

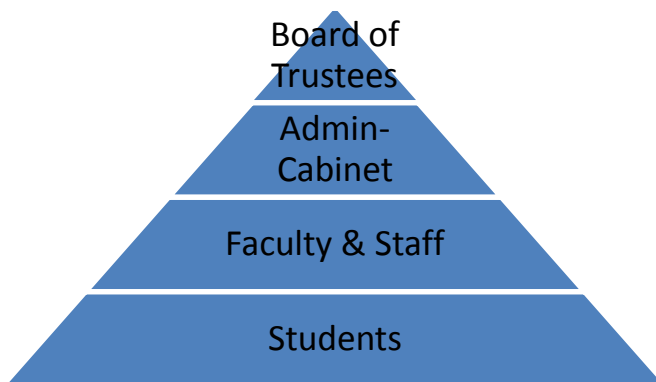
**College Council Notes DRAFT  
January 26, 2018**

**Welcome:** Christina Erickson welcomed everyone to first 2018 College Council at 8:31a.m., and asked all to introduce themselves to the group.

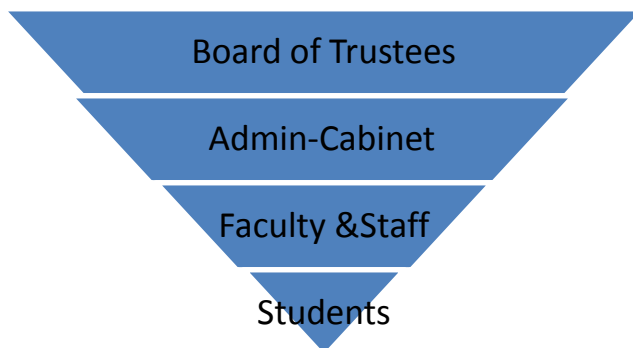
**Opening Comments:** When Christa, Christina and President Laackman met to talk about the topic for this College Council meeting, Christa suggested the Student Leadership experience. The purpose of this Council meeting is to take a deeper dive into the experiences of our student leaders, both positive and challenging.

As a way to frame this conversation, the President asked, “have you ever seen a diagram that has change your world view?” At a recent meeting with the Board of Trustees, one of the Board members shared the following diagram regarding shared governance:

**TRUTH – Board of Trustees has a much smaller view of truth than the students have of truth.**



**VISION - Board of Trustees has a much larger view of the College’s vision than students have of vision.**



We need to have the Faculty, Staff, and Cabinet more aware of the truth of the Champlain College experience, and we need to have students and others understand the vision for Champlain College. Some of the re-imagining of what Champlain College Professional Education means started at the recent Town Hall. There will be many more opportunities to engage in these conversations and make the community aware of our future vision and planning.

**Student Presentation:** Immediately following the meeting with Christa, Christina and the President, Christa and the SGA leadership set out to survey student leaders' experiences, both positive and challenging. Christa and Bianca shared some of the preliminary survey results with the Council and here are a few highlights. (*Note:* Linda Murphy has the presentation, so please ask her if you are interested in having this presentation.)

Of the 180 student leaders, we received responses from 53 of them, which is 28%. Most student leaders have served as a leader for more than one year.

Favorite parts of being a student leader:

- Community involvement and giving back to the Champlain community
- Building relationships; meeting other students is fulfilling
- Connection overall to Champlain; fond of the College and like creating a positive impact on the community

Worst Parts about being a student leader:

- Stress created while trying to balance leadership and other commitments
- Seeking support from staff; student leaders would like more guidance and more respect for their leadership roles
- High expectations and impact on mental health; leaders feel their health is at risk because of unrealistic pressure and stress

While many student leaders enjoy their student leader experiences and believe they have benefited from these experiences, some student decide to discontinue being a leader due to the stress. The stress comes from both the role, and trying to balance all commitments and the environment.

When asked how can we support and empower our student leaders so that they can navigate challenges more successfully and serve as positive role models for their peers, the answers included allowing for greater opportunities for support and recognition.

What changes would like to see

- Internal checks and balances between student leaders and the "pro staff" so there is respect for the student leadership role and the demands on the student leader.
- Increased organization
- Positive recognition and respect for student leader efforts

Students are recognized during the student employment celebration, but most recognition events celebrate the top of the top of the student leaders.

In general student leaders enjoy being in their roles and could be more impactful if there was greater support and recognition for being student leaders and for the work they do in those roles.

If student leaders are well taken care of and healthy, they are in a better position to take care of other students and serve as role models.

