

**POWER & EQUITY FORUM:
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT POWER,
EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION AT MICA IN AY 2016**

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I. Overview

This document provides an overview of the Power & Equity Forum, its formation, intent, mission and outcomes in AY15. It includes a set of recommendations developed by the Forum's working groups that focus on aspects of MICA's curriculum, policies, support and training. The document also proposes a structure for a campus-wide initiative to advance MICA's commitment to diversity and difference on campus in AY16. The document and its recommendations are part of an ongoing dialog that invites conversation, reflection and ideas about creating a more inclusive campus at MICA.

II. Recommended Structure for Continuing Institutional Conversations about Power, Equity, and Creating an Inclusive Campus

The Power & Equity Forum has served as an environment for open dialog and conversation for the entire community about diversity, inclusion, power and equity; and, it has allowed faculty, staff, students and the administration to talk about the change they want to see at MICA. The Forum has open membership and invites people passionate about this initiative to get involved. It is perceived as a space, safe from judgment, recourse or retribution, where people are free to speak about their ideas, concerns and opinions.

To advance the commitment to create an inclusive campus, the Power & Equity Forum proposes a dual committee structure that will not only continue dialog, but also set up a process for implementing change. The Power & Equity Forum proposes one part of the dual structure to be a *pan-institutional task force*, chaired by the President, focused on advancing the Forum's recommendations and a second part to be an *open forum* that brings the MICA community together in discussion, dialog, and debate throughout the year. This structure allows us to continue, broaden and deepen the conversations on campus while taking concrete steps to put recommendations into action. There is a need in the community to see implementation and change as we are learning from each other and developing a stronger sense of community.

Pan-Institutional Task Force Focused on Implementation

The Power & Equity Forum recommends the formation of a *Presidential Pan-Institutional Task Force* focused on power, equity, diversity, and inclusion on campus. As the President's task force, this group represents the priority of these issues and the College's commitment to address them. The Power & Equity Forum proposes that the Presidential Task Force be action-oriented and focus on taking the necessary steps (including but not limited to review, research and development, etc.) to implement the recommendations from the four working groups of the Power & Equity Forum, described in sections VI, VII, VIII, IX of this report. Its membership is pan-institutional with representation from a diverse range of constituencies on campus.

We recommend the following membership for the President's Task Force on Diversity, Equity, Power and Inclusion. We propose that the leadership of the Task Force be shared by the President, the Assistant Dean of Diversity and Intercultural Development and a student.

Note: There are several vice-presidents recommended on the President's Task Force because they serve as important ambassadors for the initiative and as leaders to support implementing change.

1. Sammy Hoi, President (Chair)
2. David Bogen, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
3. Clyde Johnson, Assistant Dean of Diversity & Intercultural Development (Co-chair)
4. Gwynne Keathley, Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies
5. Natovian McLeod (graduate student / P&E Forum representative)
6. Mike Molla, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives
7. Ivan Ng (international UG student / P&E Forum representative)
8. Alex Oehmke (UG student / P&E Forum representative) (Co-chair)
9. Mike Patterson, Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students
10. Shyla Rao (graduate faculty / P&E Forum representative)
11. Karen Stults (staff / P&E Forum representative)
12. Stephen Towns (staff / P&E Forum Representative)
13. Estevanny Turns, Associate Vice President for Human Resources
14. Colette Veasey-Cullors (UG faculty / P&E Forum representative)
15. Rita Walters, Vice President for Advancement
16. *International graduate student / P&E Forum representative*
17. *Board of Trustee member*

The Power & Equity Forum

The Power & Equity Forum is a complementary component of the dual committee structure and focuses on creating a campus-wide platform for communication and dialog. It provides multiple venues and opportunities for conversations, information exchange and open discussion throughout the year. The result of this work is a sustained environment for learning, listening and accepting a diversity of ideas, thoughts, and opinions. The Power & Equity Forum replicates and multiplies the spaces for dialog and reflection that the Forum created for the community in AY15.

Critical to this proposal is a transparent process for communication between the President's Task Force and the Power & Equity Forum through shared leadership and membership. A clearly articulated feedback loop allows information gathered from the community to inform the work of the Taskforce and visa-versa. The Forum will serve as the conduit to provide information to and from the community with the President's Task Force.

