

**FGLI Committee – Summer Meeting  
Dinner with Dean Mike and Bob Coughlin  
July 20, 2017**

**Minutes**

Attendance:

Bob Coughlin, Financial Aid  
Jen Gagne '19  
Michael Ivy '20  
Michelle Jarvis, Financial Aid  
Alessio Larios '19  
Teshia Levy-Grant, Equity & Inclusion  
Dean Mike Whaley, Student Affairs  
Kati Young '19 (maybe '18)

After settling down with some delicious Typhoon (!), Dean Mike welcomed the group and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Dean Mike then reminded everyone that the goal of FGLI Committee is to clearly articulate the challenges confronting FGLI students at Wesleyan and to work collaboratively toward solutions. Dean Mike expects to convene the group early in the fall semester and suggests bi-weekly meetings throughout the upcoming academic year. Dean Mike said that approximately 20 students signed up for the committee, but that this dinner meeting was an opportunity for those on campus this summer to begin to build relationships and identify issues.

Dean Mike asked Bob Coughlin and Michelle Jarvis from the Financial Aid Office to start the discussion by listing some of the issues that they have heard from FGLI students and that they are already planning to work on this fall. They listed the following:

- Review of expectations for student contributions for FGLI students, especially those who are independent due to exceptional family circumstances, and those with housing insecurity (i.e., those who may not have an option to return to a family home during the summer).
- Winter break program for high-need students. How to best support high need students during the break? What is the best way to connect students with this program? (Res Life? Class deans? Fin Aid?)
- Cost of student health insurance plans – at one point, this was covered in Fin Aid packages. Can/should Fin Aid cover these costs again? Other potential resources (e.g. Husky, etc.)? Most peer institutions provide scholarships for health insurance to high need students. At Wesleyan, only independent and international students can receive scholarships for health insurance. How many high-need students would need a scholarship for health insurance? How many students have chosen the state's Husky plan (and how does Husky compare to Wesleyan's health insurance)? Need to consider that students are paying student contributions AND health insurance.

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- Review of outside scholarship policy and clarification about how outside scholarship funds are applied to a student's financial aid package
- Improvements to the work-study program that allow posting/tracking of campus work-study jobs, accounting of work-study award usage, and better collection of data about student employment on campus

Bob Coughlin also shared with the group that Financial Aid now assigns a specific staff member to work with students from a particular class during their entire time at Wesleyan (similar to how the class deans operate). Bob hopes that this will provide better service to students and families because they will be working with the same Fin Aid staff member during their entire time at Wesleyan – that staff member will know their individual circumstances and be better able to adjust to changes in students'/families' financial situations.

Dean Mike asked Dean Levy-Grant to update the group on changes to the "First Things First" (FTF) pre-orientation program for first gen students. Deans Levy-Grant and Wood met with students who participated in last year's program during the Spring 2017 semester to gather feedback and suggestions. This year's program will be similar to the 2016 program. There will be some new workshop offerings on Financial Aid, Title IX and wellness/balance. There will be more involvement of Orientation Leaders (OLs) and more community-building activities in the 2017 program. We will again be able to accommodate up to 30 first gen students.

Dean Levy-Grant also indicated that she is working on video and Facebook pages for FTF, a calendar of events for the Fall 2017 semester, and that she hopes to partner with First Class on fall activities. Dean Levy-Grant also noted that many of last year's FTF participants have signed up to be OLs this year, which is really great!

After the above reports and discussion, the following issues/topics were discussed by the group:

- Concern was expressed about the loss of student jobs associated with Green Street when the University's financial support of that organization ends in 2018. Dean Mike indicated that Cathy Lechowicz and Professor Rosenthal are currently working on a Civic Action Plan that details how Wesleyan will engage with the local community and that he will raise the issue of robust student engagement/employment in Middletown with that group
- Communication about resources available to FGLI students was raised by several people at the meeting. There are various resources for FGLI students including "Suit Up" and other grants available through the Gordon Career Center, Camp Medical Fund available through Health Services, the Usdan winter coat program, Student Affairs emergency funds, etc. The problem is that information about all of the available resources are not collected in a central place so students find out about resources by work-of-mouth. Dean Wood did some work collecting information and resources last year and Dean Levy-Grant has posted this on the E&I website at

[http://www.wesleyan.edu/inclusion/first\\_generation.html](http://www.wesleyan.edu/inclusion/first_generation.html) This site needs to be reviewed and revised with help from this FGLI Committee!

- The idea of a Financial Literacy Workshop was discussed. Topics might include information on State and Federal taxes, assistance with filing taxes, information on building credit and use of credit cards, and information about Wesleyan Financial Aid. Bob and Michelle are interested in working with some FGLI Committee members on this project.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean Mike Whaley  
VP for Student Affairs