Parents Council Fall Meeting
Communications Committee Minutes
October 11, 2014

Attendees: Chris Coughlin P’16 (Chair), Vivien D’Andrea P’17, Susan Flagg P’17, Bruce Gates P’16, Terri Gedo P’17, Michael Genhart P’18, Freddie Gluck P’18, Kate Hanson P’17, Deb Kristensen P’18, Marya Laviste P’17, Liz Pearce P’18, Clyde Perlee P’18, Barbara Perry-Lorek P’18, Katie Howard

1. Update on Committee Projects
   a. Website Statistics
      - Katie Howard shared statistics from the parent website comparing January 1 – October 1, 2013 to January 1 – October 1, 2014. Through targeted parent communications (letter from Parents Council and letter from President Thomas), we’ve increased direct visits to www.pugetsound.edu/parents by 100%.
      - Top visited pages from Jan 1 – October 1, 2014 were:
        1. Orientation schedule
        2. Parents Council
        3. Study Abroad parent resources
        4. Subscribe to the Trail (student newspaper)
        5. Finances (bank and notary services)
      - The group will look into the least visited pages to see if there is an opportunity to enhance those resources.
      - Additionally, the group will consider how to remove outdated pages from the Parent Resource Guide that show when searching the site, and consider whether additional pages with resources should be added (i.e. banking options near campus).

2. Plans for 2014/2015
   a. Orientation
      - There was discussion around possible parent participation in Orientation (parent panel, etc. The group didn’t feel this was a top priority, but will consider how to better involve parents in admitted student days on campus.
      - There was much discussion about how the orientation for parents of athletes was unorganized and could be improved. These parents feel there could be significantly better communication about what to expect when their student arrives on campus. The Athletics Department, along with the coaches, currently plans this orientation
program, so the comments will be shared with them. A sub-committee of the group will be formed to continue these discussions specific to parents of athletes.

- Additional comments that came up regarding orientation included:
  - Need to better explain how to arrange payment for books at the bookstore
  - Possibility of posting the class schedule online for parents to access over the summer
  - Additional details about how to ship things to campus before Orientation

b. Parent-to-Parent Communications
- The group liked the idea of sharing tips with other parents, such as ‘What I wish I would have known’, and what to anticipate at certain milestones in their students’ career at Puget Sound. Vivien D’Andrea P’17 started a list when her daughter was a freshman, which will be used as the starting point to enhance and share with incoming families. A sub-committee will be formed to focus on this communication piece for parents.

c. Parent Website
- While the parent website has been significantly improved over the past year, there is a need to continue to monitor and update the website based on parent feedback. The group discussed several areas of opportunity within the website, including:
  - Clarification around Financial Services and options for parent online bill-pay
  - Student Health Options and clarification around what services students can receive on campus and what they must go elsewhere for (prescriptions, service limitations, etc)
  - Details about the sexual misconduct policy (Update 10/24: A link to the Sexual Misconduct Resource Center has been added to the parent page)
  - Transportation options around campus, specifically airport transportation
- A sub-committee will be formed to continue these discussions and potential areas of opportunity within the parent website.

3. Next Steps
- Given the three areas of focus for the group, sub-committees will be formed to discuss each area in more detail. The groups will plan to convene via conference call to continue their work in their respective areas.