

**College Council Notes DRAFT**  
**April 27, 2018**

**Welcome:** Christa welcomed everyone to the last College Council meeting of the academic year at 8:34a.m. Christa introduced President Laackman who introduced Rodney Rivers, Senior, Psychology major. Rodney did his senior capstone on the Champlain College Pet Policy. The President heard Rodney's presentation and thought the College Council would appreciate an update on a policy that was supported by the Council a few years ago.

**Pet Policy:** Rodney Rivers shared the results of his Senior Capstone regarding the Champlain College Pet Policy. He began with sharing his awareness of his own biases as he embarked upon an assessment and recommendations related to the Policy, including his love of pets. He shared that as a community we must remain sensitive to members who may have allergies and/or anxieties/phobias/fears related to pets and animals on campus.

Rodney was able to survey *264 participants, including 88 staff, 50 faculty and 150 students*. Rodney found that a good number of our community members were unaware of our current Pet Policy, as well as unaware of the impact of ADA and the Fair Housing Act's impact on pet policies. When asked about suggestions to improve the policy, many suggestions were in violation of the ADA and, or the Fair Housing Act. One recommendation that Rodney made was to enhance educational efforts for the community to so that more were aware of the Pet Policy, ADA and the Fair Housing Act.

Considering space on campus is limited and connected, and we can assume we have community members who are allergic or phobic to animals, we would not want anyone to feel they could not freely walk around campus. Rodney was hopeful we could create "pet friendly" areas. Doing this would mean some students, staff and faculty would need to navigate the campus differently than others. Not wanting to have some members navigate campus differently than others, the recommendation that came from this data was to host more animal assisted/engaged activities. Approximately 85% of those who responded to the survey supported more opportunities for animal interaction.

Rodney shared that changing the policy to allow pets is not what we need, but, simply to ensure we are policing animals appropriately and to host more opportunities to interact with animals would meet the needs of many. For example, with notification, animals in the SmartSpace should be continued. Animals in the library during finals week could be considered and continuing with puppies for SGA voting would be appreciated by many. These programs would improve engagement with animals and enhance the mental health of students who are not allergic, phobic or afraid.

In summary, Rodney's research data supported more education on the Champlain College Pet Policy, the ADA, and the Fair Housing Act; and more pet friendly opportunities involving animals on campus in a controlled way is recommended.

**By-Law Revisions:** Christine, Ciaran, Melissa and Linda continued to work on revising the By-Laws so that they would align with the new format of the College Council. Attached to the

calendar invite was a marked-up version so everyone could follow the changes made, as well as a clean version for clarity. The By-Laws Committee presented revised By-Laws to the College Council for consideration.

The outstanding issue was adding a member of the Adjunct Faculty to this group. Adjunct faculty are not compensated for additional responsibilities. The President shared that both he and the Provost receive on-going feedback from Adjunct Faculty. The By-Laws Committee accepted not having a member of the Adjunct Faculty added to this group at this time. While there was concern that not many people were at this meeting to vote on the By-Laws, there were no other substantive concerns regarding the By-Laws.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the April 27, 2018 DRAFT version of the College Council By-Laws. The Council unanimously approved this motion. The By-Laws will now go to the President for his and the Cabinet's consideration.

**College Priorities and Budget:** The President shared that one of his goals has been to increase awareness and transparency as it relates to the College's budget. This year the leadership and Finance embarked upon a Strategic Budget Plan. Prior to this, the President and Cabinet asked themselves, in general, what are the College's priorities for next academic year, and they are as follows:

- Student success (Trad/CPS)
- Salary increases - faculty & staff
- Meeting enrollment goals (Trad/CPS)
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Non-tuition sources of revenue
- GMHEC (Green Mountain Higher Education Consortium) – an organization in which Champlain partners with St. Michaels and Middlebury to consolidate operational processes in order to save money, for example, purchasing (P-Card) health plan and purchases in order to take advantage of efficiencies and drive down costs.

