

## **Minutes of Student Life Committee: November 19, 2004**

### **Members Present:**

Faculty: Mark Harpring, Chris McKim, Kurt Walls, Jac Royce

Ex-Officio: Carrie Washburn, Houston Dougharty

Students: Cara Evans, Becca Fay, Patrick Moyle

Meeting convened at 8 am by Kurt Walls.

Minutes from October 22nd approved.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Campus Events and Publicity:**

The committee discussed the ways in which event information is disseminated to students. In general, while there are several publicity systems in place, students (and others) continue to complain about inadequate publicity. Carrie noted that the Student Life Committee discusses this issue every year. This meeting's discussion ranged from how the Tattler has worked (or not), the current limit for the SUB of 10 posters per event (to avoid 'poster blindness'), the calendar on the University website, and efforts to get students to be pro-active in searching for information. Cara and Houston discussed the new ASUPS website, which targets RAs and frosh. ASUPS hopes most students will keep the website as their homepages. Patrick noted that most students don't know about the ASUPS website. Carrie suggested adding questions to the annual Student Voice survey to determine where students get their information. The committee floated the idea of inviting Randy Nelson (Institutional Research) to discuss the survey and potentially helpful questions. We also considered inviting Yoshiko Matsui and a representative from ASUPS.

#### **On-Campus Housing:**

Houston began by citing figures that showed that on-campus housing cost less than off-campus housing in 2001. The discussion then shifted to making on-campus housing more attractive to sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students. We considered complaints we have heard about Trimble and what might be done to mitigate some of the problems. Cara said the suites were like "giant closets"—particularly with no windows in the kitchen/living rooms. Kurt suggested glass doors to the main halls might make the suites seem less cut-off from each other. We also discussed the complexity of trying to treat older students like adults in an atmosphere that also tries to keep underage students from drinking. Houston said that the original idea was to have Trimble appeal to juniors and seniors, but that applicants to live there were primarily sophomores. Cara said that Trimble might be good transition housing even though it doesn't appeal to students who don't want a dorm-style living situation. Cara and Becca both felt that older students were attracted to off-campus living because there is more freedom and the living situations are more adult. On-campus houses can fill this niche (if arrangements can be made to better accommodate responsible drinking), but that there are not enough houses. Houston told the committee that the Master Plan includes building townhouses for juniors and seniors. Kurt asked about the possibility of purchasing an apartment building near campus for student housing. The final part of the discussion concerned the campus' ongoing efforts to increase the percentage of students who live on-campus. Currently, about 70% of undergraduates live on-campus (excluding those studying abroad). Jac wondered whether the strong residential emphasis has a

negative effect on race and age diversity in the student population by undervaluing local and/or mature students.

**Parking:**

Since the committee has been charged with considering parking management, discussion moved to the impact of on-campus and commuting students on parking. Carrie said that the campus' goal is to reduce the number of parking spaces by 300 as part of the move to a more ecologically-sustainable campus. Group discussion centered on the question of why parking is a charge given to the Student Life Committee when the issue actually affects the entire campus community. The consensus was that parking management is a Master Plan issue, rather than a Student Life issue. The Student Life Committee should have a representative to a Parking Management subcommittee of the Master Plan Committee, rather than trying to *be* the parking committee. Jac acknowledged experience with parking and mass transit at UC Santa Cruz and volunteered to be our representative if the subcommittee idea moved forward.

**New Business:**

**Alcohol Issues:**

Prompted by 27 incidents related to "The Rail" the previous weekend, Becca and Cara brought up the problem of binge drinking and other alcohol-related problems on campus. They wanted to lead alcohol awareness training for RAs, in addition to other programming and conversations for the larger student body. They cited a complex of factors from lack of information (for example, many students don't believe that alcohol poisoning is real), to students who suffer from alcoholism, to the perception that drinking is cool. "The Rail" was even announced in a Mortar Board meeting. Mark noted that any approach has to be realistic: just telling students they shouldn't drink doesn't work as well as educating them about responsible drinking. Jac noted that drinking is also implicated in sexual abuse and harassment on campus, citing a survey by the Trail that found a high incidence of rapes and other assaults on campus, most related to drinking, and most unreported to campus authorities. Houston discussed the advisor alert system and substance abuse prevention. Cara and Becca decided to explore programming ideas. The committee decided to continue to discuss the problem with an eye to proposing a role for the Student Life Committee, perhaps as one of our standing charges.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Jac Royce  
for the Committee