

# MAKING EXCELLENCE INCLUSIVE

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**August 2021 Update**

Revised on September 20, 2021



## *Intersecting Goals of Representation, Belonging, and Capability*

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Launched in July 2019, the Making Excellence Inclusive University Report and Recommendations outlined the ongoing, interconnected goals of representation, belonging, and capability for the University of Richmond to strengthen its commitment to inclusive excellence and create a vibrant, inclusive community where all members feel a sense of belonging and can reach their full potential.

Over the past two years, the University has completed almost all of the action items called for in the report while also creating and implementing new actions to respond to the needs of our campus community. While the majority of initial actions have been completed, our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and our goals remains steadfast. We have to do more.

This report outlines the work underway and completed to date under the Making Excellence Inclusive plan. Moving forward, updates on the institution's progress and accountability on the goals of representation, belonging, and capability will be shared on the **equity.richmond.edu** website and through regular updates.

This complex and multi-faceted work represents the ongoing commitment and dedication of the President's Cabinet, academic deans, staff and faculty colleagues, and students across campus.

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## GOAL 1: REPRESENTATION

Continue to recruit talented and diverse students, faculty, and staff to ensure our campus community reflects the rich diversity of our city, region, nation, and increasingly, the world.

### *Student Recruitment*

*Accountable Leader: VP for Enrollment Management*

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Assess the success of expanded training and tools to support the identification of student applications from diverse backgrounds and modify if needed to support recruitment and retention.

- Continue to use Landscape to supplement application review to support and identify applicants from diverse backgrounds.
- Use Spanish-language print and electronic versions of publications on UR Merit Scholarships and UR Financial Aid.

Create new training opportunities for admission tour guides to ensure staff and students are able to respond authentically and effectively to difficult questions and speak openly about UR, even during challenging times on campus.

- Based on ambassador feedback, provided guiding language to talk about diversity and inclusivity on campus.
- Develop training and messages about why diversity is important to UR's educational and community experiences.
- Continue messaging about the burying ground to the campus tour guide training.

Use and evaluate new inclusivity training provided by the Student Center for Equity and Inclusion for all student ambassadors in Admissions.

Incorporate and use affirmation of the University's values in the admitted students checklist for incoming classes.

#### **ADDITIONAL ACTIONS**

Repurposed funds to hire new Director of Diversity Outreach and Partnership in Admissions who started in July 2021.

Starting in fall 2021, UR will complement its policy of being need-blind in admission and meeting the full demonstrated need of all traditional undergraduate students by eliminating the loan portion of student financial aid packages for Richmond Public School students and providing grant aid up to the full cost of attendance.

## ***Staff and Faculty Recruitment***

*Accountable Leaders: EVP COO and EVP Provost*

### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Rolled-out new process for searches that adhere to University guidelines for committees to maximize recruitment of diverse, qualified applicant pools.

- Between 2018-2020, 23 out of 29 hires were faculty of color and international faculty and 21/39 were women.

Complete and pilot the development of training for faculty search committees and hiring managers prior to the posting of a position vacancy to support anti-bias efforts. New hiring process for faculty searches is currently underway, template job advertisement was revised, initial training for faculty search committees (including anti-bias training) occurred in early May and changes will be made as needed.

Multiple training on running searches offered to staff by the Director of Talent and Organizational Effectiveness.

## ***Representation at UR***

*Accountable Leaders: EVP COO, SAO, VP for Communications and VP for Planning and Policy*

### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Inventory current campus commemoration and memorialization and recommend process for memorializing previously excluded figures and milestones in our University history on campus.

Publish and promote inclusive language as part of the UR Communications style guidelines.

- Prominently posted the Inclusive Language Guide on the equity.richmond.edu website under the Resources and Opportunities tab.
- University Communications hosted a workshop for campus communicators focused on the inclusive language guidelines.

Continue to implement changes in Banner, Blackboard, and on campus forms that support the use of gender-inclusive language and preferred pronouns.

- Changes to faculty rosters and GradTracker implemented in 2021.

Received institutional access to Prism, a job aggregator for faculty and staff hires focused on recruiting diverse candidates, starting in January 2021.

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## GOAL 2: BELONGING

Cultivate living, learning and work environments in which all can fully participate in the life of the institution and experience a sense of belonging.