For the open community exchange and dialog to be successful, the Power & Equity Forum recommends strongly that staff, faculty and students be supported for their participation in the Forum, its programming and events. Where possible, we request that supervisors allow staff to count attendance in the Forum events as part of the job or to receive release time to participate. Faculty contribution should count as service, and where appropriate, we hope that students may integrate their engagement into their coursework and requirements.

What will the Power & Equity Forum do next year?

1. Provide meetings and get-togethers that reach all constituencies and stakeholders.
 - i. Create safe spaces for conversation and dialog in the MICA community.
 - ii. Serve as a place for everyone on campus to contribute, participate and to have their voices heard.
2. Explore various tactics to gather ideas, issues, and concerns and reach different constituencies.
 - i. Hold sessions at different times of the day and varying days of the week.
 - ii. Design both small and large group gatherings and in different spaces and formats.
 - iii. Adopt a broad topic or subject each month for conversation.
3. Ensure a consistent feedback loop between the Power & Equity Forum and the President's Task Force by serving as the communication conduit between the two groups and with the community.
 - i. Help make the President's Task Force information and progress transparent and consistently accessible to the community.
4. Provide programming regarding issues, questions or concerns raised as part of the Forum conversations (racism, equity, equality, power, white supremacy, etc.).

Power & Equity Forum AY16 Membership:

The Forum is open to all; a core group will continue to guide the work of the Power & Equity Forum.

Suggested core group members:

1. Nicole Evans
2. Clyde Johnson
3. Gwynne Keathley
4. Morgan Kempthorn (on leave in fall 2015)
5. Fletcher Mackey
6. Trenton Nettles
7. Karen Stults
8. Stephen Towns
9. Colette Veasey-Cullors

Additional members of President's Task Force that may also serve on the core group:

1. Natovian McLeod (graduate student)
2. Alex Oehmke (UG student)
3. Ivan Ng (International UG student)
4. Shyla Rao (graduate faculty)
5. *(International graduate student)*

III. Power & Equity Forum: Mission

Power & Equity Forum provides a space for faculty, students, staff and the community to share their experiences, perspectives, ideas and concerns related to privilege, power, diversity and inclusion at Maryland Institute College of Art. It is our hope that these dialogs will heighten awareness of the current social, cultural, racial and power dynamics at MICA and promote a culture critical of and sensitive to these issues. The goal is to create an ongoing space for dialog, learning and growth and to make substantive change within the MICA community.

IV. Power & Equity Forum: Membership

Attendance at the Power & Equity Forum meetings fluctuates each month, creating a fluid composition of MICA's undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and administration. Membership in the Power & Equity Forum is on a volunteer basis. Individuals are free to attend meetings and participate in programs and events as their schedules allow. Currently, the Power & Equity Forum has 83 members. A Google drive folder provides all participants information such as meeting minutes, articles and resources, and information about events and activities. Individuals who express interest in the group, but cannot attend meetings, are added to a contact list and receive access to the Google Drive Folder and meeting announcements. In addition to the larger Forum, a "core group" guides and plans meetings, develops agendas, and helps facilitate programs. Membership of the core group also fluctuates.

Student involvement is central to the structure and development of the Forum. Originally initiated by graduate student, Alanna Purdy (MFACA, '14), the Power & Equity Forum has relied on student participation in all aspects of its activity, from planning and leading meetings, to leadership and subcommittee work.

V. Power & Equity Forum: Formation of Four Working Groups

Meeting for the first time in November 2014, the Power & Equity Forum provided a space for students, faculty, and staff to process recent events across the country and at MICA, to reflect on MICA diversity initiatives, and finally to recommend changes needed to address issues of racism, power and privilege at MICA. In its March meeting, the Power & Equity Forum divided into four sub-committees focused on Curriculum, Policy, Structure and Support, and Training and Awareness. Through the lens of these specific topics, the sub-committees generated a list of recommendations based on preliminary research and observations with a clear goal of initiating change at MICA. Sub-committees worked diligently from March through May 2015, often getting together in the weeks between the monthly Power & Equity Forum meetings to work. Each group provided updates on their progress at the April and May Forum meetings. A core group gathered in June and July to consolidate the report and complete the recommendations.

