**JMU’s Legacy of Exclusion: Confronting our past and creating a culture of inclusion**

SCOM 447 Conversation, 11/29/18

We ran a follow-up conversation allowing the student facilitators in SCOM 447 to be the participants and generate their own ideas. Here is a report of that conversation.

Introduction

We asked students, “Why did you become so passionate about this process after hearing Dr. Mulrooney’s talk in our class?”

Eric Fife captured their responses and can speak to what he heard. Largely the students said it is because they were so surprised to learn about the information.

Round One

We asked students to think about:

* What types of audiences do you think would have very different responses and why?
* How do you think JMU can best acknowledge that our history is both good and bad so we can understand who we are and become who we want to be?
* Brainstorm and chart how the information might be presented in such a way that is both sensitive and productive, meaning it moves us toward addressing this is ways that increase diversity and inclusion on campus?

***How and where might we present this information?***

* FRoG week presentation or activity
* Campus material – potty mouth?
* Gen Ed. Class and making it mandatory taught by a good professor (High rate my professor scores)
* Educating Groups who will then share it with others (Ambassadors and Deep Impact)
* More talk on campus with transfer students
* Public announcements on building names
* In History class, give a lesson on the history of JMU
* Greek Life
* Different parts of campus (Madison Union – exhibits on walls with people there to explain it)
* Limited Exhibit (in Festival) – Information needs to be laid out and presented by students (presented with solutions pending and how to get involved)
* Video of where we have been and where we are going
* One Book section on the history
* Lower classroom/women
* More sensitive subject
* “Knowledge is power”
* Stress that what’s done is done, we’re trying to adapt for the future
* Infographics – Animated characters/real people (all different backgrounds) that show the changes and continued potential for positive change
* Hold an Elective class on JMU History/Future
* Lead the way!!!

Round 2

***Discuss what you experience as JMU’s LIVED values regarding diversity and inclusion?***

***What leads you to see these as JMU values?***

Values:

* FRoG week creates an inclusive environment
* Belonging to a Group – lots of letters/sweatshirts with major/organization names or letters
* Inclusion/Exclusion tensions: Greek Life/Multicultural Groups are both inclusive to members and allow people to find their “place” but can also be exclusionary and segregate us.
* Politeness - Door holding, overall niceness, but also has a dark side of wanting to avoid conflict and unpleasantness
* School pride – Purple and Gold everywhere
* Sociability - lot of use of public communal spaces, libraries, SSC, dining halls, etc.
* Authority (No rallies/riots that are actually BIG, requirements to have all flyers approved)

***What types of symbols, structures or systems do we have on campus that ...***

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| --- | --- |
| PROMOTE INCLUSION* Diverse marketing pieces/images
* CMSS/Multi-Cultural Organizations
* Feeling of community
* Addresses blatant acts of racism quickly
* D-Hall showcasing different cultures
* Having discussions and programs about issues of race
* A wide variety of clubs and organizations
* Wide range of concerts
* Orientation
* Dining hall staff itself is diverse
* “Website” showcases diversity
* Valley Scholars
* CMSS
* Politeness
* UREC classes (anyone can enroll and meet new people)
* Football games and tailgating (sporting events in general)
 | FOSTER EXCLUSION* Inaccurate marketing
* Separation of groups (Greek/Multicultural) doesn’t encourage active allies
* Campus is separate from town
* Not a lot of promotion for interaction of different culture
* Binary labels: White v. Minority
* Images/Media/Articles used in teaching may not be intentionally diverse and inclusive
* D-Hall doing it wrong - surface cultural diversity
* Building names
* Organizations - the segmentation
* Student Organizations (SGA, Greek Life, Student Ambassadors) that are not particularly diverse, showcase one dominant way to “be JMU and bleed purple”
* Demographics
* Social pressure
* Politeness (Greek Life/Clubs)
* Panhellenic Recognition (Greek Letters on Apparel)
* Quality of buildings (Harrison v. Jackson) - highlights who matters more (what majors)
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Round 3

***What are some specific actions/plans/goals that you think JMU could explore to expose things that are potentially exclusionary and transform them/transform campus?***

The students created lists in teams an then reviewed all of the suggestions and dot-voted for their top 3 choices. The numbers indicate the support for each suggestion/action.

* Create General Education class about JMU’s history – include discussions (with passionate professor, 8 week course, discussion based) (18)
* Cross-Partners between Greek Life Organizations and organizations and other types of multicultural organizations; Pairing/encouragement of university multicultural programming (15)
* Social media; Include quotes from students, polls from student populations, and show Infographics that make people aware of the past and how we are committed to inclusion today (11)
* Outreach to other cultures and backgrounds (10)
* Include informational video in the One Book (9)
* Have at least 1 campus wide discussion that every must go to (5)
* Have President Alger discuss JMU’s history and where we are going in a video (2)
* Admit more minorities (2)
* Presentation to all majors (club) – 5-8 minutes to maintain audience attention and visuals that create shock value and it needs to be hard to look at (2)
* Documentary that shows the history all time “highs” and then goes into “lows” (1)
* Have students collaboratively paint Murals – where? (1)
* Promote curiosity to learn about JMU’s diversity
* Have a diversity page that is easier to find and is more prevalent
* Host more passport/extra credit events
* Petitions and surveys
* Chalking – JMU advised students not to, tried to silence our voices