### *Student, Staff, and Faculty Belonging*

*Accountable Leaders: VP for Student Development, EVP Provost, Academic Deans, SAO, VP and Director of Athletics, VP for Advancement*

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Administered the Higher Education Resource Institute (HERI) surveys to students (diverse learners survey), staff, and faculty in 2020-21 to continue to assess UR's overall campus climate. After results are released, senior leaders will analyze results, establish any needed actions, and share with the campus community.

Memorialize the burying ground for enslaved people on campus with input from and connectivity with the descendant community.

Support ongoing work to integrate inclusive historical context into campus, including development of historical exhibits and interpretive signage.

Senior Woman Administrator in Athletics has also assumed oversight responsibility for DEI.

### *For Students*

*Accountable Leaders: Executive Assistant to the President, VP for Student Development, VP for Planning and Policy, EVP and Provost, Dean of the Business School*

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Established a President's Student Cabinet beginning in fall 2020 to facilitate open dialogue among students and University leaders.

Increased funding for the Spider First (first generation) support program.

Reallocated staff resources to create a new Assistant Director, Student Center for Equity and Inclusion that will focus on support for LatinX and Asian students.

Through the reallocation of existing University funds, providing \$100,000 in new funding for student cultural organizations from 2020-22.

Continued support for the University of Richmond Race and Racism Project, including undergraduate research, faculty director, and co-curricular learning opportunities throughout the academic year.

Establish DEI plans and goal setting in schools and units.

Completed Health Services Review to evaluate and align well-being services for students.

- Implementation underway includes significant expansion of appointment availability in CAPS and the Student Health Center, same day appointments in CAPSs, and establishment of a free-standing Disabilities Services office with a dedicated director and a renovated testing center.

Pilot and evaluate opportunities for prospective Robins School majors from underrepresented communities to prepare for RSB academic life; 2 Endeavor Program cohorts focused on RSB started in 2020.

WELL 100 class was approved by faculty and begins in fall 2021. All new students will be placed in a section of this 14-week extended orientation course. The curriculum includes modules on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Advancement has continued to fundraise, and with the generosity of donors, to support students, including Spider Helping Spiders which supports the Student Emergency Fund and the Career Opportunity Fund.

- Since 2018, the Spider Emergency Fund has received over \$625,000 in gifts which have supported unanticipated expenses that are not part of the normal cost of attendance.
- After the pandemic struck, UR funded more than 400 requests for funds to travel home and to pay living assistance for students unable to do so due to border closing and quarantine restrictions.
- The Career Opportunity Fund supports students needing assistance to purchase interview clothing, pay for travel to interviews for jobs and internships, pay for graduate school applications, or participate in Spider Road Trips and academic conferences.
- In spring 2021, in collaboration with students. Advancement also raised funds to support additional capacity for CAPS as needed during acute times to provide first-rate counseling on campus for students.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIONS**

Due to Covid-19, the Faculty Senate, with advocacy from the Black Student Coalition, passed a temporary pass-fail option for the 2020-21 school year.

Completed review of student services and with considerable feedback from students developed recommendations to enhance support for underrepresented students with the creation of the new Student Center for Equity and Inclusion to open in August 2021 merging the Office of Common Ground and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Whitehurst Hall was renovated to include a spacious LGBTQ lounge, conference room, outdoor gathering space, a multicultural space, and office space for the SCEI staff.

Significant funding was approved for the renovation of an existing fraternity lodge. This will allow for all student organizations to reserve this contemporary, multi-functional, indoor/outdoor space for meetings, events, programs and social activities. Preliminary drawings will be available for preview during the fall months, with the opening anticipated in early spring.

Faculty voted to create a new Africana Studies program to launch in 2022.

Commitment to hire 2-3 faculty positions to teach in the Africana Studies program.

The University passed-through \$2.8 million of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds to UR students who qualify for need-based financial aid since the onset of the Pandemic. Using University resources, the University also provided funds for needy international and DACA students who did not qualify for HEERF funds under federal government mandate.

***For Staff and Faculty***

*Accountable Leaders: EVP and COO, Senior AVP of Human Resources*

**ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

HR to continue conversations with staff on needed supports for pilot affinity groups to provide support for underrepresented groups to connect, build relationships, and affirm social identities while working at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI).

