

Student Life Committee Minutes October 7, 2009

Attending: Bruce Mann, Mike Segawa, Geoff Proehl, Aislinn Melchior, Alison Tracy Hale, Jan Leuchtenberger, Christian Brink, Gina Tzodikov.

The Committee was convened at 2 pm.

- I. The Chair reported to the Committee on his conversation with the former chair, Nick Kontogeorgopoulos, including information on the work the previous committee did on study-abroad outcomes.
 - a. The work was motivated by a desire to measure the effect of study abroad on student learning outcomes, and to give the students more opportunities to share their experiences in the classroom.
 - b. At the time the Committee began to look at these issues, the Interim Study Abroad Committee (ISAC) was busy reviewing all of the study abroad programs and did not have time to take up these issues, and International Programs was understaffed and also not able to deal with the questions. For this reason, and because it was clearly a student life issue, the SLC took the issue on as a charge.
 - c. Work done by Nick and previous committee members included:
 - i. Revival of the practice of sending out a list of returning study-abroad students to all faculty so they can see which ones are in their classes.
 - ii. Development and implementation of a pre-departure survey that all students complete before leaving on their trips. The survey has been integrated into the pre-departure checklist given to all students by International Programs, and was taken for the first time by students going abroad last year.
 - iii. Development of a post-study-abroad survey, meant to be taken six months after students return from study abroad. This survey has not yet been given for the first time.
 - d. Nick and Mike both hope that these survey instruments get fully implemented, but it is still unclear who should be responsible for that. This became an issue last week when the Faculty Senate discussed the surveys and could not figure out whether to send the charge for pursuing them to the International Education Committee (IEC) or to International Programs (IP).
 - i. Since IEC is finished reviewing all of the study-abroad programs, they might be interested in this issue now.
 - ii. IP is probably too busy to deal with it.
 - iii. A member asked whether ASUPS is concerned with these issues, but the student members did not know the answer.
 - e. Until the Faculty Senate decides to whom to send the charge, the issue of who administers the surveys will have to wait. At this point, it is

unclear who, if anyone, is planning to send out a reminder email to the returning students about the post-study-abroad survey.

- f. That leaves the question of how to best use the students' experience in the classrooms. A member suggested that a panel could offer suggestions on how to do this to faculty at a Wednesday at Four session.
- II. The Chair also asked the Committee for ideas on how to give students the chance to communicate their concerns to the SLC.
 - a. One possible idea was an open-mic night attended by some Committee members and interested students.
 - b. Members expressed concern about the structure, focus and range of such an event, and whether it would be productive. There was also concern raised over a structure that puts a few faculty in the role of representing all of the faculty on this Committee
 - c. Segawa pointed out that a previous Committee had set up a system in which the third student representative was also the chair of the ASUPS Student Concerns Committee and would regularly pass on relevant concerns to the Committee. This year's chair has said she cannot attend the SLC meetings, but the Chair (Mann) asked Segawa to contact ASUPS and ask them to send a representative to the Committee to serve as the third student member.
 - III. The Chair reminded members that they may be needed to serve on ad-hoc committees that may be formed throughout the year. The most recently formed Greek Review Committee is already staffed by former Committee members, and there are not immediate needs for members to serve.
 - IV. The Committee then continued its discussion of the Residential Seminars.
 - a. A student member recalled being jealous of a residential group he knew because they were very close and did things together early on when he and others were still getting to know people. Segawa added that this was an ideal outcome – that students have something in common enough to form a social bond that was helpful in adjusting but did not preclude them from forming interest groups later.
 - b. A Committee member who has taught a Residential seminar remarked that one benefit of the experience was building a stronger relationship with Debbie Chee and Student Affairs.
 - c. The same member commented that there is value in having some seminars be residential and others not.
 - i. Segawa said that the original grant committed the university to making half (20) of the seminars residential, but that never happened. Last year the number reached a high of 16, but there are only 8 this year. It appears that on average 10-12 faculty will be interested in doing it.
 - ii. The number each year is determined by how many faculty want to participate.

- d. The Residential seminars are not promoted to students in admissions literature, mostly because it is still experimental. Is it possible they've been downplayed too much?
- e. Faculty who participate in the Residential seminars sometimes feel the burden of making the most of the opportunities (though such a burden has never been imposed on them by Student Affairs).
- f. Faculty have observed that it is easier to foster discussion in Residential classes because the students already know each other before starting the class.
- g. Another dynamic noticed by faculty is that students in Residential seminars tend to go to the faculty with questions less often, because they seem to rely more on their peers to answer those questions. This can be a good or a bad thing.

The Chair advised the members that they would take up the issue of Residential seminars again at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Leuchtenberger