

Questions and Themes from the Presidential Search World Café #2 February 24, 2014

Interim President Carol S. Long invited the college community to a "World Café"-style conversation to generate ideas about our community's vision for the next leader of SUNY Geneseo. The World Cafe is "a social technology for engaging people in conversations that matter." Learn more about The World Café method at <http://www.theworldcafe.com/method.html>

Question 1

As we prepare for a presidential search, what do you think are the attractions and strengths of Geneseo that will make it appealing to candidates? What are the needs and challenges the College faces, and how might those influence our choice of candidates?

Themes generated by conversation/discussion of Question 1

Advantages:

- Selectivity and quality of students and faculty
- Size
- Shared, well-defined mission and values
- Competitive price and low student debt
- Public nature and mission of the college
- Positive town/gown relations
- Robust general education curriculum

Challenges:

- Need to enhance diversity
- Need for effective advocacy in a complex bureaucratic atmosphere
- Fundraising and allocation of resources
- Need to convey the broad social and economic value of what we do
- Translate mission with today's new values
- Enrollment management challenges given changing demographics and competition
- Facilities

Question 2

According to Joseph Johnston, Jr., and James Ferrare in A Complete Guide to Presidential Search for Universities and Colleges, “Four archetypes generally emerge from conversations about what higher education institutions need in a president: a manager, an academic leader, a politician, and a fundraiser.” What relevance do these archetypes have for our Presidency? What balance among them would you seek? What are the primary qualities you would seek in a President at this time in Geneseo’s trajectory?

Themes generated by conversation/discussion of Question 2

Archetypes:

Rather than “politician,” the group proposed ambassador, advocate, diplomat, negotiator. It was agreed that all archetypes are necessary at different times. One group suggested this ranking:

1. Academic leader
2. Negotiator
3. Fundraiser
4. Manager

One group suggested the following percentages:

- Academic leader 100%
- Manager 100%
- Fundraiser 150%
- Negotiator 150%

Qualities:

- Articulate about vision, liberal arts
- Personable, fosters community
- Authenticity
- Able to delegate effectively
- Has a big picture approach
- Able to develop trust and make hard decisions
- Collaborative
- Able to interweave, keep elements of the college connected
- Adept at problem solving
- Sees academic leadership at the heart
- Focused on potential, aspiration, inspiration
- Can lead out of the comfort zone
- We don’t need a ‘fixer’
- Can define new directions