VI. Working Group Recommendations: Curriculum

As the student population in American schools becomes increasingly diverse, it is imperative to create a climate that views diversity, internationalism and globalism as an essential, interwoven curricular core in the education of all of MICA's students. By integrating the curriculum with diverse perspectives and conversations, the education and educational experience at MICA becomes stronger and more inclusive by valuing and learning from the differences in people and cultures. By encouraging and harnessing these differences, MICA provides its students and faculty with the opportunity to grow outside of their boundaries. The recommendations below are essential tools to MICA's advancement in diversity within the curriculum by instilling cultural competency (*the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds*), an inclusive and inspiring community, and an understanding that diversity is an essential component to the cultivation of our student's education in this global society.

Recommendations

1. Faculty training with outside and/or peer facilitators to instill a sense of responsibility and capacity for fostering and creating space for diversity discourse within the classroom.
 - a. The Faculty Cultural Expansion Committee may help facilitate this training by hosting workshops centered on methods provided in the *Beyond Critique: Different Ways of Talking about Art*. This text may serve as a resource and guide for discussion about critique methodologies that are sensitive to cultural difference. *Note:* Historically the Faculty Culture Expansion committee had \$10,000 to \$20,000 in grant funding for faculty to create new approaches to diversity initiatives in the classroom.
2. In-class workshops with community partners or leaders (i.e. Baltimore Racial Justice Action, Theater Action Group) that allow students to explore connections between their personal life experiences and the broader social / political environment, to develop basic literacy regarding historic power structures, and to better understand and appreciate cultural difference – especially as embedded within the Foundation curriculum as appropriate.
3. Increased availability of non-western historical references and material within the curriculum: specifically across the studio-based disciplines and within the humanities.
4. Development of a resource database of non-western artists and scholars and other artists representing diverse perspectives and approaches for use by MICA faculty. Also, an intentional push to bring more of these artists and scholars to campus as visitors. (Ask each department to diversify their standard visiting artist roster with this goal in mind and to contribute to the database using expertise from within their own disciplines. For example, increase artists representing diverse perspectives to the Monday fine art lecture and as members of the Senior Thesis review committees.)

5. Expand the student course evaluation to gather data on student experiences with issues of diversity and tolerance in the classroom (critique process, related field experiences and more).
6. Exploration of alternative critique models that are in sync with the values of a progressive curriculum and that address issues of power and equity in the critique process.
7. New study abroad sites that are germane to creating a more diverse experience.
8. All division and departments of study will require that faculty searches and potential candidates possess skills and experiences in the teaching of the curriculum with respect to identity formation and cross-cultural learning.

VII. Working Group Recommendations: Policy

Fundamental to a commitment to diversity on campus are policies structured to support creating fair access, opportunity and agency regarding MICA's employment and management practices. The *policy subcommittee* explored current MICA policies by reviewing the College's website and discussing the current practices and perceived gaps with administrators. The subcommittee developed the following recommendations in order to foster a community that is more inclusive of peoples of differing backgrounds including race, sex, religion, national origin, physical disability, and age.

Recommendations

1. Develop a clear system for members of the MICA community to find policies.
 2. Develop a framework for members of the MICA community to respectfully challenge an institutional or academic policy.
 3. Develop a framework for members of the MICA community to report a bias.
 4. Develop a protocol to promote fair and equitable hiring.
- 1. Develop a clear system for members of the MICA community to find policies.**
 We recommend that all MICA policies be located in an internal institutional website and/or portal. The site should be easily navigable and the link should be provided at the beginning of the year for staff and faculty and during orientation for students. Outreach to faculty and staff should include contact information of an HR employee that can answer questions regarding policies. At orientation, students should receive a "Student Bill of Rights" that highlights key policies pertaining to students and their rights. There should be a section grouping civil rights for all members of the MICA and a formal bias report system (*see #3*).

2. Develop a framework for members of the MICA community to respectfully challenge an institutional or academic policy.

We are recommending the development of a system that provides a way for a member or group to challenge a policy and/or request a review of a policy at MICA.

a. For challenges of institutional policies:

- Create a standing policy review committee, chaired by Human Resources, that is representative of stakeholders in the community and takes into account the content and the implementation of the policy.
- With each challenge, HR reviews the committee to assess the appropriate membership to serve as the review board.
- HR will prepare materials for policy review, and redact names or identifying factors, as needed to protect those challenging the policy.
- HR will provide follow-up to the individual that challenges the policy.

b. For challenges of academic policies:

- Create a standing academic policy review committee chaired by the Office of the Provost that is representative of stakeholders and takes into account the content of the policy and the implementation of that policy.
- The Office of the Provost will prepare materials for policy review, and redact names or identifying factors, as needed to protect those challenging the policy.
- The Office of the Provost will provide follow-up to the individual that challenges the policy.

