

College Council
Thursday, January 7, 2021

Minutes

Present: Kevin McGruder, Elise Peyroux, April Welford, Hannah Montgomery, Sharen Neuhardt, John Jacobs, Shadia Alvarez, Noah Greer, Christine Reedy, Mila Cooper, Dean Snyder, Kim Landsbergen, Jennifer Grubbs, KaDae Brockington, Gariot Louima, Coco Gagnet, James Lippincott

Events of January 6 in Washington

Shadia offered a space for the Council to share thoughts and feelings about the storming of the Capitol Building yesterday. April mentioned that Friday Forums were helpful for the community to discuss current events.

Approval of Minutes

April moved that we approve the December 10, 2020 minutes. Noah seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Report Back: Senior VPs' Responsibilities

Shadia reported the areas of responsibility for each of the three senior VPs. Sharen heads student affairs, admissions, and academic affairs. John leads finance, facilities, and operations, and Shadia heads of equity, CSKC, advancement, marketing, communications, grants, and external relations.

Goals for the Senior VPs are:

- Culture: rebuild trust across all levels of the college and the local community
- Teaching and Learning: affirm a rigorous and forward-thinking curriculum matched with respected and effective faculty committed to governance and the long-term sustainability of Antioch College
- Financial Sustainability: establish a sustainable budget model that aligns with the mission and vision of the college.

Presidential Search

Shadia reported that

1. The board is actively seeking a chair, someone in the region who knows the community.
2. The board is thinking about committee members on the committee: two student reps, two staff reps, and two faculty reps.
3. There will be a series of town hall meetings to make sure voice is given to as many members as possible.

Discussion of College Council minutes

Shadia reviewed some of the comments that were made during our discussion time at the last meeting. She suggests creating ground rules surrounding how we'll have these conversations and

asks how we create the time to go deep into these conversations and come out with something that works for our community.

Kevin stated that, for context, the faculty are the only ones at Antioch that have a review process, which is quite extensive and is outlined in the faculty handbook. It is different than the review process than other employee reviews.

Shadia posed the following: What do we need to be to have courageous conversations and critiques? What norms or ground rules are in place or what norms do we need to put in place?

- ___April - Feedback should be given in a respectful, constructive fashion.
- ___John - How much transparency can we introduce into this process when we're talking about delicate issues.
- ___Shadia - We need to be committed to transparency but also to the confidentiality required.
- ___April - If there are confidential conversations that need to be had, we should move to a closed session.
- ___John - define the relationship between College Council and the Board. There seems to be confusion.

Shadia pointed out a few things she's seen: respect and acknowledging history without being paralyzed by it.

Further, we need to require a commitment to making sure all voices are heard.

There will be times when we have a conversation or would like to push something forward that might be good for our individual department or group but isn't necessarily good for the whole or the sustainability of the College. These conversations will require courage.

- Coco - Rules of engagement can be turned into an accountability process for decision. Who are the stakeholders? Who needs to be involved in this conversation? She referenced Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation.
<https://www.citizenshandbook.org/arnsteinsladder.html>
- Shadia stated there will be times when there is no quick fix or a time when don't have a solution that feels good to us as a community.
- Sharen - the three Sr. VPs believe this calendar year represents the year where we starting DOING thing. She emphasized that we are called to be student centered. Students are our products, our business. We want everybody at the table. We don't want Antioch to be a bcc environment. The Sr. VPs will try harder to communicate in a way that helps to move an issue forward, getting all the right people at the table and to be more transparent. The people in this council are leaders.
- John stated that we have to introduce a sense of urgency that we haven't in the past. We've spent a lot of time in the last 6-9 months examining what we need to do and, as Sharen said, now is the time to do them. We must adopt the agile process approach.
<https://www.methodsandtools.com/archive/archive.php?id=115#:~:text=Agile%20iterations%20enable%20frequent%20interactions,%22traditional%22%20process%20improvement%20approach>

- Hannah appreciates this conversation. Some silence comes from a place where many of us have been in SLT meetings and has sometimes felt like there's an hour to talk about the role of the body but there isn't movement outside of that time together. She appreciates that we can take projects outside of this meeting time.
- Jennifer - She hopes the council can foster this culture of action but also that it trickles out to other committees and there is a level of accountability. She wants us to get to a point where we have an action plan with a timeline.
- Elise - with regard to the norms we must recognize what worked in our previous patterns and what did not. We must understand how we operated previously and recognize where we need to make changes and make new ways of operating while supporting our mission. She stated, from a finance perspective, we must recognize what are soft costs and what are hard costs. Soft costs must be addressed just like hard costs.
- Shadia stated she will draft the covenant we've come up with. This also calls us to be accountable.

Three question:

1. Who do we need to be to model courage and transformation?
2. What is our process for decision making? We should refer to our bylaws to make sure we're all in agreement when making decisions.
3. What are the areas of priority for our Council to move us forward?

Gariot and Noah will work on the part of the bylaws that addresses decision making and will bring it back to Council.

Shadia introduced the idea, begun by April, of a retreat. Coco agrees a retreat is better for reflection and hitting the depth we need. She agrees that, in the long term, this will make future work easier, and believes a community retreat may be the way to go. We must figure out who we are before bringing in a new president.

Elise stated that a retreat needs a clearly stated purpose. Mila reiterated Noah's comment about the role of this council vs. work that should be done in other departments. She shared her confusion about what College council is becoming and that she does not have a good sense of what we would do in retreat.

Sharen stated the importance of creating an agenda for Council's work over the next few months. We need this agenda to know what we need to accomplish. There are many hills we have to take and she requested from council members what hills are priorities.

Gariot believes College Council has dual responsibilities. The policies and procedures guide how we interact with each other, how we hold each other accountability and it's important for CC to be involved in the refinement of those documents. A lot of community issues are around how we live up to our policies such as SOPP and RDPP. College Council has some place to advise Sr. VPs on campus culture but it's also important to recognize the primary work of the college is to deliver an academic program. We can't have conversations in silo about whether there are elected members in the room without faculty at large being involved in those conversations. We

can't ignore the policy making work because it influences how we live and work in community together.

Sharen would like this group to decide which policies are important that we want to work on and provide advice to the Sr. VPs about what those are.

Antioch needs to work on aligning the institution to one where students get an amazing education, where faculty have a great quality of life, and where we have a path forward for the administration that works.

Shadia reminded Council of John's comment about being agile, and stated we are going to be required to pivot in this point in time.

Land Acknowledgement as College Position

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10SM8ulqj6gEya6fQrybZTfoq9Td4J2A4i5AsF6i5gmM/edit>

Coco drafted the draft document above which is intended to be proposed to the Board of Trustees. Her working group would like to propose this in Community Meeting at the end of January. Shane is working on a presentation to contextualize colonization and decolonization in higher ed and plan to have small group conversations with facilitators.

The land acknowledgement intent of community meeting is about taking this on as an official position. We can't assume everyone is on the same page in their awareness of colonization and how it affects our life at Antioch, so there will be an educational piece about colonization in higher and specifically at Antioch.

Jennifer stated that, if we adopt this acknowledgement and claim we support it, she wants it to be reflected in campus climate and we can honor the land but what about the labor and how the slave trade fostered the growth. We should have a statement acknowledging that too. She's pressing us to think about how this reflects who we are.

Coco said some of the bullet point state we are committed to the work and requires us to engage on a curricular and programmatic level. We need a conversation that brings this agreement into shared consciousness before we create working groups and get specific about ways to move forward.