



March 6, 2020

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

I'm grateful to all who participated in Tuesday's Community Meeting and shared feedback via the online form. It's clear that we have a good deal of work to do as we progress toward a more inclusive law school community – one made stronger by ensuring that each member feels welcomed in their professional home here at Richmond Law.

At Tuesday's meeting, speakers shared stories and feedback that highlighted several themes. These themes included clear requests for accountability and transparency from administrators; a need for a more diverse student body, faculty, and staff; a call for consistently inclusive classroom experiences shaped by faculty interactions and curricular content; and a desire for continued engagement on these issues with and amongst faculty and staff. Perhaps most importantly, I was reminded that, as faculty, everything we do and say in the classroom impacts our students.

In addition to these themes, there were some requests for specific information, and I have attached an FAQ document that addresses these questions. But what I'd like to focus on below is what happens next.

These are the concrete steps we will take.

Survey & Strategy

- We will develop a law school Diversity & Inclusion Plan that lays out short-term and long-term principles and goals for achieving a more equitable law school, and we will share important updates related to the plan on a new webpage devoted to issues surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion. The website is scheduled to launch this summer.
- We will hire a consultant to conduct a climate survey to collect data on law student experiences and set a baseline for growth and improvement. This data will supplement ongoing conversations and individual student experiences shared with your administration.

Events, Training & Programming

- We will add workshops, training, and events for faculty and staff on topics surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion. These sessions will occur a minimum of once per semester.
- We will increase by \$10,000 existing funding for student events that promote diversity and inclusion, or for travel to conferences and job fairs that promote diversity and inclusion.
- We will establish monthly meetings between the SBA Diversity & Inclusion Committee and Law School administration.

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- We will host a Community Meeting every semester for discussion and feedback on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- We will re-evaluate the diversity and inclusion-focused portion of Orientation.

New Reporting Avenues

- We will continue to make available an online [form](#) for students to provide feedback to Law School administrators on issues including diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- We will collaborate with Common Ground to review the [Student Complaint Form](#) and process, including how it functions in the Law School and whether it should be improved.

Recruitment & Hiring

- We will continue to review recruitment techniques in admissions, including developing new marketing materials and incorporating more student experiences on the website.
- We will use a trained diversity advocate on hiring teams for both faculty and staff positions.

Again – thank you for being a part of this important work. As we implement these steps and explore other ways to continue to improve, I will keep you updated on our progress. And I invite your continued feedback throughout this process of creating a law school in which all students, faculty, and staff are valued and treated equitably.

Sincerely,

Dean Perdue