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Developing policies for gender non-conforming students

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Developing Policies for Gender Non- Conforming Students

Thursday Forum
March 31, 2016

Mary Geller
Doug Mullin, OSB

Transgender people within higher education continue to be an invisible, often forgotten community. Only about 10% of colleges and universities have trans-inclusive nondiscrimination statements. Research suggests that trans people face higher rates of harassment when compared to cisgender, lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, and are three times more likely to fear for their physical safety on campus. In the last decade, however, a number of campuses have become leaders in creating trans-friendly policies, programs, and practices.

As Benedictine institutions, CSB and SJU are committed to the value of respect for persons regardless of gender identity or conformity. As Catholic institutions, CSB and SJU seek to recognize and affirm the importance of gender identity. As a college for women and an undergraduate college for men, CSB and SJU are each committed to a single sex mission.

As part of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Open Pathways Quality Initiative for re-accreditation, the SJU and CSB Vice Presidents for Student Development were charged to organize and lead a research-based task force that will guide the development and implementation of "transgender policy and practice for the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University via a collective process thus preparing the institutions to educate and serve transgender and gender non-conforming students in ways consistent with the Catholic and Benedictine character of CSB and SJU, and the single sex mission of each institution."

We will report on our task force findings and seek thoughtful and constructive discussion on the policies we are recommending.

Overview

- Background
- Research
- Community Conversations and Support
- Proposed Policies
- Next steps

Background

- Indicators of a transgender issue for CSB/SJU
 - Campus Surveys
 - Student Inquiry
- Environmental Scan
 - MSHL 2014
 - ASACCU
 - MIAC Carleton: 2014; Macalester 2015
 - NCAA 2011
 - Bruce→Caitlin Jenner 2015
- HLC Open Pathways Quality Initiative Sep 2012
 - Presidents identify “Gender Development” as the focus CSB/SJU inquiry 2014
 - VPs for Student Development propose developing a policy for transgender students Feb 2015

Research

- Survey of Catholic colleges and universities [ALVERNO](#) • [GEORGETOWN](#) • [GONZAGA](#) • [MT ST MARY'S](#) • [ST ELIZABETH](#) • [DAYTON](#) • [ST JOSEPH](#) • [URSULINE](#)
- Inquiry among theologians/canon lawyers
- Survey of colleges for women [AGNES SCOTT](#) • [ALVERNO](#) • [BARNARD](#) • [BRYN MAWR](#) • [CONVERSE](#) • [HOLLINS](#) • [MILLS](#) • [MT HOLYOKE](#) • [MT ST MARY'S](#) • [SIMMONS](#) • [SMITH](#) • [ST JOSEPH](#) • [URSULINE](#) • [WELLESLEY](#)
- Survey of colleges for men [WABASH](#)
- Survey of MIAC [AUGSBURG](#) • [CARLETON](#) • [HAMLINE](#) • [MACALESTER](#) • [ST OLAF](#)
- Consultation with Barnard College
- What students are we seeking to support with our policies and practices?
 - [The Whittington Family: Ryland's Story](#)

Community Conversations and Support

- Coordinate Cabinet: 8/19/2015
- SBM and SJA Leadership: 9/4/2015
- Bishop Kettler: 10/6/2015, 12/11/2015, 3/17/2016
- SJU Trustee Committee on Student Development: 10/1/2015, 11/19/2015
- CSB Trustee Committee on Student Development: 11/19/2015
- CSB and SJU Joint Trustees: 2/26/2016
- Legal Counsel: 3/24/2016

Community Conversations and Support

- Thursday Forum: 3/31/2016
- CSB/SJU Student Development All-Staff: 4/7/2016
- CSB and SJU Student Senate Executive Session: 4/13/2016
- PRiSM: TBA
- Other ???

Proposed Policies (Part 1/3)

College of Saint Benedict

The College of Saint Benedict is a Catholic and Benedictine, residential, liberal arts college committed to the education, growth, and development of undergraduate women.

Founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Saint Benedict, the College of Saint Benedict is unwavering in its commitment to respecting the dignity of all persons and to welcoming students, faculty, staff, and guests who find inspiration and value in these commitments.

Saint John's University

Saint John's University is a Catholic and Benedictine, residential, liberal arts college committed to the education, growth, and development of undergraduate men.

Founded and sponsored by the monks of the Order of Saint Benedict, Saint John's University is unwavering in its commitment to respecting the dignity of all persons and to welcoming students, faculty, staff, and guests who find inspiration and value in these commitments.

Proposed Policies (Part 2/3)

College of Saint Benedict (cont.)

In furtherance of our mission, tradition, and values as a college for women, and in recognition of our changing world and evolving understanding of gender identity, the College of Saint Benedict will consider for undergraduate admission those applicants who consistently live and identify as women, regardless of the gender assigned to them at birth. The College of Saint Benedict will continue to use gendered language that reflects its identity as an undergraduate college for women.

Saint John's University (cont.)

In furtherance of our mission, tradition, and values as an undergraduate college for men, and in recognition of our changing world and evolving understanding of gender identity, Saint John's University will consider for undergraduate admission those applicants who consistently live and identify as men, regardless of the gender assigned to them at birth. Saint John's University will continue to use gendered language that reflects its identity as an undergraduate college for men.

Proposed Policies (Part 3/3)

College of Saint Benedict (cont.)

This admission policy does not affect students who transition while enrolled at the College of Saint Benedict. Once admitted, every student will receive the individualized support that is an essential part of the Bennie experience. If an enrolled student decides that the College of Saint Benedict no longer offers an appropriate educational environment, guidance and resources will be available to assist in making choices that are best for that student.

Saint John's University (cont.)

This admission policy does not affect students who transition while enrolled at Saint John's University. Once admitted, every student will receive the individualized support that is an essential part of the Johnnie experience. If an enrolled student decides that Saint John's University no longer offers an appropriate educational environment, guidance and resources will be available to assist in making choices that are best for that student.

Next Steps

- Ask all areas to identify support/accommodations
 - Residential Life
 - Athletics
 - Recreation
 - Registrar
 - IT Services
 - Other?
- Questions, Comments, Suggestions....