

11-19-2015

[Email from the Faculty Committee on Admissions to the Community, November 19, 2015]

Faculty Committee on Admissions, Sarah Lawrence College

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From: SLC_Community@slc.edu on behalf of SLC Admissions Committee
<AdmissionsCommittee@sarahlawrence.edu>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2015 3:07 PM
To: SLC Community
Subject: Message from the Faculty Committee on Admission

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Dear members of the Sarah Lawrence College community,

During the Faculty Committee on Admission meeting on Wednesday, November 18, the committee members present discussed the #BlackOutSLC protest on Monday, November 16. On Monday, we heard student voices express the need for action in a number of areas of academic and student life, and the committee understands the need for the entire SLC community to look into all of our roles here and examine how we can make the lived experiences of students safe and free from oppressive behavior.

Because of its role concerning admission and the recruiting of future Sarah Lawrence students, this committee takes very seriously the desire on the part of current students of color for a larger population of black and brown students enrolling in future cohorts at Sarah Lawrence College. To impact the likelihood that more students of color will enroll here, the committee will do at least two things immediately: we will create informational material and a web presence (such as videos) specifically designed to enroll more students of color on campus beginning with the next incoming admitted class, and to do so we will involve current students of color; we will also reach out to the alumni board to find Sarah Lawrence alumni of color who can partake in new public ways to showcase to families of prospective students the ways in which Sarah Lawrence College students of color are valued and heard.

These were two steps we felt we could take immediately in response to the protest. We know that they are not the limit of what we feel we can do, so we will also continue looking for ways to increase the number of students of color of all backgrounds to Sarah Lawrence's campus. We recognize that of equal importance are efforts to support and retain students who commit to SLC, such as sensitivity training for the entire campus. We commend efforts by all areas of the college as they work to address these issues.

Part of our discussion involved a piece of Sarah Lawrence's past: in 1941, a group of students drafted a letter to trustees asking the institution to begin admitting and enrolling black students. The following year, the college did indeed admit its first black students. The admissions committee knows that student voices have always had a strong role in shaping the direction of this institution, and the admissions office places the extent of that student "ownership over the education" as one of the features that sets us apart from every other college in the country. We hear and understand the frustration of students, but we are also proud to see that our students are once again taking a leadership role in a vitally important national conversation. We commit to working with students toward the goal of achieving greater diversity.

Sincerely,

The Faculty Committee on Admission:



[Redacted text block containing approximately 15 lines of blacked-out content]

Sarah Lawrence College

Office of Admission

sarahlawrence.edu | (914) 395-2510