

**JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY
PROVOST'S COUNCIL**

Jeanne Colleran, Medora Barnes, Gwen Compton-Engle, Sherri Crahen, Margret Farrar,
Sr. Katherine Feely, SND, Jim Krukones, Mark McCarthy, Al Miciak, Michelle Millet, Terry
Mills, Martha Mondello Hendren, Maryclaire Moroney, Ed Peck, Mindy Peden, Nick Santilli,
Elizabeth Stiles, Brian Williams, David Wong.

January 27, 2016
8:00 a.m.; CAS Dean's Conference Room
Minutes

Present: J. Colleran, M. Barnes, G. Compton-Engle, S. Crahen, M. Farrar, K. Feely, J. Krukones, A. Miciak, M. Millet, T. Mills, M. Moroney, E. Peck, M. Peden, B. Williams, D. Wong; Guest: D. Carter

The minutes of the meeting of December 2, 2015, were approved.

J. Colleran welcomed Danielle Carter to the meeting and introduced the first and principal item on the agenda: the preparation of a University-wide conversation about racial discrimination on college campuses, with special focus on the situation at John Carroll, where the African American Alliance issued its own demands and began meeting with Fr. Niehoff last fall. As set forth in a draft sent to PC members prior to the meeting, a major goal of the conversation is “to bring our community into a shared understanding of what the AAA demanded and how the administration responded and is responding.” The University is called to this action by its “explicit moral and ethical commitment to acting as a just community and to forming our students to be ethical agents of social change.” It is envisioned that this event, scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, at 2:00 p.m., will include framing comments by K. Feely and J. Colleran on the reasons for holding the conversation, a review of the recent national student protest movement and the demands of the John Carroll AAA by D. Carter, the showing of excerpts from a video documentary about the AAA protest filmed by Robin Goist, a description of the University's response by J. Colleran, small-group discussions, and an “I commit” exercise to which participants would be invited by T. Mills. J. Colleran showed the PC the video clip she intended to use at the event. The small-group discussions are to be led by PC members, with a mix of faculty and staff at every table. J. Colleran will ask Fr. Niehoff to attend. The idea of inviting a cross-section of the student body to participate in the event was briefly considered; in the end, however, it was decided not to invite them at this time.

Attention then turned to the questions proposed for the table discussions, a set of which appeared on the draft. It was suggested, for instance, that a question that asked “Why is it so hard for me to talk about race” be changed to “What is it about race that makes it so difficult to talk about at JCU?” M. Farrar asked what the take-away from the small-group discussions is supposed to be. J. Colleran suggested that a connection be established with the University learning goals and its Jesuit mission. Concern was expressed about raising the issue of “white privilege” in the discussions. M. Peden urged reaching out to faculty who have been dealing with this issue in their own scholarship. It was decided that faculty interested in sharing such expertise in the

small-group discussions should contact T. Mills. A. Miciak wondered whether the questions in their original form were somewhat vague. M. Peden thought that the emphasis might be shifted to structures rather than individuals. J. Colleran said that we ought to presume that those who attend are of good will, so that the emphasis should be on how to contribute to making things better, for example, our own operations. K. Feely suggested using “connecting threads” from the recently issued Provost’s Report to establish a context for the discussion, with emphasis on two questions: 1) What might be done as a next step? 2) What might you bring to these efforts? T. Mills said that it is important to lean on our mission in order to bring about change. E. Peck cautioned that the February 3 event is only a beginning and thus should focus on the basics, for example, do we actually take notice of African American students on campus? J. Colleran asked that several people get together to rewrite the questions based on the PC discussion: M. Barnes, K. Feely, T. Mills, and A. Miciak.

J. Colleran also noted that we want to be able to promise those attending the event a list of resources. G. Compton-Engle wondered whether the display of comments posted on Yik Yak at the meeting might be a trigger to those who experience racism in personal ways. T. Mills responded that it is necessary to present this kind of evidence so that charges of racism could not simply be dismissed as AAA fabrications. The PC discussion then turned to the “I commit” part of the event. It was suggested that individual participants write down on a “sticky note” what they intend to do in order to promote respect on campus and post it on the wall or special sheet in the LSC, at the same time keeping a copy for themselves. It was also agreed that participation in the “I commit” exercise be voluntary. In addition, the PC members—serving as discussion stewards—would take notes at their tables about the activities and resources suggested by participants that might help make the University more inclusive. J. Colleran announced the formation of a logistics committee, including, among others, E. Peck, M. Moroney, and T. Mills. She herself would prepare an email to the campus community about the February 3 event.

Next, B. Williams briefly reviewed the fall-to-spring retention data. At this point, three students are trying to become full-time; everyone else is accounted for. A challenge was posed by a spike in first-year attrition. Between now and the next PC meeting, the Committee on Student Retention and Success will look into the background of the 117 first-year students who did not return for the spring semester. (While these students represent about \$750,000 in tuition, their withdrawal had no budget impact due to the moderate temperatures during the first weeks of winter. J. Colleran added that we made up the difference in other ways, but that we are not in a good place regarding the budget.) At the same time, there are success stories, e.g., students who ended the semester strongly after a weak start.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Minutes recorded by J. Krukones