

**Community Council Meeting
January 17, 2010**

Present- Shirley Collado (Co-Chair), Raymond Queliz '11 (Co-Chair), Staff Members: Linda Ross, Linda Schiffer (Alternate), Andrew Wentink, Faculty Members: Andrei Barashkov, and Quinn Mecham Student Members: James Schwerdtman '11, Rachel Sider '14 (Secretary), Kevin Broussard '11 (Alternate), Ariel Smith '11, Riley O'Rourke '12 (SGA President)

Leaving Early- Linda Schiffer, Quinn Mecham

Absent- Janet Rodrigues '12, Naomi Neff (Ex-Officio), Zach Hitchcock '13 (late), Joyce Mao, Addie Cunniff '13, Dan Prior '14 (Alternate)

Minutes from the January 11, 2010 meeting were approved (2 abstentions) and will go online. The Council's next meeting is January 24, 2010. Ariel Smith will take minutes at next week's meeting.

Gender Council Proposal Revisited: Students proposing the creation of a Gender Council clarified a few issues, and explained their changes to the proposal view in our December meeting. They also detailed the latest additions to the proposal, and ways they addressed the Council's previous questions/concerns. They seek a recommendation from the Community Council, then approval from the President, and then they can move on to solicit student applications and assemble the Council.

- Review from last time: A need for a Gender Council was visible in various College documents, is a resource for the entire Middlebury community
- Primary Functions- prevent crisis/gender related issues in the long run, provide guidance and intellectual resources for gender-related projects, educate the community (learn about how gender affects everybody)
- There is a hope that the Administration would invite Gender Council members to engage in discussions, take on specific issues (ex. Bathroom accessibility), propose policies (low retention rates of faculty, student, staff of color) through topical subcommittees.
- Leadership- student and faculty co-chairs (act to lead meetings and provide continuity for the Council), various ex-officio seats
- Student application- demonstrate a basis of the understanding of gender politics, past experience in social justice activism, example questions:
 - Why are you interested in serving on the Council?
 - Which courses, if any, have you taken related to gender, sexuality, race, disability, and ethnicity?
 - What would like to improve about the culture or institutional policies at Middlebury?
 - Define gender in own words.
- The goal would be to centralize efforts of disparate student organizations and College departments, (and improve communication) offer political resources to see goals to the end ultimately through a policy change.
 - Ideas include a "Summit on Gender", public blog, ex-officio seats, open meetings

- The Council would seek input from other organizations to see what kind of progress other groups have already made on a specific issue/policy decision.
- **Addressing Questions from last meeting:** (see FAQ sheet for complete explanation)
- 1) Gender goes beyond certain identities and populations, has relations to race/religion/nationality etc. The goal is to make a community where everyone feels like they can belong and flourish.
- 2) There isn't an organization dedicated to addressing needs of students/faculty/staff with regard to gender issues. Other committees (Community Council, SGA) do not have the background and knowledge to address gender related issues.
- 3) Community Council only relates to non-academic issues, but cannot address gender in the classroom. This would be a centralized and dependable resource.
- The Council would institutionalize the progress for gender awareness, and ensure that these attitudes carry on at the College.
- 4) Although there is concern about creating more red tape, creating a Gender Council would only make the process more accessible/simple in creating policies.
- **How would it relate to other diversity organizations and positions?** Offer seat to diversity organization members every year, gather institutional memory (reports etc) from other orgs before beginning a project, and draw on other orgs experience and networking potentials when organizing an event or project.
- **Why not have a sub-group on a Diversity Council?** Separating people into identity sub-groups creates a barrier impeding cooperative, grassroots social action at Middlebury, thus conflicting with GC goals. There is also concern about inefficiency (more steps between constituency and the Administration, making conceptualization of action more fractious).
- **Would the GC make policies that just its members want or what is best for the campus as a whole?** They would not get rid of one lifestyle or system and replace it with new ones, but rather seek to create new spaces and opportunities for those who do not fit in.

Concerns from Community Council- They need to be conscious of how the GC works with other organizations because it is specifically a "gender" council. Avoid using the word "expert" because it can insinuate exclusivity. Be wary of strong activism vs. concrete and sustainable programs/policies. Maybe change the name from something other than "Gender" Council.

- **Conclusion:** We are not requesting any formal revisions, because they adequately addressed our original concerns. We cannot officially vote until Monday due to lack of representation, but on January 24 will vote on a recommendation to President Liebowitz.