3. Develop a framework for members of the MICA community to report a bias.

A bias incident is an offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by the offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender identity BUT may not rise to the level of a crime. Bias incidents include hostile environments and harassing behavior that is severe, persistent or pervasive to the point that it threatens an individual or limits the ability of the individual to work, study, or participate in College life. (2015, July 1. Retrieved from <http://www.davidson.edu/student-life/multicultural-life/hate-crime-and-bias-incidents/>)

The committee recommends a formal bias report system (BRS) for members of the MICA community experiencing bias on the campus. Recommendations for this system are the following:

- a. Provide an explanation of what a bias is and examples to help reporters distinguish between a bias that should be reported to the institution and a crime that should be reported to higher authorities. This section should also include information about where the information is going and FAQs.
- b. The BRS should be an online form (possibly powered by Maxient) housed on the policy page that includes information about civil rights for members of the MICA community. All should be easily navigable within the MICA website with explanations of the timeline and process of submitting complaints.
- c. BRS should allow for anonymous submittals. However, the form should be crafted to gather enough information to follow up with affected parties. Add a required field that says individual perceived to be affected (a name, etc.).

- d. The institution should develop a framework for adjudication of a reported bias-related incident to make sure that it is understood by the MICA community and the process is fair and complete, including the investigation and hearings of reports.
 - Investigation
 1. Who is investigating the incident?
 2. How are they selected?
 3. How are they trained?
 - Hearing Committee
 1. How are they selected?
 2. How are they trained?

4. Develop a protocol to promote fair and equitable hiring

By addressing the protocol for hiring employees and faculty, MICA can ensure that the institution recruits and hires employees that represent diversity and varying backgrounds. *Resource:* City College of NY Office of Affirmative Action (<http://www.cuny.edu/affirmativeaction/>) provides a model for recruitment strategies. Recommendations related to MICA's hiring policies include:

- a. Audit relevant data of overall representation and hiring patterns to help set goals for diversity in employment decisions on campus.
- b. Provide support and training to bring awareness/sensitivity to biases throughout the hiring process and employment decisions.
- c. Create guidelines about the makeup of search committees to represent diversity in the membership.
- d. Identify specific diversity goals for recruitment for a particular position.
- e. Develop an outreach plan to meet diversity goals for recruitment for each new position.

VIII. Working Group Recommendations: Structure & Support

This subcommittee explored the individuals, divisions and offices charged with helping MICA community members feel validated and included on campus. Specifically, it looked at the structure and support for individuals, including students, faculty and staff. The subcommittee recommends that support be responsive and proactive and show empathy for faculty, students and staff who are exploring their own identities. It also recommends that the structure allow for listening and learning. The goal of these recommendations is to foster a community sensitive, tolerant and inclusive of difference.

The sub-committee made a number of recommendations regarding staff training, professional development for faculty, and hiring practices that have been incorporated into the recommendations of other subcommittees. In addition to suggestions related to structure/support, included here are also recommendations for the development of a strategic framework for long-term and sustained commitment to advance the principles of diversity, inclusion, and globalization on campus.

Recommendations:

1. Invest in a full diversity audit of the community through an external consultant.

The first and only full MICA Diversity audit was conducted in 2006/07, almost ten years ago. It is recommended that MICA invest in a full audit that assesses the climate for racial equity in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for improvements.

Resources: Baltimore Racial Justice Action group and Associated Black Charities are local organizations that can help evaluate and make further recommendations.

2. Create a stronger structure through policies, programs and resources that demonstrate a commitment to tolerance and support for difference on campus.

- Integrate conversations about difference and diversity into existing events and activities, such as student orientation, new faculty orientation, staff meetings, SVA, etc.
- Introduce the Power & Equity Forum to new hires through the onboarding process (handout/brochure in their welcome packet, introduction during new employee orientation, etc.)
- Provide time off, such as floating holidays or holy days that employees may use at their discretion to observe their personal religious, cultural, national beliefs and allegiances.
- Update MICA webpage with resources about diversity and equity issues and existing structures for support and policies at MICA.

