

DEAN KING'S LETTER TO THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dear Debo and Karen,

I have separately shared with you the letter of resignation that I sent to President Bergeron.

I am writing to you now to share concerns that I have for the Connecticut College community and specifically for the Senior Administrator group that were not contained in that letter.

There is an unhealthy and very concerning set of dynamics in Cabinet meetings and Senior Administrator meetings. As I have noted in my letter of resignation, over the past year, I have witnessed President Bergeron yell at, denigrate, talk over, and silence my colleagues during Cabinet meetings. These bullying behaviors are clearly violations of the basic respect that should be afforded any professional. In listening to community members, these are not new behaviors and have been exhibited by President Bergeron throughout her presidency.

This has led to a toxic administrative culture of fear and intimidation. People seek to avoid triggering Katherine's anger and this affects their ability to do their jobs. On more than one occasion I have heard people cite "Katherine will not like that" as a reason to reject a course of action. I have also heard people say, "Katherine won't let me say that" to explain why they withhold information from the community. Instead of following best practice or prioritizing the needs of the community, people are focused on pleasing President Bergeron. The most honest, open, and collaborative discussions the Cabinet and the Senior Administrator groups have had have occurred when President Bergeron was not present.

We are in the midst of crucial work on the 5 year financial plan for the institution. The ability of the Cabinet to engage in this vital work is being compromised by the toxic culture created by President Bergeron. Senior Administrators are afraid to speak honestly about the financial projections in the proposed budget model. There are serious valid concerns about the soundness of the budget model.

It is crucial that some intervention is made. I am taking on significant personal and professional risk in writing to you. I fully expect some form of retaliation against me for sharing the information in this letter and in my letter of resignation. I'm taking on this risk because of the urgency of taking action for the Conn community. Therefore, I'm asking you to take seriously the information I've shared and that you conduct a 360 degree review of President Bergeron.

Dr. Rodmon King