play crucial roles in administration and policy development.

Caveats. Employees can elect not to disclose their demographic information which would result in uncertainty in data. Composition of seven of the 12 committees considered here is beyond the control of the VIMS Administration. It will be important to not overburden individual employees with too many committee assignments in an effort to enhance diversity of committees generally.

6. Diversify VIMS Foundation Board.

The VIMS Foundation was incorporated in 2000 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and to support the mission of VIMS and the W&M School of Marine Science. It does so by building endowment funds to support institutional needs, professorships, and student fellowships. The VIMS Foundation also holds funds to support current program needs at VIMS, and holds unrestricted annual funds to support VIMS' greatest needs in the current year. It provides a means for those interested in marine science and education to support these fields through direct gifts or to leave a legacy through bequests and planned giving vehicles.

Over the last few years, the VIMS Foundation Board converted from a 60-member organization (council, campaign committee, and board) to an 18-member board. Throughout this transition, the board has been developing a strategic plan. Because of this recent change, further diversification of the board should be done gradually as replacements are needed.

6A. Continue efforts to diversify the VIMS Foundation Board.

Explanation. Over the past few years, the VIMS Foundation Board has been intentional about diversifying its membership by focusing first on recruiting board members who are younger and identify as women. The goal is to increase board membership to include ethnic and gender diversity.

Implementation. Identify potential candidates for board service that would enhance diversity and inclusivity. Network with potential candidates so they know our mission and can engage with the institute in the future.

Caveats. None noted.

6B. Have a DEI-related presentation at least once a year.

Explanation. The DEI presentation will expand the board's knowledge related to this topic and demonstrate VIMS' commitment to DEI at all levels.

Implementation. Relevant DEI training should be woven into at least one board meeting annually, providing board members an opportunity to discuss pathways forward into diversifying the board. An aspect of this could be promoting opportunities for specific projects to advance diversity initiatives that individual board members could support.

Caveats. None noted.

7. Diversify Public Outreach Efforts.

VIMS has recently developed an educational workgroup through a “SeaChange” initiative. SeaChange personnel held a workshop to collect feedback from the VIMS community about how we can better reach diverse audiences with the goal of increasing diversity in STEM education and outreach. SeaChange also hosted a community engagement forum to educate the Gloucester community about VIMS and obtain feedback from them about how to better engage their constituents.

The VIMS outreach and education staff recently hosted a diversity and inclusion training session. Efforts are being made to enhance the outreach program by:

- making a conscious effort to include diverse people in advertising materials and resources that VIMS produces;
- including inner city schools in flyer distribution for Marine Science Day;
- participating in local and regional festivals with wide audiences such as Mathews May Faire and the Hampton Blackbeard Pirate Festival;
- partnering with area museums similar to current partnership with the Mariners Museum in Newport News that brings VIMS programming to Newport News school children; and
- recruiting diverse volunteers including regional undergraduate students and members of the public.

7A. Support efforts of the “SeaChange” program.

Explanation. Several outreach activities were suggested in a recent workshop, including having a VIMS traveling van that could go to schools, churches, libraries, Lions clubs, etc., to reach audiences that typically do not visit VIMS or attend Marine Science Day.

Implementation. Delve deeper into the workshop recommendations and establish a plan to move forward with some of the suggestions.

Caveats. Resources would be needed for additional personnel, materials, and van/bus. There may be opportunities for enhanced outreach programs through funding agencies.

7B. Increase communication with VIMS principal investigators about ongoing activities involving community groups that could interact more with VIMS scientists.

Explanation. Increased involvement of VIMS scientists from all units on campus is desired. However, some activities from the outreach or advancement groups are unknown to faculty and staff until after the event has occurred, if at all. Increased communication could facilitate volunteering by scientists to become involved in outreach events.



Implementation. Provide regular communication of upcoming outreach activities that afford VIMS personnel the opportunity to participate in and/or pass along to potentially interested groups.