3. Design an integrated, college-wide infrastructure (combination of offices, committees, research centers, etc.) to support a long-term commitment to advance and sustain a diverse, inclusive, tolerant and globalized campus.

4. Reframe, enliven and enhance the work of the Center for Race and Culture to serve as a resource on campus.

IX. Working Group Recommendations: Training & Awareness

In a quick survey of MICA's training models it appears that while there are a few opportunities for specific students and staff to receive training, the greater student population, along with faculty and staff receive no obvious cultural competency training. Staff and faculty attend a brief orientation session at the beginning of employment, neither of these sessions contain information regarding diversity, tolerance, and sustaining or creating an inclusive community. The only population to participate in any form of training specifically geared toward cultural awareness is student employees or student leaders within the department of Student Affairs and the Center for Art Education.

It is important to recognize that the term training should be inclusive of multiple platforms for creating awareness and educating our community on important MICA guidelines. Trainings should be an ongoing infusion of information for the MICA community. Training, cultural competency and awareness are systemic issues and educating our community

cannot be reliant on a singular mode or method of training. It is necessary to “train” our students, faculty, and staff on important MICA standards in order to establish expectations for how our community is to engage with one another.

Recommendations

1. Create clear goals and guidelines for developing cultural competency becoming forerunners on the issues of racism, power, privilege, advocacy and art.
2. Establish a funding model to support ongoing educational initiatives related to the topics of cultural competency.
3. Develop multiple platforms for awareness and training students, faculty and staff.
4. Require training for each sub population.
 - a. Create mandatory full day workshop opportunities for faculty and staff. To ensure all levels of the staff and faculty have the ability to participate in professional development opportunities, all employees involved are paid to attend (whether during formal workday or weekend) and offices may choose to close for that half-day/day of training.
5. Set a community standard of tolerance, cultural competency, awareness, engagement, actions and language.
6. Create ongoing, sustainable campus wide programs and resources.
7. Create optional check-in experiences for individuals to further develop personal and professional understanding of what it means to be culturally competent.
8. Establish an ongoing literature resource library with virtual and physical publications related to cultural competency and advocacy.
9. Create a database with access to: films, books, artwork, articles and safe spaces for community members to engage expanding their knowledge base.
10. Make resources accessible to all members of the MICA Community.
11. Review of Best Practices in other organizations. Models to consider include The Racial Equity Toolkit: <http://www.seattle.gov/rsji/resources>; Restorative Practices: <http://www.iirp.edu/what-is-restorative-practices.php>; Center for Teaching and Learning: <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/>
12. Review facilitators/training workshops outside of MICA that could be invited to help educate faculty/staff. Options include:
 - NCORE: National Conference on Race and Ethnicity. Faculty and staff who attend could identify “experts” at the conference that could present to a larger group at MICA; tweaking the presentation/workshop around MICA’s needs. [Note: Clyde Johnson, Jacquis Watters, Morgan Kempthorn and Gwynne Keathley attended NCORE in May 2015.]
 - Continue to engage TAG: Theater Action Group to provide training opportunities for addressing difficult conversations

X. History of Race, Integration, and Diversity at MICA 1891-2012

In 1891, MICA enrolled its first black student, Harry T. Pratt, more than six decades before the Supreme Court of the United States ordered public schools to desegregate in 1954's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. When Pratt enrolled at MICA, few institutions not solely dedicated to African Americans would admit them, especially in Maryland, which was at the time considered part of the South. Pratt's admission was a national controversy and spectacle, with *The New York Times* declaring his admission, "a departure which has never before been attempted in this city." The writer implored MICA's board not to admit him, but they not only admitted Pratt; they admitted three additional black students between 1892 and 1895.

Pratt's time at MICA could not have been easy. More than 100 students withdrew in protest, and by the time he graduated, the school bent to the pressure and adopted a policy restricting admission to "reputable white students." That move put it squarely in sync with U.S. government policy. About the same time the Supreme Court ruled in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case that "separate but equal" facilities for whites and blacks were lawfully acceptable.

