

Campus Conversations with President Maloney

February 20, 2019 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Administration Building, Fuller Auditorium

President Maloney greeted everyone.

1. Campus Updates

- The President thanked several people, including Dean Roberta Kyle, for gaining approvals from the Board of Higher Education for the first two new graduate programs in approximately ten years, Master's in Public Management and Public Policy
- Campus governance has approved a certificate in addiction counseling.

2. Capital Projects Update

The May Street Building:

- Owned by the Worcester State Foundation, it is long overdue for action. The Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) has put out an RFQ call for architects. The goal, as stated during last year's space study, is to free up wet lab space in Ghosh Science and Tech Center.
- We need to have some deep conversations with the only current academic inhabitant of the building, the Sociology Department.
- Architect should be determined in mid-March and then we will engage with faculty about space needs.

LRC & SC:

- State passed a capital bond bill focused on critical repairs.
- We put up the LRC and Student Center as buildings in need of significant investment, and the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance is buying into the idea that the existing buildings are not worth investing in, that a combined right-sized facility should take their place.
- Expect to hear more in March about that architectural process.
- Note that the state moves very slowly.

Parking:

- Looking at options for another parking garage, three sites: N. Parking Lot, Chandler Street Lot, and President's house/property.

3. Student Hunger and Homelessness

- Recent news stories told of a statewide pilot program to combat student homelessness, and we are a part of it. Three QCC students and two WSU students – all fulltime students – are being housed in WSU rooms. Governor Baker has established funding for this initiative, and we are pleased as it is directly in line with University mission and priorities.

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- We recently opened a campus food pantry, in the Student Center, a collaboration between Urban Studies and Student Affairs, with Student Government Association involved. The pantry is listed as one beneficiary of the WSU "March Madness" days of giving on Mar. 19 & 20.

4. Positioning Study

- February 12th & 13th, two days of productive conversations about ways we can strategically grow the number of applications to WSU. While we are up 82 students from this time last year, it is only due to retention not to more applications. New student numbers are down.
- Focus of the study was to develop strategies, using survey methodology, to increase applications to WSU. Additionally, get the WSU name out into markets where we currently don't have a lot of name recognition.
- Now, up to the campus community to determine how we will adopt study recommendations and how quickly we will move.
- These are not optional conversations, WSU must act.
- The State and NECHE is getting involved in determining financial stability of colleges/universities.
- Positioning study offers opportunities to strengthen our position and to have a hand in determining our own fate.

Discussion:

- A discussion followed with several faculty members raising questions about the Positioning study. Pres. Maloney mentioned that advising was a key recommendation that emerges from the positioning study and that we need to engage within the rules of the contract on how can ramp it up.
- Faculty hiring was a topic.
- Next steps include reviewing the feedback provided via forms, then engaging the campus broadly. There is no script for how that will happen yet.
- It was said that WSU faculty could have undertaken the study. Pres. Maloney responded that third-party validation for the work that we do is a way to hold off forces outside the university, like state government, from telling us how we should run our university.
- A roadway project was deferred in order to cover the cost of the Art and Science Group's positioning study – we did not dip into the academic budget.
- All are welcome to get involved in the implementation process moving forward.