Conversation with the Deans - November 15, 2021
Primary Speakers: Dean of the College Karlene Burrell-McRae, Provost Margaret McFadden

I. FLI and Accomodations
Provost McFadden reported on her continual meetings with students on campus. Students approached her because they wanted to discuss the shortcomings of accommodations. Currently, they are working on implementing a session during admitted students day to learn about the process of accommodations. Along the same lines, Provost McFadden also met with student representatives from the FLI program to discuss ways to connect FLI students with members of the faculty. She is in the process of creating a training session for faculty to better be able to assist students.

II. Restorative Practices
A new development within Colby is the usage of restorative practices. These procedures are meant to be reflective but differ for every scenario. Because this is a new development, the administration expects some missteps along the way but hopes that it can be a very important learning lesson for the Colby community.

III. Acceptable Protest
Dean Burrell-McRae offered input on what an acceptable protest on campus would look like. The administration is highly in favor of student protest so long as it doesn’t result in significant and continuous disruption. When former Governor LePage came to campus, students brought signs and asked tough questions but didn’t interrupt continuously. Colby maintains a content neutral stance on issues and by allowing people to still hear the talk, the protestors got their message across.

IV. Multicultural Housing
Multicultural housing has been an important topic over the past few years but Dean Burrell-McRae laid out the reasons as to why it is going to be challenging to implement in the near future. The administration maintains that housing that lacks a connection to a lot of the other pieces on campus such as the academic mission of the college as well as an application process will not be successful. Hopefully, these kinks can get worked out so that this plan can be brought to reality.

V. Bias Incident Prevention Reporting (BIPR)
Provost McFadden clarified what students can do in situations involving BIPR. Students have the opportunity to report to their CA’s or fill out the BIPR form online.

VI. Mental Health Counseling
In response to the recent increase in stress within the student body, a few changes have been implemented. The faculty have been spending a lot of time talking to students who need support, counseling has increased capacity, and there are a number of support groups on campus that are designed to help people feel better. In response to Provost McFadden’s email, a lot of the faculty have decided to cancel classes and get rid of certain assignments.