

Association for Equity and Inclusion in Journalism
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 12, 2020

Wednesday, August 12, 2020, 2:30 - 4:20 p.m. EDT, Zoom

Attendees: Brett, Matthew, Susan, Alex, Haneen, Lilo, Safiyah, Tobin

I. Story circle update

- **Story circle is coming up in two weeks; it is scheduled for Monday, August 24, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.**
- Safiyah will be meeting Anita on Monday, August 17 and will give us an email update afterward
- All story circle slots have been filled
 - Two students signed up as both students and faculty, so two faculty spots may still be open; Safiyah will check the Eventbrite list
- We need to split students and faculty into groups
 - We'll try to divide students into groups based on year standing
 - We haven't had any students request not to be placed with certain faculty
- Anita's questions are not centred on race, so though the framing of the event poster focuses on anti-racism, students will have the chance to raise other issues

II. Review of the mission statement

- The Paul Menton Centre uses "students with disabilities," as does the government; social justice groups tend to use "disabled students"
- Final draft mission statement pending review by other AEIJ members:

"The Association for Equity and Inclusion in Journalism is a student-led group dedicated to informing, advising, and working with the Carleton journalism program to address racism, ableism, queerphobia, transphobia and other forms of oppression and microaggressions in journalism and journalism education. The association's role includes creating activities and opportunities for students and pushing for changes such as diversifying curriculum, achieving better representation at all levels of the program, and more. Our mission is to make the journalism school a safe(r) space for Black, Indigenous, and students of colour, 2SLGBTQ+ students, and **students with disabilities/disabled students.**"

III. JSOC Welcome Week

- Every year, JSOC hosts a Welcome Night to showcase journalism-related clubs such as the Charlatan, CKCU and Journalists for Human Rights
- This year, the event will take the form of a virtual Welcome Week hosted on Zoom
 - Each club will hold a drop-in interactive Q&A, where students can pop in and find out more about the club
 - The event will be open to students of all years, but attendees tend to be first-year students

- Each club will select a time slot between 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., on one day from Monday, September 14 to Friday, September 18
 - Each slot will be 60 to 90 minutes; JSOC will set up a Zoom link for the meeting
 - JSOC has reached out to eight clubs, but AEIJ gets first pick for its time slot
- During our slot, we can introduce AEIJ, its connection to journalism, its significance, etc.
 - It'll be a good chance to tell students about our work and recruit new members
 - JSOC encourages clubs to put their own spin on the event
 - We can consider creating a "human library" where students can share their experiences at the school
- Club reps will be asked to stay for the entirety of their time slot
 - Haneen and Alex have volunteered to help out; Alex can talk her experiences with navigating the Paul Menton Centre and requesting accommodations
 - **If other AEIJ members would like to participate, we can set up shifts for the event;** Safiyah will send out an email to see who else is interested
- A representative from JSOC will also share their experience with the club
 - Our JSOC liaison in this regard will be Lilo or Pascale
- Haneen will be AEIJ's main representative/contact person for this event
 - Details are currently being finalized but Lilo will be in touch
- Brett will reach out to Randy Boswell to ask about the first-year journalism orientation
 - Will see if it's possible to make AEIJ a part of it, or at least introduce our association's work
- Matthew will reach out to whoever is organizing the graduate journalism orientation to see if AEIJ can be mentioned

IV. Review of July 15's meeting and plans for an AGM

- Ikram mentioned not worrying too much about logistics; we should see what works and what doesn't and expect to change our approach accordingly
- Hopefully, the story circle will help us find out what students want support with
 - We should take note of what students say when they talk about what they would've done or what they want to see from the program
 - These notes can come from Anita's final report or from each group's facilitator's notes
- The allies group can come later, after we've finalized our association's structure
 - Setting up a committee for allies soon is also an option
 - Allies won't necessarily have a voice and a role in how AEIJ is shaped, but creating a committee will give them a space to work with us and support us as necessary
- AGMs are a chance for us to introduce our Executive Board, explain AEIJ's mission, structure
 - We can put our mission statement before the general membership, mentioning this is what the Executive Board has developed and putting it to a general vote
 - We can also present our general plans for the coming year (i.e. hosting an inward-facing and an outward-facing event)

- We should make clear during the meeting who is allowed to vote and who isn't
 - Our Executive Board can decide this beforehand, or we can leave it as an open question to discuss during the AGM
- The AGM can be scheduled for a week or two weeks after JSOC's Welcome Week, so that we can mention it during our time slot
 - Setting a date for the AGM also gives us a deadline for figuring out our structure
- If we determine what positions we want filled ahead of the AGM, then candidates can make their pitch during the meeting
 - There may be a position for a representative of the allies committee
 - We can finalize Exec Board roles for current members who are already fulfilling a position's responsibilities, and then hold an official election for the Exec Board in 2021
- After the story circle, we can discuss our plans for Welcome Week and the AGM

V. Procedure for meeting minutes and review and adoption of July 22's minutes

- We will make a motion at the beginning of every meeting to accept the meeting agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting
 - This main motion needs to be seconded, after which it is open for discussion
 - Members can propose edits to the minutes or the agenda as motions to amend; these amendments must be seconded and then passed through a majority vote to apply to the main motion
 - The minutes and agenda, amended as necessary, become official documents once they are passed through a majority vote
- We should adhere to a formal meeting structure because AEIJ is doing important work and we need to ensure the decisions we make are legitimate
 - Following Robert's Rules for approving meeting minutes encourages contribution, ensures members have the chance to clarify their statements and prevents misquoting
- Tobin will continue to send meeting minutes to all AEIJ members
 - Members can pencil in amendments as edits/suggestions on the Google Doc
 - These amendments will be reviewed at the next meeting and Tobin will approve passed amendments on the spot
 - Once the minutes have been reviewed and approved, they'll be made public via our website
- Brett will update AEIJ's page to include a section where we can post our meeting minutes
 - AEIJ's page will look similar to the journalism program's [Accountability page](#)
 - Brett will also post our new mission statement once it has been sent for review and approved by other AEIJ members
- July 22's meeting minutes approved as corrected

