

# Joint President/Senate Inclusion & Respect Task Force Preliminary Recommendations for Discussion

## Background

The Joint President/Senate Inclusion Task Force was charged by President Loh and Senate Chair Falvey on August 25, 2017. The task force held three campus-wide forums in September and November to get input on the experiences of members of the campus community and feedback on elements of its charge. Task force members also solicited feedback from various stakeholder groups including the University Senate, Student Government Association (SGA), Graduate Student Government (GSG), Residence Hall Association (RHA), Black Faculty Staff Association (BFSA), and non-exempt staff. In addition, the task force working groups consulted with numerous relevant units on campus including UMPD, Resident Life, Office of Civil Rights & Sexual Misconduct (OCRSM), Office of Student Conduct, Undergraduate Studies, Institutional, Research, Planning & Assessment (IRPA), the Graduate School, the Academy of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, the Health Center, Multicultural Involvement & Community Advocacy (MICA), the Student Affairs Diversity Committee, and the Montgomery County Civil Rights Coalition. The working groups also reviewed peer and other Big 10 institution data, existing climate survey data, information on current diversity programs, and current procedures for responding to hate/bias incidents before reporting preliminary recommendations to the full task force.

## Climate

### *Campus Climate Surveys*

The University's goals include increasing empathy for diverse groups and developing mutual respect, to make it possible for people to come together as equals. This means cultivating a commitment to social equality and fairness, as well as personal responsibility in achieving these outcomes. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) should conduct biennial climate surveys of faculty, staff, and students to better understand individual experiences and assess the efficacy of diversity programming and initiatives.

***Survey Methodologies:*** Climate research should draw upon conceptual frameworks and best practices established in scholarly literature, and should incorporate multiple approaches to data collection, methodologies, data analyses, and interpretation of findings while valuing the lived experiences of our campus community.

**Content:** Surveys should explore the social and personal constraints that students experience in attending events sponsored by a cultural or affinity group other than their own.

**Targeted Populations:** Surveys should identify and oversample for specific affinity groups so as to enable the development of targeted interventions that meet their unique needs.

**Evaluation & Assessment:** Surveys should assess the University's progress towards achieving its climate goals through qualitative approaches and longitudinal and scientifically valid samples. Specifically, they should evaluate the outcome of efforts to improve diversity and the impact of those activities on students. They should also assess changes in attitudes on elements of diversity over time. Feedback from climate surveys should be incorporated into the deliberations, priorities, and agenda of existing administrative and academic leadership structures.

### **Principles & Values Statement**

The University should adopt a principles and values statement that is ingrained into the experience of each member of the campus community and reinforced throughout their time at the institution. Everyone from the leadership down should embrace and communicate the importance of the University's principles & values:

The University of Maryland is a community of individuals living and working together to support and advance the research and educational mission of the University. The principles and values that our community strives for in our environment, our interactions with one another, and our individual and collective goals are: **Secure and Safe, Respectful, Connected, Inclusive Excellence, Peer and Personal Accountability, and Growth and Empowerment.**

### **Prevention & Education**

The University should develop a coordinated prevention and education program on diversity, inclusion, and respect that is open to all faculty, staff, and students with a blend of mandatory and voluntary options and through different modes. The overall program should include a broad vision for diversity initiatives. Diversity programs, events, and trainings should be communicated at the university level and diversity themes should be integrated into the University's culture and ingrained in the UMD experience for each member of the campus community throughout their time on campus.

**Programming Coordination:** Representatives from existing University diversity programs as well as additional relevant representatives should collaborate on diversity programming.

**Diversity Programming:** Registration and information about the prevention and education program options and events should be aggregated on the ODI website categorized by topic area. All programs should have an evaluative component to assess efficacy and make necessary changes. Programming for undergraduate students should complement the learning objectives of the General Education diversity requirements.

**Programming Options:** Orientation activities with a diversity focus, resident assistant workshops with diversity themes, trainings on cultural competency, diversity bystander intervention, badging and e-portfolio programs, certificate programs, training on difficult dialogues, and implicit association tests.

## **Hate/Bias Response**

The University should assure the campus community that their safety and ability to pursue their academic and work-related goals is a high priority and act assertively against threatening and intimidating conduct. The University must do more to promote civility and respectful treatment of all members of the campus and an environment where the free and open exchange of ideas can occur without the threat of intimidating conduct.

**Create a new Policy on Conduct Motivated by Bias:** A policy prohibiting conduct motivated by bias should be established to express University values and denounce threatening or intimidating conduct. The policy would define prohibited conduct, explain where to report different types of misconduct, and how such reports are assessed, investigated, and adjudicated by the University. The University should vigorously protect the right of free speech/freedom of expression and its use in the marketplace of ideas, but it is misguided to apply this protection to conduct that is intended to threaten and/or intimidate specific individuals.

**Improve reporting to the public on hate/bias incidents in terms of coordination and transparency:** A unified reporting strategy for informing our campus community of the hate/bias incidents we experience is a necessary response to desires for accountability and transparency. The new Hate-Bias Incident Response Protocol moves the University forward in clarifying roles, responsibilities, and resources for those affected by hate/bias incidents. The protocol supports the development of a reporting mechanism to aggregate information and share it with the University community. A unified strategy for reporting will reduce confusion and minimize inaccuracies on the

number of incidents our campus is experiencing. All information about hate/bias incidents and our response to them should be consolidated and all of the information related to the University's principles, policy definitions, how to report, statistics or information about recent/past incidents, and information about prevention efforts should be centralized.