Fast forward 100 years, the faculty and administration of MICA grappled with the fact that African American students, now freely accepted into MICA's programs, were matriculating but not graduating. Questions arose about how to support students of color at a predominately white institution. Around 1990, the college created the Office of Multiethnic Student Services and recruited Dr. Frankie Martin as director to develop special support programming for Black students. With this new initiative and engagement, the numbers of students being retained increased, as well as the number of students graduating.

After Dr. Martin announced her plans to retire, MICA conducted its first survey of undergraduate and graduate students on the topic of diversity and inclusion in 2006-07. Over 675 students responded with a 37% response rate. The data from the diversity survey was used to make major changes on campus related to programs and services related to diversity and inclusion, including:

- The restructuring of the Office of Multicultural Programs to an expanded Office of Diversity and Intercultural Development;
- A broadened scope of responsibilities and outreach to student constituencies; and
- Support to a wider breadth of students and for innovative academic initiatives related to diversity.
- Elevate the position from director to assistant dean and hire an assistant director
- The role of the assistant dean would be to work pan institutionally on diversity issues, and the assistant director would work closely with students and programming.

During this period, the College established the Faculty Cultural Expansion Committee (FCEC) to assist faculty in developing culturally relevant instruction, curriculum and programming. This endeavor was funded in part through a \$30,000 grant. Funding for the grants ended in 2009. During this period, the FCEC worked to redefine its goals and outcomes. Committee members worked with the Assistant Dean for Diversity to create support structures for students; in addition to, facilitating discussions around diversity and art at extracurricular events and exhibitions. A major goal the committee was developing ways in which faculty might address cultural biases in the critique process. Spearheaded by Susan Waters-Eller, the committee took on the task of creating a book on critiques. After

two years, the project was completed with a published book, *Beyond Critique: Different Ways of Talking about Art*.

In September of 2008, the new Office of Diversity was opened and staffed by the assistant dean. The assistant director's position would not be funded for another three years. During this first year, the assistant dean worked closely with the president and established the President's Diversity Committee which was composed of faculty, staff and students. The committee's role was to be an advisory and reporting mechanism to the college and the president. The committee functioned for two years and was disbanded by the assistant dean as he relayed the committee's displeasure in not having any actionable goals and responsibilities.

Five years after the first diversity survey, the Office of Diversity and Intercultural Development engaged the undergraduate and graduate students in a follow-up survey to assess if there have been any significant changes or shifts that warrant further attention and to explore if MICA has been successful in reaching goals developed from the last survey. The second administration of the survey was completed in December 2011 and yielded 517 completed surveys, a response rate of 26%. The survey was administered by Campus Labs (formerly StudentVoice). It asked students to respond to questions about their demographic background, and to provide their perceptions of the campus climate as it pertains to diversity and inclusion, campus services, faculty/academic environment, discrimination, and racial/ethnic climate. Furthermore, the survey allowed students the opportunity to respond to several open ended questions pertaining to any experiences of discrimination or harassment; where this discrimination or harassment occurred; their preferences in socialization; their breakdown of ethnicity; and most importantly their belief as to whether or not MICA is a diverse community.

Several implications were drawn from the results of this survey. Whereas, with an exception of a large percentage of majority students and those that fall in the "other" category, all students believe that their personal knowledge of diversity makes them a better artist. Our majority students have a low rating for discussing diversity related issues with family and friends, as well as well express the lowest rating for needing diversity related programs, discussions and exhibitions at MICA. (The full report is attached in the appendices).

XI. Current Events and the Formation of the Power & Equity Forum 2013-2015

Throughout 2013-2015, national media coverage of the repeated pattern of events of police brutality brought attention to the violence and economic disparities that disproportionately affect people of color. The murders of Trayvon Martin (2012), Eric Garner (2014), John Crawford (2014), Michael Brown Jr. (2014), Walter Scott (2015), Freddie Gray (2015) fueled local conversations about social inequality, poverty, lack of equal access to education and resources, gentrification, inequities in the community and the *Black Lives Matter* movement.

Black Lives Matter originated with the acquittal of George Zimmerman in July 2013 for the murder of Trayvon Martin and has become a worldwide movement that raises awareness of the inequities against Black American men, women and children. Its message: that black

lives matter as much as whites fuels the greater cause to end the dehumanization of Black American people and culture.

As part of the graduate Town Hall in October 2014, the graduate students raised concern about the lack of a campus-wide commitment to diversity on campus and made a formal proposal to create a diversity task force at MICA to bring people together to advance the conversation and initiatives to increase, pay attention to and commit to issues of diversity on campus.

