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| **Committee Members 2018-2019** | **Abe Goldberg** (POSC) *James Madison Center for Civic Engagement;*  **Anthony Togan** (MATH) *Interim Vice Provost for Research and Scholarship;*  **Colleen Walker** of *Graduate Student Representation*;  **Eric Fife** (SCOM) *Committee Co-chair*;  **Georgia Hanigan** of *Undergraduate Student Representation*;  **Jack Knight** of *University Legal Services*;  **Kate Morris** of *Libraries and Education Technologies*;  **Lori Britt** (SCOM*) Institute for Construction Advocacy and Dialogue*;  **Meg Mulrooney** (HIST) *Associate Vice Provost of University Programs*;  **Steve Reich** (HIST) *Committee Co-chair*; and  **Weston Hatfield** of *Advancement* |
| **Sub Committee** | History & Content |
| **Co-Chairs & Attendees (ending status and changes from last year)** | Eric Fife and Steve Reich (co-chairs)  **Membership:** Added undergraduate student Georgina Hanigan for the spring 2019 semester, based on her role as a dialogue facilitator for the undergraduate student dialogue described below. Lost Yvonne Harris for 2018-2019, added Anthony Tongen (who has assumed part of Yvonne’s role at the university).  Also added Lori Britt, based on her work with the student dialogue and the expectation of other dialogues later this year. All other faculty/staff members from the original committee remain engaged, including graduate student Colleen Waller. When David Owusu-Ansah became co-chair of the task force as a whole during 2018-2019, Steve Reich was appointed working group co-chair. For the record, this group was very well-chosen and each member made a significant and unique contribution to our efforts, including its newest members (Britt and Hanigan). |
| **Meeting Dates (Please include the Diversity Conference)** | Committee activities during 8/25/18-4/22/19.  We met nine times during this academic year. Co-chairs also have remained in regular contact with task force co-chairs and participated in overnight retreat at Montpelier. Task force co-chairs also met three times and co-chairs of the working group met on many occasions. We also continued an ongoing email dialogue. |
| **Summary of Accomplishments (focused on 2018-2019)** | **Transparency:** [The Breeze](https://www.breezejmu.org/) published an article focusing on our work.  We’ve developed a web site through JMU Libraries which will include content related to our work, and of course provided task force-related content for the President’s page on the JMU site. The group presented and interacted with many members of the JMU community in the spring during two sessions of the [Diversity Conference](https://www.jmu.edu/diversity/programs-and-events/diversity-conference-index.shtml) on March 13 2019. Faculty senate was also aware of our efforts, and we were consulted when Tim Miller proposed naming the new dorm in honor of Paul Jennings. We encouraged the university to consider a more thoughtful, inclusive and transparent process for future naming/commemorating opportunities.  **Student Involvement:** With one undergraduate and one graduate student member, students have also been very involved through our work with Lori Britt’s SCOM 447 class (Fall 2018; see additional information below) and Meg Mulrooney’s HIST 396 class (Spring 2019).  Lori’s class took on the undergraduate-focused dialogic forum as its primary year-end project, and the specific group assigned to our forum met with one of the co-chairs regularly toward the end of the fall semester.  Meg Mulrooney visited that class and gave a well-received lecture on lesser-known (and less positive) aspects of JMU’s history, so they’d have a context for the forum. Lori also recruited several students from 447 to help facilitate dialogues in the spring, including the forum which involved DEEP Impact as a partner (see additional information below).  **Dialogues:** During the second academic year of its existence, the working group scheduled three dialogues. In the fall semester, the group set up the [November 13, 2018 dialogue](http://www.jmu.edu/icad/) with approximately 80 undergraduate students, facilitated by students from SCOM 447 with Lori’s guidance. Separately, Lori facilitated a dialogue including only students from that class, since they are now “experts” in their understanding of less public aspects of JMU’s history and the issues associated with that historical context. Full reports from both groups are included in this final report (see appendix A and B). Student-constructed thematic analysis of the first large group dialogue suggested several themes: the desire to learn more about JMU history (possibly through a class), the importance of faculty/staff training related to historical issues and diversity/inclusion more generally, the importance of being transparent about that history, some frustration with how JMU has handled diversity/inclusion issues in the past, and some discussion about renaming Ashby, Jackson, and Maury.  The working group also designed a second student dialogue in conjunction with DEEP Impact on April 15, 2019. Final themes from that conversation are not yet available, but 34 students participated in a survey related to the forum and those responses are attached (see appendix C). Student comments largely mirrored those from the earlier dialogue. Across both groups, students consistently expressed concerns about building names once they were made aware of the history behind those names.  Finally, the working group designed a Flash Dialogue for faculty and staff on March 29, 2019 through the Center for Faculty Innovation. Faculty/staff comments emphasized transparency and having an inclusive process for commemorating activities, which would involve a reconsideration of existing practices (see appendix D). |