VI. Brett's PWG update

- The Permanent Working Group (PWG) on Anti-Racism and Inclusion's mandate and structure are outlined on the j-school's Accountability page
 - Brett and Matthew are liaisons with AEIJ
 - Other members include Vicky McArthur, the program director of the media production and design program; Sarah Everts and Adrian Harewood, an incoming adjunct professor
- Adrian is working as an official advisor for the PWG and will be creating a new course for the journalism program that will be launched this year
 - Adrian is also teaching JOUR 4001 in the winter term, through which he'll be able to reach all fourth-year students
 - Adrian was hired last spring and the course he's developing was put into the budget last December
- Matthew is teaching JOUR 5000, the foundational master's level course that all MJ students must take when they enter the program (the graduate equivalent of JOUR 1001/1002)
- An outline of new faculty and an explainer on the courses they'll be teaching will be coming to the j-school's site
- Brett will look into reformatting the Accountability page so that the Progress section shows newest updates first and the Progress section comes before the Plan section

VII. Review of the Equity Checklist

- The [Equity Checklist](#) came out of AEIJ discussions and had been in development since the end of June (it was referenced in Susan and Allan's letter)
- Initial reactions to the checklist: the checklist items are quite broad and seem to have been presented as general recommendations
- The PWG is gathering resources to help professors and instructors implement checklist items in their courses; three resources have been/will be developed:
 - J-Schools Canada has hired someone from the Canadian Association of Black Journalists (CABJ) to put together resources such as readings, journalistic examples and lists of guest speakers that can speak to more than equity and inclusion; the deadline for this resource is August 14 and it will be made available to all journalism instructors for use in their courses
 - Carleton j-school alum Atong Ater and the Federal Black Employee Caucus have created a list of resources on anti-Black racism, which has already been made available to journalism instructors
 - Gowlene (an AEIJ member) has been hired to work with faculty to improve diversity in the program and create a list of guest speakers that faculty can invite to speak in their classes
- The Equity Checklist is new as a guiding document meant to help faculty as they draft curricula; it asks professors and instructors to look at their course materials through an equity and inclusion lens
- The checklist has been reviewed by Equity and Inclusive Communities
- The checklist is living document and is expected to change over time

- Re accessibility and online courses: this version of the checklist is worded for the moment we're in but it will be adjusted and amended as necessary for the next term
- The PWG has asked professors and instructors to inform the program head of how their courses/curricula have been impacted by the checklist (e.g. how the professor has reviewed and revised their guest list, altered their lineup of readings, etc.)
 - At the faculty meeting, Brett shared his experience with reviewing his course and recognized that improvement is ongoing
- Checklist recommendation: specificity may help professors and instructors approach the document as more of a checklist, making it a more practical resource
 - Encouraging quantification through the checklist's wording (e.g. a checklist item could be, "Does at least half of the guest speaker list consist of racialized individuals?")
 - Faculty members have already taken the first step with awareness; quantification/reflection is the second step
- Introducing greater diversity to the program is a process, so we should have faith in how instructors are trying their best to improve their courses
 - Instead of the program head dictating requirements for curricula, the checklist is presented as a product of the journalism program presenting a standard that it hopes to reach
 - The story circle will likely help faculty see the importance and urgency of addressing challenges faced by BIPOC students in the program
- Lisa Khoo, CBC's unconscious bias/diversity program leader, will be giving all journalism staff a one-day anti bias training session before the fall term begins
 - The full-day session is the first of likely more training to come in the future
- Brett will be sending a note to inform faculty of how the PWG hopes professors will adopt the checklist and report on their course changes going forward
 - Brett will word them as prompts (e.g. "What examples of journalism are you using? How many were produced by racialized journalists?")
- Checklist recommendations for the "Accessibility" portion
 - Faculty should be encouraged to offer flexibility in the shape/format of assignments
 - The framing should be changed to place the burden on professors instead of students to address challenges to accessibility (e.g. instead of "Ask students to inform you of any accommodation they require," something like, "Did you conduct a poll to ask about students' accessibility needs?")
- Checklist recommendation: turning statements into specific questions so that it is easier for faculty to provide feedback on how they considered the checklist in the creation of their curricula
- The PWG will redraft the checklist and reshare it with AEIJ
 - The checklist will be left as it is on the website for now since it is a living document; amendments will be made as necessary
 - **AEIJ members are encouraged to continue making recommendations**

VIII. Update from Paul on the mentorship program

- The Carleton University Alumni Association is designating five to 10 mentors for the fall term as the first cohort for the journalism mentorship program's launch (candidates include reporters from the Walrus, CBC, CNN)
- In September, once AEIJ has recruited a good number of mentees, the mentorship program will begin and can grow to include more mentors

IX. Closing thoughts on the story circle and the next meeting

- The story circle facilitators are Brett, Anita, Safiyah and Susan
- There may be three extra faculty spots since two students mistakenly signed up and Brett can give up his ticket since he's a facilitator
- Safiyah will email AEIJ members next week after meeting with Anita
- Safiyah will circulate a meeting agenda ahead of the next meeting, currently scheduled for August 26 (after the story circle)
- Safiyah adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m. EDT

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 26, 2:30 p.m. EDT



Tobin Ng

Approved August 26, 2020