

Questions and Themes from the Presidential Search World Café #1 February 7, 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

K. Johnson Bowles writes in *Inside Higher Ed*, "A president cannot be one-dimensional. A president is everything to everyone at all times while being a wholly genuine and authentic individual. A president should be chosen for his or her ability to connect and commit to an institution and people served in a physically, emotionally, and intellectually healthy manner."

What examples of actions or engagements have you seen from college presidents (not only at Geneseo) that exemplify the complex job description provided by Bowles?

Themes generated by conversation/discussion of Question 1:

- Building community: showing up, making connections
- Able to hear and integrate different opinions
- Having and advocating for a vision of the public liberal arts
- Communicating in language that is meaningful and specific, without clichés or sound bites
- Supporting and challenging the traditions of the campus
- Can support culture change to integrate diversity and excellence

Question 2

The ACE American College President Study asserts that: "Higher education is at a crossroad. Even as our nation looks to colleges and universities to provide the educated citizenry we need to compete globally, these institutions face unprecedented challenges in achieving their missions. These challenges have made leading an institution of higher education in the 21st century no easy task."

Given this context, what do you feel are the most important qualities we should seek in our next Geneseo President?

Themes generated by conversation/discussion of Question 2:

- Qualities and traits: flexibility; listening; intercultural competency; decisive (when it's time); interacts well with students; concise, clear, direct; empathetic; non-dictatorial; emotionally resilient; creative and open to others' creativity; politically and technologically savvy
- Interest and understanding of town/gown relations and the importance of Geneseo's role and relationship with the village community
- Can learn from mistakes
- Aspirational, but not a climber
- Know how to engage in discussion
- Can help to redefine what it means to be a residential liberal arts college in the 21st Century
- Listen, understand, and be responsive, not resistant
- Have a commitment to existing Geneseo graduate programs and a vision of their role in the mission of the College
- Understand changing student demographics and value affordability and accessibility
- Have an appropriate sense of the internal/external balance of the job
- Have a vision of higher education's relationship to knowledge in the 21st Century; understand issues of open access, the future of knowledge sharing, the role of liberal arts institutions in this landscape.