

## FAQs Regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

### **What is the current process for reporting complaints regarding bias or racism?**

The official University process for reporting student complaints, including incidents of discrimination bias, includes two levels.

- Students may submit **informal** feedback and comments on Law School issues of diversity and inclusion via [this form](#), which is submitted to Law School administrators.
- Students may submit **formal** feedback, as detailed in the [Student Complaint Policy](#), via the [Student Complaint Form](#). This process is managed by the University's Student Development office, in partnership with Law School leadership and Common Ground.

These links are available on the Law School's Current Students [webpage](#). We plan to look carefully at this process as it applies to the Law School.

### **What steps has Richmond Law taken toward a more diverse student body?**

The Admissions Office continually evaluates its strategies and processes, including web content, recruiting events, student surveys, and communications materials. We regularly incorporate student feedback in an effort to evolve and improve every admissions cycle.

The Admissions team participates in recruiting events specifically for diverse students, attends diversity conferences, and works with other schools to learn and implement new strategies. We have hosted diversity events for admitted students, invited students from historically underrepresented backgrounds to campus for private group visits, partnered with law school organizations, met with pre-law advisors at new institutions, and offered travel stipends to encourage individual visits and offset the cost of observing daily life at the law school. We also count on current students through our Ambassador Program – to both connect prospective students with the greater Law School community and to share more insight into life as a law student at Richmond Law.

We know that increasing the diversity at the Law School is an ongoing process and we are committed to that goal with our students, both current and future. If you would like to meet with the Admissions team or serve as a Law Ambassador, please do not hesitate to reach out to Dean Heck.

### **What steps has Richmond Law taken toward a more diverse faculty and staff?**

The faculty has taken a number of steps to make the faculty hiring process more equitable and inclusive. For example, every faculty search committee has a diversity advocate who receives training in best practices in faculty hiring. The diversity advocate helps the committee build a diverse applicant pool and proactively ensure that diversity and inclusion are part of the evaluation process. In addition, during the interview process all candidates are specifically



asked how their teaching and/or scholarship would contribute to the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Staff searches include a similar focus on increasing diversity in the candidate pool, as well as examining candidates' contributions to a diverse and inclusive community. Going forward, a diversity advocate will be included on the teams recruiting for staff positions.

That said, we fully recognize that we have more work to do in this area.

### **What steps has Richmond Law taken toward more inclusive classrooms?**

Recruiting a diverse student body and faculty is only the first step in creating a truly inclusive school. The attitude and practices of inclusivity must be carried over into all aspects of the educational experience. In keeping with this goal, many faculty members have worked to develop their ability to engage in "inclusive pedagogy," a student-centered style of teaching that recognizes that students bring different backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities to the classroom. Professor Meredith Harbach led a University-wide conference on inclusive pedagogy last year, and prior to that, the Faculty/Staff Diversity & Inclusion Committee organized a faculty training in recognizing and counteracting the biases that impede a truly inclusive classroom experience.

### **There was a reference at the Community Meeting to T.C. Williams. Who was he?**

Although details about the life of Thomas C. Williams Sr. are somewhat sparse, we know that he was a businessman who founded a successful tobacco manufacturing and export company in Richmond in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. He was a graduate of Richmond College, and following his death in 1889, his family gave the school \$25,000, enabling the College to reopen the Law School which had temporarily closed due to lack of funds. He is sometimes confused with a different T.C. Williams, Thomas Chambliss Williams, who was a 20<sup>th</sup>-century public-school superintendent in Alexandria, Virginia, and was well-known for defending those schools' segregation policies. There is a high school in Alexandria named for this latter T.C. Williams.