Caveats. Coordination may require more time of existing outreach staff. Inclusion in the VIMS Digest would be ideal.

7C. Continue efforts to engage communities outside of Gloucester and Mathews counties to bring underserved kids, families, and adults to VIMS.

Explanation. VIMS hosts a number of events that may not be accessible to communities outside of Gloucester and Mathews counties. Expanding the outreach to other communities will bring awareness of VIMS and potentially build the pipeline for marine scientists from

underrepresented backgrounds.

Implementation. Distribute flyers more broadly. Be aware of potential transportation concerns of people in outlying communities and plan programming accordingly. Hold VIMS After Hours-type lectures at other locations (e.g. community colleges).

Caveats. Resources would be needed to create additional flyers and personnel to distribute them. Vehicles may be needed to bring in people from outlying communities. Some venues may require fees.

7D. Engage with affinity societies that have existing networks of diverse constituents.

Explanation. Existing organizations (e.g. Chambers of Commerce for Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asian Americans) could help VIMS connect with diverse people who may not be aware of marine science and the benefits to society.

Implementation. Identify contacts at each of these societies. Commit to regular contact to ensure a lasting relationship.

Caveats. Resources needed for personnel.

7E. Enhance communication and interaction between the W&M Office of Diversity and public-facing groups (e.g. VIMS Outreach, Marine Advisory Program, and News and Media).

Explanation. More engagement with existing diversity experts (e.g., personnel from W&M Office of Diversity) could help to better educate and assist VIMS groups that are tasked with advertising or sharing media to the public. The W&M Deputy Chief Diversity Officer has been very helpful and responsive in the past but additional interactions would be desirable. Those who are non-experts in diversity could use advice on how to best include underrepresented groups, quantify diversity in our programs, and maintain awareness of any potential biases.

Implementation. The university could create a position within the Office of Diversity & Inclusion that is tasked with maintaining regular contact with all W&M schools and outreach groups. The person in this position could schedule related training and regularly review materials prior to public posting. The person also could travel among the different units as a service to the entire W&M community.

Caveats. Resources needed to fund additional personnel in the W&M Office of Diversity & Inclusion.

8. Additional Opportunities.

Five additional opportunities for increasing DEI were highlighted in the 2016 VIMS Diversity Plan. Four out of the five opportunities have been addressed since 2016. Progress of the four opportunities and a recommendation for the one additional opportunity not yet addressed are listed below:

Pursue funding to offer a minority fellowship or postdoctoral position modeled after the highly-successful Hall-Bonner Program at VIMS.

VIMS partnered with Hampton University and Old Dominion University in the Hall-Bonner Program for Minority Doctoral Scholars in the Ocean Sciences. In addition to support provided by VIMS, Hall-Bonner Scholars were eligible to receive additional funding for tuition, research, and travel and were expected to participate in a pre-enrollment summer course that eased the transition to graduate studies and provided exposure to a variety of research experiences. As a part of the program, scholars participated in enrichment and career-building activities, including special seminars, research cruises, teaching, community-outreach, academic employment preparation, and attendance at scientific society meetings.

8A. Explore funding opportunities that will assist in offering a minority fellowship or institutional postdoctoral fellowship.

Explanation. The goal of the Hall-Bonner Scholars Program was to increase the diversity of students earning doctoral degrees in the marine

and ocean sciences by creating a genuine community of minority ocean scholars.

Implementation. Work with other organizations, agencies, and academic institutions to expand funding opportunities made available to minority doctoral scholars to potentially include fellowship or postdoctoral positions. Other possible avenues would be to examine options within 4-VA and find a partner institute (e.g., ODU, GMU, UVA, JMU, VT) within the college network, including teaching and scale-up grants. Further, models for institutional training grants such as NIH NRSA program and USDA WAMS may provide a good framework for similar programs at VIMS. Also, NSF programs such as INCLUDES may be appropriate for VIMS to apply.

