

**COMMUNITY ACTION MEETING
MAY 6TH, 2013**

PRESS RELEASE

We are students who have grown sick of talking about our community's problems, when what we really need are actions to fix them. We have put in extensive work trying to make our campus safer and more supportive. We have been on committees, met with administrators, met with the Board of Managers, and have already come up with concrete proposals for change.

Yet every time hateful acts occur on our campus - in our home - we are told that we need more words.

For years this pattern has played out on campus, and our years in dialogue with the administration have led to no change. Today, we have organized an action meeting on Parrish to lay out our proposed solutions, which we will present at this afternoon's Collection. Parrish is where decisions are made - so we are bringing our decision-making process to Parrish.

We invite you to join us at any time from 10am to 2pm at Parrish and to stand with us at the Collection in the Amphitheater at 2pm.

LIST OF DEMANDS:

(we'll be discussing them in Parrish parlors)

1. Creation of an Ethnic Studies Department as a long term goal. However, in order to serve the current students' need, we need the creation of Latino (in the U.S.) studies, Asian-American studies, and increased institutional support for other programs which address issues of social justice like Black studies, Gen/Sex and Environmental Studies.

We feel that part of the problem is that current students are not well informed on the histories and issues surrounding marginalization and that it is not the responsibility of marginalized students to be constantly educating their peers on these topics, so the school must provide more academic opportunities for students to become familiar with them.

2. Making classes in Ethnic Studies and Gen/Sex mandatory, for example as part of the distribution requirements

We believe that having at least a baseline knowledge on these topics is essential when trying to build community with people with marginalized identities.

3. Having the histories of marginalized communities and past student organizing represented in the sesquicentennial

These communities have been integral parts of the college and have been responsible for shaping the college and its values through their past demands for change. For example, when black students in the '60s felt threatened on this campus they rallied together and made concrete demands for change, such as the creation of the BCC.

4. More Queer/Trans Faculty and Faculty of Color in tenure track positions.

These groups are underrepresented in the faculty, especially in tenure track lines; for example, one disturbing statistic is that there are currently zero US-born Latino/Latina faculty in tenure track positions. Faculty diversity is an indication to minority students that their identities are represented at the college, and these faculty can also be strong advocates within their departments for the needs of minority students.

5. More Students of Color/International Students from underprivileged backgrounds

Diversity at Swarthmore currently makes students of color a statistic that is used to advertise Swarthmore as an inclusive environment. However, diversity at Swarthmore needs to take into consideration the intersectionality in class, religion, sexuality, gender identification and why these students feel so isolated once they arrive at Swarthmore.

6. Better support systems for students of color

We ask that you pick up IC/BCC Coalition campaigns for Summer Bridge Program. We also demand for administration to do campus climate survey to seek to understand why students of color do not feel comfortable in participating in certain spaces, and therefore, are not taking full advantage of what a Swarthmore Education offers (social life, arts, athletics, academics). In addition to the surveys, we also ask for administration to meet with current students of color to reflect on their experiences at Swarthmore to fill in the gaps in the survey.

7. Count undocumented students as domestic students

Undocumented students applying to Swarthmore currently have to compete with both the domestic and international applicant pools, placing an unfair standard of scrutiny on their applications. Also, this would mean that financial aid would be need-blind (it is currently only need-based but not need-blind as they are --sort of-- counted as international students).

8. Increased transparency from administrators and the Board of Managers

This would include administrators publicizing what discussions they are undertaking to push for specific concrete steps, and having available public agendas for and notes from meetings of the Board of Managers.

9. Increased documentation of responsibilities and processes (as opposed to unwritten understandings or constant re-hashings), allowing for greater accountability of those in power.

One obstacle that student organizers have encountered in the past when trying to enact specific changes is that they are constantly passed off between different administrators, committees, the Board of Managers, etc., all of whom pay lip service to their support but then say that they are not the ones who are responsible for enacting the proposed changes.

10. Increased institutional support for the IC, BCC, RA team, DART, and SMART.

Despite being at the heart of creating a campus that makes students feel safe, welcome, and supported, these groups have extremely few staff dedicated to their functioning.

11. Creation of an Office of Survivor Advocacy with legal, trained student advocates, and, comprehensive rights education.

12. Immediate revision of the CJC process, so that sexual assault cases are no longer confidential.

13. Immediate implementation of the emergency alert system to notify students of sexual assaults and violence on campus as in compliance with the law.

14. A public apology from the administration admitting grave mishandling of and wrongdoing towards survivors of sexual assault in violation of federal law.