***We should be informed about the national context and educate our campus:***

There should be education on the national context that hate incidents have been on the rise across the country. This does not minimize the seriousness and concern that we feel on our campus, but allows us to see these incidents in a larger context.

### **Free/Hate Speech**

Free speech and freedom of expression are of paramount importance in an educational environment and should be upheld throughout University policy and practice. The University should not engage in any efforts to silence or sanction offensive speech, but the University should speak out against speech that does not align with its core principles & values, and should empower members of the University community to use counterspeech to combat hate and bias on campus.

***Current Policies & Guidelines:*** All existing policies and guidelines related to freedom of expression and the reservation and use of space for speech and demonstrations should continue to be utilized. The guidelines should note that messages shared in chalkings may not violate other University policies prohibiting threats or harassment.

***Statement on Free Speech Values:*** The University should endorse a new Statement on Free Speech Values. The University should take steps to communicate its viewpoint to its community, using messaging that aligns with UMD's core values. When offensive speech or conduct takes place on our campus or affects our community, the University should denounce it and explain that just because speech is protected does not make that speech appropriate or welcome in our community.

***Communication:*** All policies, guidelines, and reference documents related to free speech, expression, and demonstration on campus should be centralized on one website with explanatory text and all resources linked.

***Education & Training:*** The University's training and education efforts should include some form of civics education that includes free speech and resources on how to engage in counterspeech to promote your interests.

**Next Steps**

The task force will solicit feedback on its preliminary directions from many of the campus stakeholder groups that it met with in the fall semester before working to refine and finalize its recommendations. The task force is also holding a Design Thinking workshop with the support of the Academy of Innovation & Entrepreneurship. The task force's final report and recommendations will be presented to the University Senate on April 24, 2018 for a vote before it is forwarded to the President for final approval.



# JOINT PRESIDENT/SENATE INCLUSION & RESPECT TASK FORCE

**Preliminary Recommendations**



## BACKGROUND

- 3 Campus-wide open forums and additional meetings with stakeholder groups (SGA, GSG, RHA, BFSA, non-exempt staff)
- Formed 5 working groups: climate, prevention & education, free/hate speech, hate/bias response, policies & procedures
- Working groups reviewed peer/Big10 institution practices, scholarly research, current practice, and relevant policies
- Participated in Design Thinking Workshop with members of the Academy of Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- The task force formed preliminary recommendations in January



# CLIMATE

Guiding Principle: A safe environment where individual opinions are valued, and free and open exchange of ideas is encouraged without fear of retribution.



# CLIMATE

- A university-wide principles & values statement that is ingrained in the experience of every member of the campus community and continually reinforced throughout their time at the University.
- Biennial campus climate surveys that assess the experience of various constituencies and are used to evaluate training and educational efforts and progress towards our diversity-related goals.



## **PREVENTION & EDUCATION**

Guiding Principle: A coordinated diversity education and training program that includes existing programs and new opportunities for all members of the campus community (faculty, staff, and students). Programming is offered through different modes with a blend of mandatory and voluntary opportunities and is evaluated periodically to ensure alignment with the University's diversity-related goals.



## PREVENTION & EDUCATION

- Training for all incoming undergraduate students
- An e-Portfolio system that allows students to document and track skills gained throughout their experiences at the University.
- Workshops and resources for faculty and TAs on difficult dialogues in a classroom setting.
- Opportunities for individuals to learn and understand their personal biases through implicit association tests that link to relevant resources and training opportunities
- Centralized information about prevention and education program options and events



## **HATE/BIAS RESPONSE**

Guiding Principle: The University should assure the campus community that their safety and ability to pursue their academic and work-related goals is a high priority and act assertively against threatening and intimidating conduct. The University must do more to promote civility and respectful treatment of all members of the campus and an environment where the free and open exchange of ideas can occur without the threat of intimidating conduct.



## **HATE/BIAS RESPONSE**

- A new policy to establish the principle that the University will not tolerate an environment where students, faculty, and staff are subjected to hate-based conduct that intimidates or threatens.
- Make clear in policy and in practice about the distinction between protected speech and prohibited conduct motivated by bias.
- Centralize information and resources on reporting hate/bias incidents



## **FREE/HATE SPEECH**

Guiding Principles: Free speech and freedom of expression are of paramount importance at a public university and should be upheld throughout University policy and practice. However, the University should speak out against speech that does not align with its core principles & values, and should empower members of the University community to use speech to combat hate and bias on campus.



## FREE/HATE SPEECH

- A free speech values statement that embraces the ideals of freedom of inquiry, freedom of thought, and freedom of expression. While controversial ideas and differing views are necessary in a community of scholars, conduct that violates criminal law or university policy should not be tolerated.
- Counterspeech must be encouraged to attack hate speech
- A civics education program that includes education on free speech and hate speech and how to use speech to promote interests.
- Centralize information on policies, guidelines, reference documents and resources related to free speech, expression, and demonstration on campus.



## NEXT STEPS

- Collecting feedback on preliminary recommendations from the University Senate and other campus stakeholder groups.
- Holding a design thinking workshop with the support of the Academy of Innovation & Entrepreneurship.
- Work to refine and finalize recommendations.
- Final report and recommendations will be presented to the University Senate on April 24, 2018 for a vote before it is forwarded to the President for final approval.



## QUESTIONS

- What principles & values do you think should represent the University community?
- Should all incoming students take diversity-related training?
- How should information about hate/bias incidents be reported to the campus community?
- How do you think the University could encourage counterspeech?