Starting in early November 2014, graduate students, undergraduates, faculty and staff met and formed the Diversity & Equity Forum in order to meet with peers to share thoughts, concerns and feelings regarding the many assaults and legal decisions and to address diversity on MICA campus.

In late November a hate crime was committed in Leake Hall, a freshman dormitory. An individual or group carved the message “kill black people” and “negroes” into the back metal wall of an elevator. Reported on Friday, November 21, the crime was likely committed during the week of November 10th or possibly the week of November 17th. During that period multiple members of the campus (students and staff) entered the elevator and yet the crime remained unreported for many days. It is still unknown who committed the crime nor the impact the crime took on the general wellbeing of those living and working in the building. Many on campus wondered in dismay that the crime took place on campus and that it went unreported for so long.

Undergraduates began to organize - expressing concerns over the elevator incident and voicing opinions about the Michael Brown trial in Ferguson. MICA undergraduate leaders in the Black Student Union (BSU) organized a community meeting on Monday, November 24, to discuss the hate crime. The meeting was promoted on social media and by word of mouth. Members from all segments of MICA’s community (undergraduates, graduates, faculty and staff) participated in the 10:00 p.m. discussion numbering somewhere between 200 and 250 people moving beyond the room’s capacity. Undergraduates from the BSU led the meeting, providing thoughtful observations and opening the conversation to the community at large. The BSU followed the meeting a few days later with a peaceful march from Leake Hall to Cohen Plaza where they met with College President Sammy Hoi to deliver a list of concerns and demands. BSU students were joined by faculty from the Fiber department, graduate students and faculty and staff from various campus communities.

Later in December the offices of Diversity/Intercultural Development, Community Engagement and the Staff Enrichment Council held an open forum for staff to discuss concerns about the elevator incident. The staff group shared the list of concerns developed during the meeting with President Hoi. By early December, the Diversity & Equity Forum, held its monthly meeting and invited members from all aspects of MICA’s community. In February, the campus community invited all to participate in the the Power Speaker Series, a program developed by the MFA in Community Arts program.

In its February 2015 meeting, the Diversity & Equity Forum discussed and “unpacked” what members perceived to be the true focus of the group. During this time, the group began defining aspects of racism, various phobias such as xenophobia, transphobia, and “isms” such as sexism, ageism, ableism and privilege, systems, power, language, structural and systemic inequities, etc. At the end of this discussion, the group changed its name from the Diversity & Equity Forum to the Power & Equity Forum to combat the erasure of identities with the use of the word diversity. (See APPENDIX G for notes from this discussion)

XII. Appendices

White Men as Full Diversity Partners Report (*APPENDIX A*)

Institutional Surveys (*APPENDIX B*)

Survey on Diversity & Inclusion, 2006-07

MICA’s 2011/12 Survey of Students on Diversity and Inclusion)

Black Student Union Letter (*APPENDIX C*)

MFA in Community Arts Student Response Letter, November 25, 2014 (*APPENDIX D*)

Meeting Notes & Letter (*APPENDIX E*)

Diversity / Equity Forum, November 7, 2014 Meeting Notes

Staff Conversation Regarding Hate Incident Summary, December 10, 2014

Presidential Communications in Response to Hate Crime (*APPENDIX F*)

Memorandum: Response to Hate Incident, November 24, 2015

Memorandum: Timing of Response to BSU Open Letter, January 23, 2015

Memorandum: Public Response to BSU Open Letter, February 26, 2015

Power & Equity Forum February 6, 2015 (*APPENDIX G*)

Meeting Notes

“Defining what we are talking about”

Power & Equity Forum meetings (*APPENDIX H*)

Attendance Sheets (November, December, February, March & April meetings)

Subcommittee membership

Faculty Curriculum Survey Responses (*APPENDIX I*)

Transcriptions of Index Card Responses at Faculty Meeting May 15, 2015 (*APPENDIX J*)

Link to Appendices Folder

https://drive.google.com/a/mica.edu/folderview?id=0BwY4mITd4Su_fnRzaDRmQjdqOEdlUFh6TVdOWXVDMFo2Y3VXQjdBcUtTRUttMWljQ2tkNW8&usp=sharing