Caveats. The Hall-Bonner Scholar Program was administered by Hampton University. Limited funding was available. There are limited human and financial resources to fully administer another program or collaborate/coordinate with other organizations that may have available funding.

Explore opportunities to create a “commons area” where the VIMS Community can congregate.

In 2018, “The Galley” was opened as a communal space for VIMS personnel to eat, craft, play board games, and engage in fellowship. In addition, The Galley is the location of the new Community Food Pantry where snacks and beverages are made available for anyone who has a need. The two newest buildings on campus have incorporated kitchen areas or break rooms for the VIMS community.

Offer flex time and non-traditional work hours to attract and accommodate non-traditional employees.

Employees currently have the opportunity to work a flexible, nontraditional work schedule as allowed by their supervisor and job duties. In addition, effective May 2016, W&M instituted a telecommuting policy that applied to both campuses. Encouraging supervisors to communicate and support these types of benefits is imperative.

Identify and communicate professional development offerings to allow career advancement.

All Professionals, Professional Faculty, Operational, Classified and Part-Time Staff are eligible to use Development Funds that are provided by the VIMS Administration and administered by the Professional and Professional Faculty Council (PPFC). The purpose of the Development Fund is to offset costs associated with travel, online courses, certification or other appropriate professional development expenditures. In FY19, the VIMS Administration provided \$70,000 which was used to support 83 eligible employees. Additional work is needed to encourage supervisors commit matching funds for all eligible

employees. In addition to professional development opportunities that the employees are able to find on their own, employees should be encouraged to attend workshops hosted by the W&M Office of Human Resources and the W&M Cohen Career Center.

Establish an “employee of the quarter” or a “featured employee of the quarter”.

The Dive-In Committee has established a Community Bulletin Board in Waterman’s Hall (the VIMS administration building) to highlight the accomplishments of employees. A new section of this board, which will also be reflected in the VIMS Dive-In Digest, highlights employees from diverse backgrounds.

9. Benchmark Diversity and Inclusion.

VIMS Administration is encouraged by the campus’ participation in the 2018 W&M Climate Survey (72% participation), which was a substantial increase from 52% in 2015. However, the goal of 100% participation remains.

In the fall of 2018, the Dive-In Committee began to examine VIMS hiring data over the past 10 years; these data are still being analyzed, but suggest continued improvement in hiring faculty from diverse backgrounds can be made.

9A. Continue to evaluate progress towards goal attainment through careful data collection and monitoring and ensure there are no drastic changes in data collection method so that comparisons can be made from one year to the next.

Explanation. Benchmarking DEI efforts is imperative to understanding progress (i.e. 2018 W&M Climate Survey; 2019 VIMS Student Satisfaction Survey).

Implementation. Devise a standard data collection form that is populated annually. The Dive-In Committee will work with the administrative units and standing committees to develop specific metrics to benchmark diversity and inclusion. The Office of the Dean and Director will make benchmark data and other key indicators of goal attainment available to the VIMS community on an annual basis. Ensure LGBTQ+ and other kinds of diversity in data collection are included. Also track newsletter metrics for the VIMS and Dive-In Digests to get a sense of what links people are clicking and garner an understanding of their interests. In addition, there is value in knowing how many people are clicking various VIMS website links after events.

Caveats. Past data collection methods may have changed from one year to the next which decreases the opportunity to make accurate comparisons. Employees can elect not to disclose their demographic information which would result in uncertainty in data.



External Review Summary

VIMS DEI Task Force members recommended four external reviewers who completed a thorough review of the DEI Task Force Report and other supporting documents. Some recommended changes have been incorporated throughout the Report with additional recommendations noted below.

Ms. Keiara Auzenne, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, was selected so that VIMS could gain perspective of another marine science institution. Ms. Auzenne communicated, “Overall, a very impressive and comprehensive plan! You all have done some really good work.” Additionally, she proposes:

- Monitoring both the distribution of Professional Development Funds and usage of telecommuting benefits to ensure everyone from the various staff levels and units are accessing. Assess discrepancies and ensure unit leaders are encouraging eligible employees to take advantage of these opportunities.
- Ensuring that Dive-In sets SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goals when moving forward with the DEI Task Force recommendations.

