

11/29/16 Minutes
Open Senate

President Fox is here to talk about the new University College program.

President Fox:

Beginning in August, a new unit of the institution will begin: three new living learning communities with a recruiting goal of 25 students for each of those areas. These programs are open to residential men and women, but it is impossible to predict the breakdown of men to women. There will be one residence hall for these living learning communities. For now, Tullidge is the best new housing option. There may be more men in some of MBCW's classes but there will also be classes devoted to the living learning communities. There is a unique structure of co-curricular activities within these communities.

MBCW student government and 570 leadership positions will remain unchanged. Some structure of student representation for University College may develop later. Much like VWIL, they will develop their own structure.

With regards to the "why" of the situation, Mary Baldwin is experiencing a variety of enrolment pressures. Over the last four years, 11 women's colleges have closed or gone coed. In the 1970s, we developed the coed ADP program, and this time period is another pressure point. Sweet Briar has remained open, but with an enrollment of fewer than 350 women, 10-20 million dollars would be needed to stay afloat. MBCW is down a 100 students in enrolment. So we are utilizing the existing campus and resources to protect MBCW and the rest of our programs.

We are not taking MBCW coed. Of our 1800 students, two-thirds are enrolled in coed programs. We hold a women's college at the center of a small coed liberal arts university.

Having even a few men can feel like a significant departure, and I understand that. It's up to all of us to welcome our new students and shape the environment and legacy of the institution.

Questions

Stephanie Hart (Online student): 600 women in MBCW but 1800 enrolled. What is the makeup of the remaining students?

Dr. Fox: 570 or so are enrolled in Baldwin Adult. There are 400 in MDCHS. The remaining are in the graduate programs.

Hart: Instead of expanding it to men, have you considered opening it up to other populations like families or single moms?

Dr. Fox: Have heard about ideas like that in Wilson College but that wasn't part of this particular discussion.

Hart: Wanted to bring up this point because wanted to know why focus was not on how to get more women on campus, not men.

Brenda (2020 Senator): How is athletics going to change?

Dr. Fox: Under Title IX we have to offer proportional opportunities in team sports. So we will have to talk to the NCAA to figure out what is “proportional.” The first year, we will have club sports.

Qadira Mohammed (2019): Will these communities also get to participate in our residential activities?

Dr. Fox: There will be a student activity fee Your activities will remain yours. Things like academic honor societies and university sponsored events that every student can go to.

Kiah (2018): Will you be admitting transgender students to this program and to RCW?

Crista Cabe: Because we have specific policies for MBCW, gender is an issue. Gender will not be an issue for the living learning communities. There will be no restriction for trans individuals in University College.

Kiah: If someone in RCW wanted to transfer to University College, could they?

Cabe: Right now, the way they’re structured in the acceleration of studies, it would be difficult to do that. There is potential for this to be opened up.

Dr. Fox: There is academic permeability between the programs.

Aaleyah Joe: Students enrolled in MBCW who identify as trans, will they be allowed to stay on campus in the cohort housing and continue at Mary Baldwin?

Dr. Fox: Will discuss and provide a fuller answer.

Ashley Peterson (2017): What is your plan of action for Tullidge?

Dr. Fox: That will depend on how many men we have. If we have enough men, we will not have men and women on the same floor.

Juanyasa (2019 Senator): So, Tullidge is not specifically for the men?

Dr. Fox: The residence hall will be for the whole living learning community. Women Entrepreneurs, which is within MBCW, will be in the rest of the dorms.

Noni (2018): What are the incentives for them to come here?

Dr. Fox: The living learning communities are a gateway, and they will have activities focused on bonding, etc. We will need your input and the input of the student leaders on many of these activities. Some intersections will be easy but others less so.

Mikayla Waters-Crittenton (2017): What about RAs in Tullidge?

Dr. Fox: There are several models being proposed. For example, it might be a graduate student.

Qadira (2019): Will there be a Judicial Board/Honor Council for University College? And can MBCW live in Tullidge?

Dr. Fox: Will have a conversation about the honor codes with the Honor Council.

Tullidge will not be in the housing lottery. If it isn’t filled, people can have the opportunity to move there.

Diamonique (2018): Will the cohorts be required to finish the liberal arts core? And will they be given priority registration?