The Council appreciated the survey data and the presentation very much and had a good clarifying conversation. President Laackman commended the SGA for the quick turnaround on this survey and for the presentation, which he will share with the College leadership.

More than 50% of student leaders hold more than one leadership role.

Student Leaders would like the same things as staff and faculty, for example, recognition, life balance, etc.

Unrealistic expectations for student leaders come from the caliber of over-achieving students at Champlain, as well as the expectations inherit in some leadership roles. This is a good introduction for what graduates will face as they enter the full-time work world.

The President shared that the Cabinet and Deans recently engaged in an assessment (Strengthscope) and were able to learn more about what gives them strength and energy and what saps their energy. Cabinet and Deans are exploring how best to balance all their commitments. Kudos to students for trying to learn and understand this now, as this will put them ahead of the game.

Some student leaders seek out faculty, staff, supervisors and advisors for support, and other students do not feel comfortable doing that. Some students have sought out guidance and been told they just have to work through it, and still others have shared personal matters, only to have it held against them. There were comments that suggested when personal matters were shared, the student was still expected to keep working and finish the job/project.

There should be special attention to students' mental health. It was suggested that we create specific channels where students do not have to wait 2-3 weeks for a counselor when the need arises.

**Small Group Activity:** The President shared that he, Christina and Christa wanted the Council to specifically focus on student leaders as they set the tone for our students. Student leaders are the "go to" people and role models for all students. If Student Leaders can live lives of purpose and meaning with less or no anxiety, so can all students.

The Council divided into three groups and explore this question: How do we support our student leaders so that they navigate challenges more successfully and serve as positive role models for their peers?

**Small Group Report Out:** The groups had more questions and conversations and not as many suggestions, but several thoughts ideas. Comments and suggestions were as follows:

- Exit/Idea survey for student leaders who are leaving their leadership positions; later suggested that all student leaders should receive this exit/idea survey.
- Students could be referred to as co-workers in the work environment as they are co-workers and should be treated as such.
- When asked if the curriculum was a stress factor, the response was depending on the program and expectations as those vary and can vary by student experience and preparation.
- Lack of support was of concern for some as it is believed that mental health has been stigmatized and that can discourage some from getting help.
- A self-care curriculum/program, where the knowledge is turned into practice and ultimately skill for student leaders.
- Students want to be heard, so avenues for that – perhaps a student leader group facilitated by a mental health care provider. It was shared that Skip Harris has tried this without much student interest. It was also suggested that something like this could/should be mandated.
- What systems are in place that we need to communicate better?
- What systems can we put into place?
  - Team Meetings
  - Wellness groups for student leaders, noting that clinical needs are different than general well-being needs
  - Incident and bias report structure needs to be made known to all as there is a spectrum of knowledge among pro staff, advisors, etc. Advisors and Supervisors must be aware of all resources available to students
- How can we get more students involved in more leadership roles so the leaders do not need to be in 10 roles? Our 2020 Plan calls for 700 student leaders by 2020, which may be a stretch, but we need to do better.
  - Hiring – do not encourage multiple roles
  - How much does finances, working, work-study play a part? Not all positions are paid, so some student might feel it necessary to work and be a student leader in a role that does not pay.
  - Expand leadership and work nomination pools
- Expand leadership growth opportunities, for example, women’s leadership class and retreat; emerging leaders program for first year students – can this be expanded?

Christa compared student leadership to a machine, explaining that some parts work well and should be maintained, and some parts do not work well at all. The answer is not just replacing bad parts, but dismantling the machine to explore new and healthy operations. Thus, continue the good parts and reimagine the parts that are not working and reimagine the machine as a whole.

It was suggested that we try a Pilot Program as a way for student leaders to talk and be heard without any consequence for sharing.

As we moved into action, Christina reminded the Council that we are an advisory board to the President and the President’s Cabinet. It was clear faculty and staff listened and learned some

things today. The President shared there is a lot going on throughout the College with varying effects and various levels of awareness. The President has more contexts with more truth regarding why we are doing what we need to keep doing, for example, the bias incident report process review. The President will share this presentation and conversation with the Cabinet.

As we reinvent professional education, we must attend to the realities of what students are experiencing. We cannot put more expectations on top of what we are already doing, we must as Christa suggested, take the machine apart and do different things.

**College Council Discussion Topics:** If you have suggestions for topics, please let Christina, Christa or the President know those suggestions. The President appreciates hearing our voices.

**Adjourn:** The College Council meeting adjourned at 9:30a.m. The next College Council meeting will be Friday, March 30, 2018, 8:30a.m., in the Morgan Room, Aiken Hall.