To: Faculty Senate, George Mason University  
From: Betsy DeMulder, Co-Chair, Faculty Equity and Inclusion Committee  
Date: April 16, 2020  
Subject: Committee Annual Report to the Faculty Senate

1. Committee Members:  
Betsy DeMulder (CEHD – 2021), Co-chair & Faculty Senator Representative  
Sherrice M. Mojgani (CVPA - 2020), Co-chair  
Xiaomei Cai (CHSS – 2021)  
Kelly Knight (COS – 2021)  
Ricardo Vivancos-Perez (CHSS – 2021)

2. Committee Meeting Schedule  
Meetings were held face-to-face in September, October, November, 2019 and February 2020 and a fifth meeting was held via WebEx in April 2020.

3. Invitees  
Over the course of the two semesters, the following Mason administrators & faculty attended and presented at committee meetings:  
• Milagros Rivera – Director of Faculty Diversity, Inclusion and Well Being  
• Julian Williams – Vice President, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics  
• Christy Pichichero – CHSS Coordinator of College Diversity and Global Education; Faculty representative to BOV Academic Programs, Diversity, and University Community Committee; Faculty Fellow for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (2018-2019)

4. Committee Work  
The work of the committee included the following:  
• Data gathering from invited guests and committee members regarding faculty diversity statistics across the university and within individual units  
• Information gathering – from invited guests and committee members regarding offices, experiences, efforts, events and activities that promote faculty equity and inclusion and/or that reveal disparities and inequities  
• Discussion of Issues/Needs & Action Items. Examples:  
  ▪ Discussion of mission and tasks of this Committee; all the Committee members are committed to equity and inclusion and want to see changes; however, the committee has very little influence university-wide. For example, the Committee had no input into the planning or implementation of Mason’s 2018 Equity Summit that seems to have been a single event rather than an ongoing annual effort.  
  ➢ Recommendations:  
  ➢ Make the tasks of the Committee more clear, tangible and meaningful.
➢ Involve the Committee in more of the discussions and actions across campus to create faculty equity and inclusion.

➢ Commit to an annual university-wide Equity Summit, broadcasting well in advance the opportunity to attend the summit to hear from each college, addressing “What are we doing? and “Is it working?”; make this committee instrumental in the planning and implementation of the Summit.

- Discussion of the multiple committees and offices that are tasked to address equity and inclusion; but few college level representatives.
  ➢ Recommendations:
    ➢ Each college should have a diversity and inclusion representative who coordinates with university-wide offices, including with HR regarding trainings.
    ➢ Work to bridge and connect all of these committees, offices and individuals; centralize the information gathered from these entities and make them part of the Equity Summit.

- Discussion and critique of the COACH survey -- high response, 60%, with positive responses on how diversity issues are prioritized at Mason. Areas of concern included mentoring diverse faculty.
  ➢ Recommendations:
    ➢ Follow up with faculty who have left Mason to gain their perspective/experience on how diversity and inclusion impacted their decision to leave.
    ➢ Prioritize diversity issues, especially at the academic unit leadership level.
    ➢ Committees within units need to be informed about equity and inclusion priorities by top-level administrators.
    ➢ Identity and equity issues are critical, and the new President and Provost will need to be made aware of them.

- Christy Pichichero’s former role as Faculty Fellow in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion included looking into diversity initiatives in universities nationwide. She created a database with sections on faculty recruitment, retention, and renewal, promotion and tenure. She also compiled information about diversity and composition of our student and faculty body.
  ➢ Recommendation: Transparency and data sharing is needed, both at the university level and the college level; information/data about equity and inclusion specifically needs to be gathered and made public.

- Discussion of efforts to hire and retain more diverse faculty. Current faculty search trainings are not sufficient to ensure antibias hiring practices. Faculty perception of committee search trainings is negative. Part of Dr. Pichichero’s work included creating 3-year goals and providing a faculty recruitment guide with best practices. A draft of this guide already exists. Some of the
Recommendations below are in support of the actions Dr. Pichichero has proposed.

➢ **Recommendations:**
  ➢ Build a chain of accountability, like those at other institutions that have these structures in place.
  ➢ Make the recruitment guide a mandatory part of every search
  ➢ Create and implement accountability structures in committee searches.
  ➢ Provide more specific training about every step of the process.
  ➢ Academic unit leaders need to be more involved.
  ➢ Continue to address faculty diversity issues and concerns at the Faculty Senate

- Discussion of concerns about compliance and transparency at the level of top administrators, and the problematic relationship between diversity and profitability.
  ➢ **Recommendation:** Look at what the U of Michigan, a leader in the field, is doing
- Discussion of the extra burden on minority faculty members who are required to serve on multiple committees and sense of tokenism in that participation
  ➢ **Recommendation:** Implement the action plan to establish standard definitions on workload across units, including service overload
- Discussion of lack of opportunities for minority faculty (and allies) to gather informally to learn from each other and to offer and receive support.
  ➢ **Recommendation:** The Stearns Center or an equity-focused office should facilitate regular informal gatherings as a university-wide effort.

**Appendix**

1. During the past calendar year has the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President (or their respective offices) announced initiatives or goals or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of your Committee? If so, was your Committee consulted by the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President in a timely manner before the announcement or action? If not, do you believe your Committee should have been consulted? Would it have been helpful to have had the input of your Committee from the outset?
   - The Committee learned of some equity and inclusion efforts from members of staff that we invited to our Committee meetings, but we were never approached to consult on any of these efforts. We believe that the Committee should be consulted and our input would be helpful on initiatives, goals and acted upon issues of faculty equity and inclusion.

2. Did your Committee seek information or input from the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President or members of their staffs? If so, did they respond adequately and in a timely manner?
   - We sought information and input from the following people, who responded adequately and in a timely manner:
• Milagros Rivera – Director of Faculty Diversity, Inclusion and Well Being
• Julian Williams – Vice President, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics
• Christy Pichichero – CHSS Coordinator of College Diversity and Global Education; Faculty representative to BOV Academic Programs, Diversity, and University Community Committee; Faculty Fellow for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (2018-2019)

3. Please suggest how you believe the President, Provost, Senior Vice President and/or their staffs might more effectively interact with your Committee in the future, if necessary.
   ▪ We believe that the Committee should be consulted and our input would be helpful on initiatives, goals and acted upon issues of faculty equity and inclusion.

4. Please relate any additional information you may have regarding interactions between your Committee and the President, Provost, Senior Vice President, or their staff.
   ▪ The invited members of staff were very helpful in providing information about what the university is doing to address serious concerns about faculty equity and inclusion and offering their perspectives on what still needs to be done.