

President Maloney's Campus Conversations

January 22, 2018, 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Fuller Aud, Administration Building

- President welcomed those in attendance and welcomed the students back to university
- At a forum in the fall, Dr. Ray Lewis asked what we would do when / if there was a racial incident on campus
 - President said we would follow the steps laid out by the Campus Climate Committee
- Last Thursday, a poster was defaced in a Sheehan Hall
 - The poster was put up by an RA
 - President Maloney was away on travel but was informed of the incident by the Dean of Students. Campus Police began an investigation.
 - A group of senior administrators held a conference call that evening and President Maloney put a message out to the campus decrying the incident and informing everyone of the investigation.
 - The following day, the Campus Climate Committee met to discuss what ought to be our next steps and to review the steps that were taken the night prior
 - Several recommendations came out of that group
 - One was to have campus community members sign a banner signifying "I stand against hate"
 - Several students were involved in the meeting and the Committee reached out to student groups to help facilitate further conversations and a student forum around this topic
- President is seeking everyone's thoughts and recommendations
 - He also offered up time for individuals to disclose their thoughts and recommendations in a more private setting
 - A graduate student recommended that we look at both sides before jumping to conclusions. She said that maybe this wasn't an act of hate, but an act of confusion.
 - President feels that this is a teachable moment, but that using the word that was used is never appropriate under any circumstance
 - Question was asked about what individuals and offices can do to show support and solidarity for our community
 - President would suggest taking a look at the self-study, conducted by NERCHE
 - The self-study showed that non-white students feel invisible on campus
 - In this regard we should think about our customer service and how we interact with students in doing our jobs
 - If you feel like you need help or training to help you address these issues with students, we can provide that to you
 - A faculty member mentioned that it was nice to find out about the incident through President Maloney's email, not by word of mouth from students or colleagues
 - He felt that this helped set the tone right away

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- President Maloney thanked those who saw the defaced poster and took the steps to take it down, rather than leaving it up
- The RA who created the original poster which said, "Be Part of Something Bigger than Yourself," asked what we can do to foster conversations for those who are not at this meeting today
 - Students have asked for student-led conversations about this
 - President will work with the Deans to make sure this happens
 - President asked that Student Leaders and Student Orgs facilitate some conversations
 - When we have conversations we need to be respectful of different views and have conversations in a balanced, thoughtful way
- Someone mentioned that when they saw the poster, they were not shocked as they hear language like this all the time on this campus. She felt like students of color are not well represented on campus through student clubs or organizations
 - President agreed, in some ways he wasn't surprised either, but nevertheless was saddened
 - President would be happy to have conversations about having more student groups and student support groups
 - In the hopes of developing ways to improve diversity, support and inclusion, the President developed the Campus Climate Group
- A question was asked about the makeup of the Campus Climate Committee
 - Provost Wims, a chair of the committee, said It is made up of 17 students, staff, and faculty
 - A follow-up question was asked about how students can get involved and if campus community members outside of the committee can see the notes from the committee meeting
 - Isaac Tesfay, head of diversity, talked about having another campus-wide forum that is being designed and proposed for the next fiscal year
 - We can post the minutes on the WSU web site for access to the WSU community
- A student on the campus climate committee mentioned that she became involved with the committee because the President attended a TWA meeting and asked for students to be involved
 - Because the committee is a steering committee there are opportunities for others to get involved along the way through subcommittee work, etc.

[For a link to the Worcester State University Strategic Plan please click here](#)

[For a link to President Maloney's Five Points of Action please click here](#)