



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Katherine Bergeron
President

January 3, 2014

Dear Members of the Campus Community,

It is with great hope and enthusiasm that I write my first letter to you as your new President. 2014 represents a very happy New Year for me, and a new beginning for Connecticut College. I am honored to have been chosen to lead this wonderful institution into its second century. From my experiences over the past few months I can see how very fortunate I am to have arrived here. And so I begin my first week in office with a great sense of optimism about the future.

In this letter I would like to tell you a bit more about what I have done to prepare for my arrival and then outline a few issues that lie before us.

Campus visits

First, I want to express my sincere thanks for the hospitality you have shown since the announcement of my appointment in August. Connecticut College has long been known as a warm and welcoming community, and that reputation was confirmed for me again and again in my interactions with students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alums over the past months. In September, as part of my formal introduction to the campus, I had rich conversations with the senior administration, faculty and staff leaders, and members of the student government. In October, I had a full campus tour where I was able to experience the beauty of the College firsthand and to meet additional staff. In November, I traveled to Boston, New York, and Washington to meet trustees and other members of the CC family. And in December, I made several more trips to Connecticut to get to know the chairs and directors of the College's 40 departments, programs and centers. All in all I was able to connect with more than 150 people. I came away inspired by the energy and zeal of this community, by your dedication to its educational mission, and by your collective desire to take the College to the next level of excellence.

Ongoing searches

As you know, early last Fall the former Vice President for Advancement, Greg Waldron, left Connecticut College to take a post at another school, and Martha Merrill, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, announced her plan to move into a new position at the end of this year. Later in December, the Vice President for College Relations, Patricia Carey, made the decision to leave Connecticut to pursue her dream of becoming a novelist. These are critical positions for the College, and during the months of October and November — as President-Elect — I took on the task of organizing searches for the first two openings. Just after Thanksgiving, you received my announcement of the search committees for the Vice President for Advancement and Dean of Admission and



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Financial Aid; they will begin in earnest later this month. In order to give these searches the proper attention, I have decided not to mount a search for the third opening in the Spring. I am very grateful to Claire Gadrow for serving as acting Vice President for Advancement and to Pamela Dumas Serfes for serving as acting Vice President for College Relations at this time.

Core values

I want to make you aware of another conversation that has been taking place beyond the boundaries of the campus. Some of you may know of the recent decision by the American Studies Association (ASA) to support a boycott of Israeli academic institutions. While Connecticut College is not an institutional member of the ASA, I believe it is important to take this opportunity to respond as a College, and affirm the fundamental values of free speech, civil debate, and shared governance that lie at the very heart of the institution. An academic boycott is antithetical to these values. To be true to our mission of educating engaged, global citizens — of putting the liberal arts into action — we must work collectively to preserve an environment of rigorous and open inquiry in which all voices can be heard. As your president, I am committed to making this happen.

Next steps

Indeed, working together, I know we can do that and much, much more. In the next weeks and months, I look forward to meeting many more of you at athletic events, at talks and performances, in my office in Fanning Hall, or simply in passing in Cro or other venues on campus. I have benefited so much from the conversations I have had so far and am eager to continue expanding my knowledge of our rich and multifaceted community. I will be hosting some events at 772 Williams Street as well, at which I hope I can return the favor of the warm reception you have given me.

Of course, as I continue to learn about the College I also want to get to work. As I said in my remarks during my introduction to campus on September 20: this is no time to rest. In addition to the searches mentioned above, there are a number of important projects that need immediate attention this semester. One of these is the curricular reform project that began several months ago. The outcome of that will be critical not only to how Connecticut College understands itself but also to how the world understands Connecticut College. For these reasons, I do not want to lose momentum. You will be hearing shortly about events that the EPC and the FSCC will sponsor to advance this project in the coming semester.

Connecticut College is a remarkable institution with a unique history and mission, a vibrant student body, a stellar faculty, and a talented staff dedicated to excellence. I am



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excited to be joining you at a time of great possibility, following President Higdon's successful tenure, and I remain grateful to him for his excellent stewardship of this institution. In the coming years, I am committed to making the distinctive strengths of the College even better known both nationally and internationally, so that we will be rightly seen as one of the most important places for learning in the 21st century.

I look forward to seeing you at the end of January and to welcoming you to the new semester.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine", with a horizontal line above the first few letters.

Katherine Bergeron