The Staff and Faculty by department and division have created a Strategic Budget Plans which is now a 300-page document with these priorities as the framework to guide decision-making. The President asked for College Council's input on these priorities and he will speak with the Faculty Senate about this same issue later today.

The President clarified what non-tuition sources of revenue were including conference and event rentals and business opportunities for the Centers of Excellence (to be renamed Centers of Experience). Tuition makes up 85% of revenue for Champlain College.

The President shared that Angela Batista is advising him on Diversity & Inclusion initiatives, which include the new role of Assistant Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion. In addition, the student walk-out initiative also gave rise to additional recommendations for diversity and inclusion, including staff and faculty training. The topic of maternity/family leave being considered disability leave was raised. This is on a longer list, but not a priority for next year.

The Council discussed “mandatory diversity and inclusion training” for faculty. The Provost has shared publicly that we have had 80% faculty participation in training because it is not mandatory. The thinking is that faculty win over other faculty and our role is to focus on outcomes and not process. The outcome is for all faculty to be more comfortable with difficult conversations in the classroom. We need to find successful paths to engage and train as many as possible and making something mandatory is not the best path.

We are adding “Creates an inclusive classroom” to the IDEA evaluation form so we will have feedback and opportunity to talk with individual faculty about how best to move forward. We also discussed opportunities to engage adjunct faculty.

One of the initiatives Angela is working on is a robust bias reporting form and system to educate students on how to share incidents with the administration and faculty. We will take action as students let us know about bias related incidents. If we do not know about matters, we cannot respond.

Additional budget matters to be considered included game art labs and creative art lab space and resources in general. Maintenance issues were raised including Foster Hall carpet mold.

It was suggested that we consider a position for a system administrator for traditional programs to help plan ahead as well as resolve issues, beyond the Help Desk staff. For example, be proactive with software and hardware updates.

**College Council 17-18 Year Reflections:** We believe today’s attendance is due to it being the last day of classes. The President shared that at the beginning of the academic year, he asked College Council to do things differently. As a matter of fact, Ciaran led the charge and asked all of us – why are we here? This prompted the President to consider the role and value of College Council, which is to hear input from all constituents and to talk through things he is wrestling with – top of mind matters.

The President has found conversations with College Council valuable. In reviewing the year, we discussed several issues including what it means to be a Champlainer; questions about what we love about Champlain and what we hope the President does and what we hope the President does not do. These conversations reaffirmed the President’s views that we are a caring community and that we put students at the center. We discussed student success and how to support student success better.

In our conversations about student leadership and mental health, the President considered this conversation as he considered our goal of reinventing professional education. We value the path of knowing what you want as an academic major. As a matter of fact, this has been part of how we have defined what it means to be a Champlainer. For those who are “undecided” they can be made to feel out of place and may even leave Champlain. Our data shows undecided students leave at a higher rate. Our culture of this straight forward moving path has a down side for some who are undecided. This pause in conversation allowed us to think about student mental health and how do we create an environment that helps and supports all students as they progress through Champlain, decided or undecided.

The President looks forward to these meetings and enjoys the format and hearing honest feedback. The President's intent was to foster an open environment so that we could give him feedback. It is critical that he hears open, honest voices from all constituents.

Other members of the Council also shared their appreciation for the new format and open exchange of conversation. The new format is working and we are talking with each other and not at each other.

**Future Topics:** A future topic suggested for the Council is the future of the College. The Council would welcome a conversation on the President's vision, where we want to be in five years, anything related to the future of the College, including the future of the curriculum and the future of the Core. The President commented that he continues to hear from alumni that they hated the Core while involved with it and so grateful they had the Core. When the President asks students about their Favorite professors, the answers are often names of Core Professors. All this is to say we do need to make changes, with every program, we must stay current and relevant. It was suggested that we look at offering 300-level Core courses during the summer. In addition, we should look at increasing flexibility in what counts in this sequence.

Another topic for next year is the downtown building effect of the College.

**Adjourn:** The 2017-2018 College Council meeting was adjourned at 9:32a.m. All the best as we end this semester. The next College Council meeting will be in September 2018.