Parents Council Spring Meeting  
Communications Committee  
April 12, 2014

Attendees: Bruce Beiser P’14, Chris Coughlin P’16 (Chair), Bill Eiffert P’17, Teri-Lynn Gedo P’17, Darell Krasnoff P’17, Peter and Alice Nestingen P’16, George Sorensen P’15, Katie Barosky, Katie Howard

1. Update on Committee Projects
   a. Website Statistics
      • Katie Barosky shared statistics from the newly redesigned website. In general, very good results, including: doubled traffic to the site, time spent on site is up, bounce rate is down.
      • Top visited pages are:
        1. Sign up for the Trail (student newspaper)
        2. Information about Tamanawas (yearbook)
        3. Parents Council
   
b. Communications Calendar
      • Reviewed calendar and components which includes information sent to all parents, including: Arches, letter from the President, event invitations, etc.
      • Also includes information sent to specific groups of parents, including Parents Council volunteers, and letters sent to parents of specific classes (second year housing information, commencement, etc).

2. Plans for 2014/2015
   a. Welcome letter from President Thomas at start of academic year:
      • One new addition to the communication calendar will be a letter from President Thomas, welcoming parents to the start of another academic year.
      • The suggestion was made to send an email blast with a link to the website with a video message from the President.
      • Given the university’s lack of email addresses for all parents, snail mail is the best way to reach all parents. However, the video message could be references in the letter, for those who choose to view it. The letter will be personalized for the parents and student’s preferred name.
   
b. Parent-to-Parent communications:
      • The group discussed sending a letter to all parents in the summer, welcoming them to a new school year, sharing the year-at-a-glance magnet, and advertising the work of the Parents Council. Thoughts to consider for the letter:
• An opportunity to build your own relationship with Puget Sound;
• Become more knowledgeable about the institution so you can be more connected to your child's experience, without hovering or bugging them!
• Chances to get additional information about the school, sessions with President Thomas, administrators, etc;
• Not a PTA;
• Group of resources;
• Potential to build community with other parents, if you want;
• Provide feedback; Staff does listen!
• Explain time commitment – things you can choose to do;
• 2 meetings that coincide with parent weekends in fall and spring;
• Group conference calls;
• Host events in your community;
• Calls/emails to other parents.
• Explain ways to be involved without coming to meetings in Tacoma: host events in your community, call/emails to other parents

• The committee discussed the best way to create an online parent community for current parents. Taking from the format of the Ask A Parent program developed by the Admission Committee, the group agreed something similar format for current parents would be helpful. Some ideas of areas to include beyond student year, academic interests, and activities were:
  ▪ Housing
  ▪ Study abroad
  ▪ Summer school
  ▪ Resources available for students
  ▪ Internships and on-campus employment

3. Next Steps
  • Committee will meet via conference call in May to discuss Parent to Parent communications planned for this summer, including the Parents Council letter in July, and the roll-out of the online mechanism for current parents to connect.