

## Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes, October 11, 2018

Meeting called to order 2:01

Present: Uchenna Baker, Jackie Dierdorff, Eli Gandour-Rood, Maria Henderson, Zaixin Hong, Alan Krause, Ben Papadopoulos, Jess Smith, Karin Steere, Mike Valentine, Adrian Villicana, Nila Wiese

The committee approved the minutes from the meeting of September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Wiese asked committee members for impressions on the Department of Student Affairs website:

- Steers – I bring a graduate school perspective. I surveyed my department on survey monkey. No one had an idea about what the Department of Student Affairs (DSA) was doing, even people who had been here for a long time. People knew that the university offered services but didn't know how to get students there. The Graduate School is trying to create bridges to the rest of campus. The vast majority of responses asked "What is student life services?" They have had no contact. Some students had engaged with intramural sports or CHWS, but nothing else. Perhaps we need a faculty and student orientation to student life services/DSA.
- Valentine – I looked through the sheet myself. It contains a huge amount of information, but is difficult to sort through. I surveyed colleagues in Thomas Hall. Faculty have no idea about what student affairs is all about or whether they had even interacted with student affairs.
- Smith – The Theater Department didn't know what student affairs is. But I know that student affairs provides great assistance to theater students and my colleagues and I know people, for example Sara Shives & Debbie Chee. I found the website overwhelming. It was not clear how different services tied together. What are the overarching values and priorities? Where does one part stop and the other part start? It was hard to find the names of people with whom faculty have had lots of contact.

Committee members engaged in a discussion of mental health services.

- Smith - My colleagues and I have general concerns about whether students receive adequate support from CHWS. Do students have access to quality mental health services? Demand has outpaced supply. We do not want to lose students. Nor do we want to ask faculty to meet the needs of real mental health concerns.
- Baker – I am conducting meetings to understand the types of students we are serving and the needs they have. We are in the process of hiring a new CHWS director and want the new director to address these questions.
- Gandor-Rood – In the past, the Student Life Committee was asked to evaluate CHWS and concluded that wait times are too high due to CHWS's limited resources.
- Baker – One solution would be training students to recognize what constitutes a crisis and how they could obtain support from other resources.
- Villicana – Students have reported similar challenges in accessing resources. They state that going off campus is a problem as many student have no insurance for off campus medical treatment.

Committee members returned to their discussion of the Department of Students Affairs website:

- Villicana – I noticed inconsistency with how things were phrased. Some sections present lofty values like joy, love, gratitude, or social justice, but did not describe how they were enacted. Some descriptions are more aspirational, other descriptions are purely procedural. In addition, I could not find things.
- Valentine – Faculty know the DSA from personal experience on the committee for student conduct or the sexual harassment board, but know little else.
- Gandour-Rood – My informal conversations with library colleagues reveal that they know people but not offices. DSA has established some good personal connections, but we would also like to understand structure and roles. Colleagues don't know about student life unless they are involved in it. Librarians have questions about staff responsibilities toward students. What issues must librarians report to student services? Librarian also have questions about responsibilities toward student staff.
- Wiese – My colleagues only know DSA through personal interaction, from working with students. My colleagues knew the person but not the office. Academic alerts and CHWS are the most common point of contact. Some colleagues know the Dean of Students through search committees. The BLP director works with Res Life. But my colleagues did not know DSA's structure.
- Dierdorf – Students don't know individuals. Students know individual departments but were unaware that the DSA connected them together.
- Smith – Perhaps students don't really need to know all of the connections. DSA would benefit from a student facing component and a faculty facing component. Some sections could be encouraging and others procedural. Different sections could also present different aesthetics, for example the outdoor program would include images of nature.
- Baker – Other areas of campus have also identified a need to redesign the web page.
- Wiese – The last web redesign centralized control of web pages and reduced faculty's opportunities to design web pages.
- Valentine – The DSA website includes a huge number of subdivisions.
- Hong – Students tell me that they come to Puget Sound to enjoy the outdoors. It is a good selling point.
- Baker – Puget Sound has not told its story well. Other organizations have told their stories better.
- Valentine – The university struggles to tell the story about its academics. For example, what is the core? What are we trying to do with the core? How do we ground it?
- Dierdorf – DSA includes no direct link to the ASUPS website. Some students did not realize that there is a separate ASUPS website.
- Wiese – Students looking for events cannot find them.
- Henderson – Students do not know that so many activities are under student affairs.
- Papadapolous – In Greek life, people know names, but don't know positions or where to find resources. Students need to be able to access services. Posted media or online announcements would help.
- Wiese – Community members need to be able find resources. Some resources are underused because people can't find them.
- Valentine – Last year the Student Life Committee developed a list of resources.

- Baker – It is important to identify what falls under the DSA. I want people to be able to access resources and to send students to resources.
- Valentine – Sometimes it is hard for faculty to know what to do to assist a student.
- Hong – My colleagues mentioned that a first year student left because of roommate problems. Faculty did not know how to help her.
- Baker – We train staff to mediate conflict and could have helped.
- Wiese - When faculty know where to refer students, they receive more support and we improve retention.
- Gandour-Rood – not required that everyone knows, but department chairs and administrative assistants. Then employees have local references.
- Smith - Personal connections are a positive. When I bring an issue up to a person, they address it right away. When I send a student to CHWS, the student must wait for support. This personal responsiveness is a strong selling point and should be visible on the website.
- Baker – We need to balance the messaging, so parents won't expect us to hold their child's hand non-stop.
- Wiese - We need balanced and consistent messaging.
- Valentine – Once upon a time, faculty met students and faculty at 1<sup>st</sup> year orientation.
- Baker – Faculty and staff are grappling with the same things as DSA.
- Henderson – RA training has filled many gaps, but more work is necessary.
- Steere – Grad School faculty don't know these services and need training.
- Valentine – It is important to decide who receives student alerts.
- Baker – We are professionals in an institution can share some information.
- Wiese – I've learned to make phone calls.
- Valentine – Academic alerts are hard to decode. I can't tell who supplied an alert or what class the student is taking.

Wiese – What is our next step? How do you want information transferred from open discussion?

Baker – Should we devote more time to outreach?

Committee – Yes, follow up on outreach.

Baker – We can think about recommendations to make sure campus is more informed so we can have better conversations on campus to address problems.

Meeting adjourned 2:57