| **Recommendations** | The working group believes it is vital that certain efforts of this group continue. To that end, we’d like to propose two general recommendations and several specific, immediate next steps.   1. The university should increase educational activities related to its own history. Part of that effort must involve actively seeking to better understand its history, as William and Mary did as part of the Lemon project. Minimally, the university should also provide additional efforts aimed to provide historical information about itself to larger groups of students, as students in dialogues consistently noted both their lack of understanding of JMU history and their interest in learning more. These efforts could take place around Madison Week celebrations in a classic lecture format, but could also involve artistic performances and/or classes (ideally, but not necessarily, general education courses in History) as a way to enhance student understanding. The committee is firmly committed to the idea of students as stakeholders in ongoing naming/commemorating decisions, and informed stakeholders will be both more engaged and more thoughtful in their participation. 2. The university should continue conversations regarding approaching future commemorative activities (naming, statues, artwork with historical themes, and other activities) thoughtfully, transparently, and with opportunities for participation by any relevant stakeholders. We believe stakeholder participation should be meaningful and have the opportunity to inform and influence new proposals at the earliest stages of their creation and development.   Specific recommendations:   1. The president should immediately create a standing committee designed to consider future commemorating requests, with its charge including examining current building names. Specifically, the committee should, during its first month, consider ways to approach the current Jackson Hall as it undergoes year-long renovations. For the working group, this renovation represents a perfect opportunity to consider the future status of that building/name moving forward, though other names (including, but not limited to, Maury and Ashby) should also be considered. The committee should also recommend a thoughtful process for how future requests should be considered, including revision of policy 5103 (“Naming Opportunities”). Though the working group did not reach a consensus with regard to specific building names, the group does believe that buildings named after Confederate heroes do not reflect the university’s current mission and desired identity. Further, the working group believes that such important decisions, made by any single person without sufficient consultation with appropriate stakeholders, run the risk of creating unintended consequences which might be avoided or minimized by adopting a more thoughtful process (for an example of such consequences, see Appendix E). Committee membership should include multiple stakeholders and must include one or more History faculty members and/or others with a disciplinary understanding of relevant aspects of historical and present context. Meg Mulrooney, whose ongoing scholarship related to JMU’s own history was central to the working group’s process and recommendations over the two-year period of its existence, would also be a vitally important member of that group and has volunteered to be involved. Minimally, current students and alumni must also be part of that group. 2. The administration generally, and the new committee specifically, should be aware of four different broad approaches to commemorating/naming which emerged from the research of the group as a whole and from the expertise of History faculty members on the committee: keeping the status quo, adding context (signage, exhibits, stories), renaming buildings or existing elements which do not reflect current values, and creating new memorials or innovative elements like public art to encourage juxtaposition/exploration. 3. It is vital that the university not lose any momentum it has achieved with the task force as a whole, and as such this working group supports the previous formal recommendation of having an external group conduct a climate study. |

Appendices

1. Reports from large student dialogue, Fall 2018
2. Report from SCOM 447 dialogue, Fall 2018
3. Survey results from student dialogue, Spring 2019
4. Notes from faculty/staff Flash dialogue, Spring 2019
5. Student comments from Madison Center-sponsored tent talks on Paul Jennings Hall and Diversity and Inclusion more generally, Spring, 2019
6. Working group update from 2017-2018
7. Handout from diversity conference, Spring 2018