

**Student Life Committee Minutes**  
**from the meeting of February 26, 2009**

**In attendance: Nick Kontogeorgopoulos, Duane Hulbert, Mita Mahato, Mike Segawa, Martin Jackson, Tiffany Aldrich MacBain, and Marta Palmquist Cady**

The meeting convened at 4:00 p.m.

Nick began with announcements: He awaits a Faculty Senate date to discuss the bylaws change; he sent out a post-trip study-abroad survey to three groups (full-year 2007-08, summer 2008, and spring 2008) and has so far seen a 40% - 50% response rate; at the SLC's next meeting, March 26, 2009, Kim Bobby and Yoshiko Matsui will discuss Multicultural Student Services with us.

The day's committee meeting centered on Marta's PowerPoint presentation on efforts to promote student leadership at the University of Puget Sound. Marta has a copy of the presentation that can be made available to any party who would like to view it.

Mike told the group that there has been continued progress with this program on campus. Leadership opportunities exist for all phases of student life and the university continues its efforts in that direction. Mike explained that the idea is to build allegiance to the college throughout students' education at Puget Sound rather than focus all efforts on first-year students.

Nick asked Marta and Mike if they have thought of revisiting Passages as a capstone event, and Marta answered affirmatively. She mentioned that they have thought about a Senior Week but said that that would be a "very large" undertaking and is still under discussion.

Duane said that it could be beneficial to find opportunities for the classes to connect with one another. Mike provided some history of this issue, indicating that Student Affairs has asked, "How do we build a stronger sense of class identity?" He explained that current leadership efforts aim to address this question and provided examples of programs aimed at sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Marta added that Student Affairs used to do a sophomore retreat and that it was discontinued, mainly due to cost. Nick asked if it had been an effective program, and Marta indicated that the program could be re-examined to address this question.

Marta paused the PowerPoint presentation to discuss E-Portfolios in great detail. E-Portfolios:

- are repositories for students to collect and organize digital artifacts.
- often include reflections on the meanings of student work, integrating individual artifacts with a broader understanding of their learning.
- can attend to specific presentations of student work.
- act as tools of assessment and data collection.

Marta explained that E-Portfolios are being considered for Puget Sound students, perhaps as a test, as part of the leadership initiative, because E-Portfolios may connect our students' extra-curricular and academic lives, and may provide students with the opportunity to track their educational experiences.

Mike added that E-Portfolios could help to convey to students the idea that "with this education comes responsibility." The hope is that students use the E-Portfolios as a way to reflect upon the educational experience and to connect to, engage with, the larger community. He said that the portfolios could also be important resources for students preparing for the job market.

Nick asked what the retention rate of sophomores is, and Mike reported that Puget Sound is in the middle of its Northwest comparison group and 5% behind its target group. Mike believes that a 5% improvement rate is quite possible. He said that once students stay at Puget Sound beyond the sophomore year, most graduate. The university finds it important to ask, "Who are the students who are leaving?" Mike said that campus leaders have been talking to students in focus groups who should, in all likelihood, be gone but have stayed. They have asked these students, "What was it that kept you here?" They have found that engagement is a big predictor, in retention.

Mike said that the leadership program would also help sophomores begin to think about what they ought to be doing over the next two years of their educations. This foresight would, in turn, reduce the anxiety and stress levels of seniors. Mike seeks to do more to transition Puget Sound seniors from college to their lives beyond. Marta says that currently, these discussions arise during junior year; Student Affairs would like for students to have heard these messages, in bits, through all four years.

Martin asked why the leadership program (as presented in the PowerPoint) lists predominantly senior areas/groups. Mike and Marta explained that we are losing our seniors upon graduation, so the university is trying to find ways to keep seniors engaged with the school. Martin suggested that sometimes seniors are not disengaged but are turning their attention to new things. Mike and Marta agreed. Martin said that perhaps we could find ways for seniors to share their experiences in formal ways with more junior students. Mita said that the SLC has talked about doing this with students returning from Study Abroad, too; and Mike and Marta concurred that oftentimes, seniors want the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Tiffany Aldrich MacBain