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## GOAL 3: CAPABILITY

Become a skilled intercultural community that enables and enriches an unparalleled academic experience.

### *For the Campus Community*

*Accountable leaders: President, EVP and COO, EVP and Provost, VP for Student Development, CIO, SAO, ICC*

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Provide faculty and staff with learning and skill-building opportunities via white anti-racism lunch discussions.

Provide faculty and staff with learning and skill-building opportunities via weekly Intersections discussions centering a range of topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Provide forums to discuss the Bias Resource Team's purpose and role on campus, listen to questions and concerns, and refine its processes and approaches as needed.

Complete and disseminate research on the enslaved burying ground, Robert Ryland and Douglas Southall Freeman and make accessible critical insights into our University history to inform commemoration and memorialization decisions.

Institutionalize the ICC as a deliberative body to build DEI capacity on campus and to support long-term diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work.

Students led a campus-wide Equity Summit.

### *For Senior Leaders*

*Accountable leaders: President, EVP and COO, EVP and Provost, VP for Student Development, CIO, SAO, ICC*

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Engage senior leaders in professional development and shared capacity-building on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- In 2020-21, senior leaders and the ICC engaged with Dr. Ruth Simmons and Jonathan McBride in shared discussion on diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism in higher education.

#### **ADDITIONAL ACTIONS**

Creation of a DEI Board of Trustees committee.



### ***For Students***

***Accountable leaders: President, EVP and COO, EVP and Provost, VP for Student Development, CIO, SAO, ICC***

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Evaluate and expand equity, inclusion, and anti-bias training for student leaders.

Support the student-led Interpoint programming to build students' awareness and skills in intercultural dialogue.

Establish a facilitator training cohort made up of faculty, staff, and students who learn together from campus and local experts to facilitate dialogues around difficult topics.

Pilot institutional history courses for students to continue to explore the history of UR and to support student learning.

Residence Life and Housing staff worked in coordination with campus partners to develop and implement an anti-bias training workshop for all student resident assistants and head residents to be implemented on an annual basis.

### ***For Staff and Faculty***

***Accountable leaders: President, EVP and COO, EVP and Provost, VP for Student Development, CIO, SAO, ICC***

#### **ACTIONS: COMPLETED & ONGOING**

Establish a facilitator training cohort made up of faculty, staff, and students who learn together from campus and local experts to facilitate dialogues around difficult topics.

Offer regular workshops for faculty and staff to build skills for engaging in difficult conversations through HR.

Offer regular workshops for faculty and staff on creating inclusive work environments through HR.

Continue support and assessment of faculty use of expanded inclusive pedagogical strategies in the classroom.

- Over 200 faculty have attended inclusive pedagogy programs and workshops to strengthen inclusion in the classroom.

Review and revise supervisor development cohort training program to meet UR's inclusive excellence goals.

Create opportunities for intergroup dialogue and discussion of topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the advancement division through a moderated discussion series (Intersections Advancement).

Use results of 2019 campus space planning effort to continue making campus spaces accessible and inclusive in order to augment community building (e.g. availability of all-gender restrooms, elevators).

- Renovation of Ryland Hall with an elevator completed in August 2021.
- New Well-Being Center opened in winter 2021.

Consider changes to existing academic policies to promote retention, including class withdrawal procedures, pass/fail guidelines for first-and second-year students, and academic incomplete and withdrawal.

- In 2020-21, the Faculty Senate put in place a temporary CR/F policy.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIONS**

UR became a founding member of the Liberal Arts Colleges Racial Equity Leadership Alliance (LACRELA). Convened by the USC Race and Equity Center, the LACRELA consortium is made up of 51 liberal arts colleges and universities committed to developing and achieving equity goals, fostering campus climates that are inclusive for people of color and other underrepresented groups, and offering shared educational resources and tools for faculty and staff. Over the past six months, senior leaders, faculty, and staff have participated in ongoing learning through LACRELA workshops. In 2021, UR will access tools and resources to support belonging and build capability, including the workshop content. These will be on the [equity.richmond.edu](https://equity.richmond.edu) (netid and password needed to access) starting in fall 2021.