

January 2012 Meeting Summary

The Colgate Alumni Council consists of 55 alumni nominated for their exemplary volunteer service to Colgate. Its members represent the approximately 32,000 alumni in the Colgate Alumni Corporation, and each member strives to be a "Colgate ambassador": enhancing the experience of all Colgate alumni by becoming deeply familiar with the state of the college; promoting robust communications, interesting and useful programming, and other modes of connection and engagement; and providing venues for alumni to discuss Colgate issues.

Please read what the Council is working on, follow the links to additional information, and feel free to contact us: we're eager to hear your thoughts and suggestions.

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From January 19-21, 2012 the Alumni Council met in Hamilton for its second meeting of the 2011-2012 academic year. The Council's work is ordinarily conducted through its committees' meetings and General Session of the entire Council. This year, the Executive Committee chose to discuss five elements of the university's strategic planning process during the Council's winter meeting. Below is a summary of the Council's work.

Real World 2012. In keeping with tradition, the Alumni Council winter meeting coincided with the annual Real World program with Colgate students. Over 500 students participated in a record attendance year with over 120 alumni mentors. The panel discussions, networking events, and informal gatherings were a resounding success.

Opening Discussion. Before the individual planning sessions began, the Alumni Council conducted an introductory meeting to discuss other relevant topics to Colgate. Tom Dempsey '72 led a discussion on institutional brand and identity, but also other issues that resonated with the entire alumni corporation not already featured by President Herbst's Advisory and Planning Committee. Greek Life, athletics, student profile, the village of Hamilton, and career development were all discussed at length.

State of the 'Gate. On Saturday morning, members of the senior staff at Colgate participated in a panel discussion on various administrative functions of the college. Panelists included Gary Ross '77 (Admissions), Bruce Selleck '71 (Dean of the Faculty), Murray Decock '80 (Advancement & Alumni Affairs), David Hale '84 (Finance & Administration), and David Roach (Athletics). A [document](#) was shared in advance with all Council members so the panel discussion could be an exchange of questions & answers.

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Technology

Facilitators: Robert Johnson '94, William Sweeney '01

Advisory & Planning Committee members: President Herbst, Professor Adam Burnett

The Alumni Council was intrigued by the Board of Trustees' trip to Palo Alto and its discussion of technology and education. The discussion focused on the ways in which Colgate must be strategic about its approach to technology in order to continue to drive communication, collaboration and innovation. These include:

1. improving the technology infrastructure;
2. using technology to expand and enhance the classroom experience;
3. using technology to improve internal business systems;
4. using technology to track the lifecycle from applicant to alumni;
5. technology as core, i.e., teaching competency in understanding/managing technology;
6. equitable use of and access to technology; and
7. ways to exploit technology as a marketing tool

Architecture of the Athletics

Facilitators: Joseph McGrath '85, Kevin Rusch '85

Advisory & Planning Committee members: Interim Dean of the Faculty and Provost Bruce Selleck '71, Vice President Murray Decock, Athletic Director Dave Roach

As the university faces the prospect of athletic scholarships for football, fundraising needs and performance evaluations, this discussion focused on three topics: value of athletics for Colgate; external and internal "brand" of the athletics program; and composition of athletics at Colgate

Key take-a-ways of the discussion included:

1. Given that the D1 athletic program has an important and positive impact on Colgate's brand, there is a need to better distinguish the Colgate brand and unique positioning of the school
2. While committed to D1, need to analyze which (and #) teams fielded, as well as balance student's desires with increasing costs of fielding D1 programs
3. Need to achieve consistent success with "focus" programs
4. Need to better leverage the fundraising potential of the athletic programs

Rightsizing the University

Facilitators: Kathleen Dill '89, Christopher Wolyniak '00

Advisory & Planning Committee members: Interim Dean of the Faculty and Provost Bruce Selleck '71

This discussion focused on sizing Colgate's student body, faculty, and staff without changing the core and critical features of the University, namely D1 athletics, residential college experience and the importance of the overall academic program. While open to growing or slowing the University's size and developing

more robust graduate programs, the Council felt strongly that “size” should not compromise standards in education, change what makes Colgate, Colgate or ignore the implications to the University’s standing, e.g., US News rankings.

Globalization

Facilitators: Lynn Plant ’77, Bruce Clayton ’89

Advisory & Planning Committee members: President Herbst

The Alumni Council spent this session discussing the implications of globalization on faculty and curriculum, off campus study, admissions, and residential life. Important findings included how to retain Colgate’s *values* (e.g., adaptability) as the school adjusts to changing demographics, how to measure and evaluate global initiatives and how to create a campus environment that embraces global thinking.

Student Diversity in the 21st Century

Facilitators: Sarah Compter ’04, Timothy Seamans ’02

This discussion focused on a more relevant definition of diversity for students so that they can all appreciate the value of difference (not just a selected audience). The Alumni Council members also discussed how diversity is confronted or embraced by faculty, staff, and alumni. A successful integration of diverse thinking is led from the top and understood by all community members.

Finally, alumni discussed what is at stake if diversity is rightfully addressed. It will take a culture shift to tackle effectively the societal issues that are built in at Colgate.

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The Alumni Council's next meeting will be held April 13-15, 2012. The annual meeting will be held during Reunion June 2, 2012.

Questions? Comments? Please write to [Tim Mansfield](#), Executive Secretary for the Alumni Council and Director of Alumni Affairs.

Best,
Christine Cronin-Gallagher ’83
Alumni Council President