Dr. Fox: They will have to complete the liberal arts core and they will not have priority registration.

Grace Garland (2019): Will there be any age restrictions/limits?

Dr. Fox: They will have to be a junior in high school or have graduated from high school

Alexis Ivy (2019): VWIL and VMI have a lot of traditions we follow - what will happen when they find out we (VWIL) no longer live in Tullidge?

Dr. Fox: They understand the need to grow

Niranjana Menon (2019): Was wondering how gateways will function in the coming years?

Dr. Fox: For next fall, they will have the equivalent of a gateway in their own communities.

Crista Cabe: The Spencer Center itself will serve the entire university.

Shari Moody (2018): Since the admin has known about the decline in enrollment since the 1970s, why has there not been more discussion about going coed?

Dr. Fox: I would say that there has been periodic discussion. The first push that happened was Baldwin Online and the second was PEG. The commitment has been and is to preserve the legacy of a women centered institution. We have extended our mission to new students. Only 3% of women in the states will even consider applying to a women's college. The residential college can't fund itself. 4-5 million dollars a year is required from all the other avenues of the college to keep it afloat.

Shari: Will there ever be an intention to combine two?

Dr. Fox: Cannot say for the future but not the intention at all now.

Juanaysa (2019 Senator): I feel that we should open the existing gateways etc to the coed programs because we want them to feel included.

Mary Ruth Wossum-Fisher (HC Chair): How will this impact the workload on our faculty?

Dr. Fox: We will sit down and figure this out in the coming weeks. We will need more faculty resources. Still figuring out how that will play out.

Grace Garland (2019): Are we only going to be campaigning for the new programs or for all programs?

Dr. Fox: We are actively recruiting for all new programs. Each member of the Board of Trustees volunteered to recruit at 1-5 high schools in their area.

Theresa Jones (2019): Will the courses be offered every year so that degrees can be completed in three years?

Dr. Fox: Courses will have to be carefully planned and sequenced.

Will the students be on senate, etc?

Dr. Fox: Will accept your recommendations. Still to be discussed.

Diamonique (2018): How much tuition will they be paying?

Dr Fox: Same tuition and scholarship structure as MBCW.

Daisha (2018): Will there be any change in the current resources available to students? For example, students take surveys etc but don't see a change

Dr. Fox: Have seen some ideas floating around on Facebook pages.

Ashley Peterson (2017): How will VWIL remain single sex?

Dr. Fox: Keeping MBCW a separate, distinct part of the university ensures that.

Makela McRae (2019): What are ideas to improve retention rate on campus?

Dr. Fox: How can we have an open dialogue on this?

Megan Edwards (SGA Pres): We did have this conversation in senate, and those minutes can be sent out to everyone. EC will follow up on this.

Grace: Why couldn't we have sororities on campus?

Aaleyeah: A senator is working on a presentation regarding this matter.

Jade Harris (2020): How do you think think change will affect PEG enrollment?

Dr. Fox: PEG has a clear and secure facility, and there is quite a bit of distance between Tullidge and PEG. But I understand that some people do feel that way.

Jade: Will we accept transwomen to MBCW?

Dr. Fox: We should figure out how to have more clarity on this question. Will discuss it.

Jade: Will there be a release of documents about finances, minutes from meetings, etc.

Dr. Fox: Minutes from Board of Trustees meetings etc exist.

Stephanie Hart: Is there a cap on the age of women who can live on campus?

Laura Cammaroto: We have had students older than traditional age live in the dorms.

Constituent Concerns:

None

Gallery Concerns:

Binetou: Wanted to bring up the point of security with the new cohorts.

Will be discussed further.

Announcements:

Dr. Fox: Please come by the President's House tonight at 7 pm and decorate cookies.

BPB's Late Night Breakfast is at midnight this Saturday

RHA Bingo will be on Saturday at 7 pm in Francis

Help Save the Next Girl will have an event on Friday at 3 pm about self defense

Megan Edwards: Please send concerns about enrollment etc to Aaleyah Joe, Sharanya Rao, or myself.

Amber Ocasio: Christmas Cheer is on Sunday. There is a service before that at First Presbyterian. First seating at 4:30 and second at 6. Make sure to RSVP.

Brenda (2020 Senator): Motion to adjourn
Seconded.