

9-7-1971

Grievance Panel 1971

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"Grievance Panel 1971" (1971). *Campus Council Records*. 54.
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ESSence of minutes,
9/7/71

TO: THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER COMMUNITY

FROM: CAMPUS COUNCIL

On Saturday, September 4, 1971, members of the Campus Council met with President Drushal, the Deans, Dr. Startzman, Mrs. Shull, and the administrative interns, to prepare for the coming academic year. While the Council discussed a wide range of issues at the beginning of the meeting, it spent most of its time talking candidly and specifically about Black-White relationships on the campus. Those present agreed that the college community must acknowledge its present shortcomings and its difficulties in dealing creatively with the tensions arising from those relationships. This letter is an expression of the Council's conviction that it has a responsibility to speak out and act upon this issue.

The Preamble to the Code of Conduct emphasizes that in all inter-personal relationships individuals will be guided by a mutual concern for each other's integrity, needs, and feelings. Personal integrity, self-respect, and respect for the rights and concerns of others are basic premises of the entire Code. We recognize moreover, that racial problems are complex, and that solutions must be sought in long- and short-range ways at the individual, group, and institutional levels.

As a first step on Tuesday, September 7th, the Council adopted the following measures:

I. The establishment of a Grievance Panel to investigate racial incidents.

The Panel shall be composed of:

2 members drawn from the greater Wooster area, preferably with experience on the Human Rights Commission or with legal or mediation experience to be selected by Campus Council.

2 faculty members, one Black and one White, to be appointed by the Faculty Committee on Committees.

2 students, one Black and one White, to be appointed by the SGA Cabinet.

1 member of the Administration, chosen by the President.

The Panel shall have the power:

1. To receive any complaints from individuals or groups -- White or Black, on any matter arising from racial differences.
2. To serve as a fact-finding board on such matters.
3. Upon conclusion of its investigation, and consideration of the evidence, to present its findings to Campus Council with recommendation for appropriate action.

Selection of the members is to be completed and presented to Council by September 20th.


II. That in its review of the 1971-72 residential Codes of Conduct, the Council will expect that in its Code each living unit will have addressed itself to, and made provisions for, the need for dealing with tension and/or incidents involving racial bias arising within that living unit.

III. That the Council will give high priority to appropriation requests from living units or other chartered groups, for the financing of programs designed to introduce ways of coming to terms with racial problems.

IV. That the Council in an immediate effort to improve its own understanding will participate in a race education program as soon as arrangements can be made.

The concerns that this letter reflect, and the measures it includes are the Council's immediate effort to take seriously its own responsibility in the area of race relations. The Council will continue to address itself to these questions as the year proceeds. But the Council is only one campus organization and its measures are not cure-alls. Hence, whether or not this college community will move beyond racial tensions to appropriate reconciliation depends upon every student, faculty member, administrator, and employee -- White and Black. Each one of us must find the will to act purposefully, creatively, and with a new sensitivity.

Submitted for the Council by


Deborah P. Hilly
Chairman

9-7-71