Dr. Benjamin Cuker, Hampton University, was selected because of his extensive history of collaboration with VIMS on issues of diversity and familiarity with diversity issues in the field of marine science. His expertise as a faculty member at an HBCU was deemed valuable. Dr. Cuker stated, “I applaud your group for developing an excellent report. It is well organized, identified problems and provided potential solutions.” Moreover, he recommends:

- Generating a more specific accounting of VIMS demography. Rather than lumping all non-majority people together as minorities, it would be useful to have a breakdown by ethnicity.
- Considering a program to recruit diverse underrepresented recent PhD graduates into institutional post-docs that would prepare them for tenure-track faculty positions at VIMS.
- Considering the efficacy of breaking out a sub-group to work specifically on underrepresented by ethnic groups, and broadening efforts to expand to other aspects of diversity (e.g., people with diverse abilities, sexual orientation).

Dr. Michael “Rocky” Parker, James Madison University, was selected because he is chair of the diversity committee for the American Society of Ichthyology and Herpetology, and his role as an advocate for diversity issues at local and national levels, particularly with regard to LGBTQ+ issues. He mentioned, “VIMS has achieved many of their goals since 2016 and laid out a great framework for improving the work environment and culture at the institution. Although more change is needed, VIMS is definitely headed in the right direction.” Dr. Parker further noted:

- One major aim of the university-level diversity initiatives needs to be institutional change, not at the level of individual faculty. Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) has great resources on how best to implement such change.
- A diversity statement component to faculty applications should be a requirement for a complete application. Simply asking for it does not give it value.
- There is need for prioritizing creation of internal support structures (e.g., mental health services, support groups, professional development opportunities, networking, and employer recruitment sessions) for all students but with an eye on structures that will primarily support underrepresented students. This will ultimately support retention of underrepresented groups in marine science.
- There is a need to increase the diversity of the VIMS Board, and provide opportunities for individuals from underrepresented groups to become advisors to the Board.
- Two key hires should happen at the staff level:
 - Director of Diversity Programming and Outreach, to orchestrate opportunities to advertise the science occurring at VIMS and then bring in people from these communities to be on the ground at VIMS in various volunteer capacities; this person would also report to the Dive-In Committee and provide info that is eventually communicated to the W&M Office Diversity & Inclusion.
 - DEI Training and Compliance Officer to serve as an administrator who would deliver DEI training to individuals in departments/programs and create a network of trained DEI representatives who would serve on hiring committees; could also create a pipeline for moving representatives to training officers if they were sent to intense boot camps at national centers to learn what the DEI training and compliance officer does.

Dr. Kersey Sturdivant, entrepreneur, was selected because of his familiarity with VIMS as a PhD graduate and minority. He indicated, “In general, I think it’s admirable that VIMS is attempting to address this issue...if VIMS is serious about diversity and inclusion, this document needs to be objective and honest about where VIMS stands in that realm and best practices moving forward.” Dr. Sturdivant suggests:

- A major priority in all accounting for diversity initiatives at both the VIMS and W&M levels should be the careful collection and analysis of data. For example, it is important not to conflate different aspects of diversity (e.g., women and minorities) within diversity metrics. “In general, the goal of this document should not be to make VIMS feel good about diversity, but should be an honest and objective appraisal of how VIMS is doing in this arena.”
- Ensure there is some regularity for conducting DEI surveys, specific to VIMS, to assess performance and cultural shifts (if any).
- Ensure goals from DEI “super group” has buy-in from the president or provost to have some form of incentive for meeting goals set, with the idea that there needs to be a reward for real change and effort.
- Increase in funding support for DEI Initiatives. “If VIMS/W&M values diversity, back it up with finances...people are aware of what a lack of financial backing means as it relates to how serious an institution is about a program.”