

**DEI Task Force Meeting**  
**3/6/19**

Present: Eric Hilton, DaNika Robinson Will Benton, Rochelle Seitz, Emily Hein, Jeff Shields, Tricia Thibodeau, Laur Ferris (Phone)

**Reviewed Minutes from 2/27**

**Discussion of Diversity Plan Goals**

Discussion of Goal 4. *Expand Minority Student Recruitment Efforts*

- Grad school in marine science experience for undergraduate students as an introduction to VIMS/VIMS visibility; geared primarily for underrepresented groups. Modeled after Cornell's Diversity program (<http://www.inclusivecornell.org>). Make this a student run program (with limited faculty involvement; in contrast to the VIMS Post-doc Committee model, which is faculty run with limited postdoc environment). Could this be an opportunity to develop a hybrid VIMS recruitment and outreach? MIT does a similar thing, at an undergraduate level, for students as a "preview weekend" (e.g., undergrads live with a student for a weekend, introduced to the campus, etc.). What would be the target audience? (sophomore, juniors? Maybe seniors, if not going directly to grad school? (Cornell's targets students that are looking to apply to grad schools in the following fall/winter). Questions such a program could answer: what does it mean to do scientific research? Is grad school for you?
- Increase ties to HBCU and EPSCoR schools
- Increase recruitment efforts at national meetings – develop more effective outreach (booths/posters/fliers) for distribution at conferences and university research symposia and meetings. Need to identify travel funds to support this type of initiative. Advertise Gloucester's cost of living on the VIMS website/flier to emphasize that, although the stipends are not as high as other places, cost of living is often lower.
- Is increasing the diversity of the applicant pool the answer to the increase of diversity among graduate student recruitment? Yes – it was recognized that having a larger/more diverse pool is a good thing. BUT, need to recognize that faculty funding will always be a limitation to increasing the student population and its diversity.
- Address ableism in curricula (e.g., recognize different learning styles are common, but courses often don't adjust for this). Task the AC with the charge from the 2016 Diversity Plan to look into this. For instance, all core courses might include some small group project as well as exams, etc. Need to offer/better advertise/encourage faculty to take advantage of professional development opportunities. Are prereqs a limitation for some who might otherwise excel?

**DEI Task Force Meeting Agenda**  
**Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 9:00**  
**D/D Conference Room**

Conference Bridge Call-In Info:

Local – 804-684-7600 (VIMS or ESL can dial 7600)

Toll Free – 1-833-236-8467

Conference ID: 7006#

Conference Password: 3326#

**1) Review minutes of Mar 6 meeting**

**2) Discuss VIMS Diversity Action Plan**

- Pick up from Goal 4 discussion and proceed through goals

**Meeting Goal**

- Complete discussion of Goal 4 (expanding minority student recruitment efforts)
- Discuss potential recommendations related to Goals 5 and 6 (of 9) of the diversity plan: diversifying internal committees, and diversifying the VIMS Foundation Board.