

STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE
2003-2004 END OF YEAR REPORT
April 7, 2004

Members of the Student Life Committee: Kris Bartanen (Dean of Students), Carrie Washburn (representative from the Dean's office)

Faculty members: Duane Hulbert (chair), Betsy Gast, Kurt Walls, Mark Harpring, Barry Bauska

Students: Kat Griffin, Cara Evans, Dave Scheinfeld

The Student Life Committee met 10 times during the 2003-2004 academic year to discuss the following charges from the Faculty Senate:

1. To continue to explore ways to encourage campus conversations aimed at promoting greater responsibility, accountability, and civility on campus.
2. To provide commentary and response to the revised Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, if that document is in fact forthcoming.
3. To examine sophomore programs (in particular, support for transitions peculiar to the sophomore year).
4. To examine and suggest ways in which models of civic and/or intellectual accomplishment can be highlighted.
5. To improve publicity procedures on campus (for example, standardizing the computer programs being used in various publicity offices).
6. To explore the relationship of student life and Facility Services (it has been suggested that the efforts of Facility Services are often unappreciated by students).

Charge #1- Early in the year, the committee suggested the possibility of changing the name "Security Services" to "Safety Services" to better reflect the function of the office and a way to lessen the "policing" impression of the existing title. Security Services did initiate a number of crime-awareness workshops with outside facilitators for RA's and Security Services staff. These workshops were endorsed by the committee, in the hope they could improve campus security. Also, new rules were set into place whereby both Residential Life and Security Services staff respond to students in need. The committee also seeks to continue to find ways to insure the individual freedoms of students while maintaining a sense of community responsibility. At the end of the year, the committee discussed again the campus "climate" as it relates to students maintaining "responsibility, accountability and civility." It was agreed the management of large ASUPS events went smoothly, and the "risk review" process for major concerts worked well in the following areas: evaluation of student and community audience, parking needs, set-up and the management of crowds. Since the original charge grew from concern regarding excessive use of alcohol and midnight breakfast events, Kris Bartanen updated that there were fewer incidents of alcohol poisoning this year. Alcohol remains a problem on campus. We discussed the use of the word "civility" and how it relates to students as they

debate difficult issues. The committee continues to support open, stimulating intellectual debate on a wide range of issues on the UPS campus.

Charge #2- The Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities is no longer being considered by ASUPS.

Charge #3- The committee discussed ways to increase programming for the sophomore. The university has received Mellon Grant funding to investigate what kinds of programs might be feasible for sophomores. A few 2002 First Year seminars had a reunion in Fall 2003, but attendance was sparse. Since the consensus of the committee was that students didn't feel the need for more programs during the sophomore year, the focus of the SLC was shifted to increased involvement in academic guidance for sophomores instead. It was suggested advisors meet with students early in the sophomore year to help them with decisions regarding study abroad, leadership positions, internship programs, how to balance academics and activities, as well as decisions on course selection and choices of major. Funding has been provided for faculty to take students on class-related off-campus "excursions." Many faculty members have taken advantage of these funds in order to host such trips. Other opportunities for program involvement are presented at the Activities Fair, held at the beginning of the year. The committee suggested having another Activities Fair a bit later in the fall, for students "overwhelmed" by the flurry of activities and program choices earlier in the year. Although listings for club membership appear on "the web," the committee suggested having a handbook of clubs available for easy referral by students. The SLC also suggested having a theme for sophomore engagement, such as diversity. As second year students, they might be more comfortable handling the issues associated with the subject. An idea to have a sophomore retreat was also suggested. President Thomas has assembled a task force to study ways the university can respond to needs of second year students. Kris Bartanen forwarded Dave Scheinfeld's outline of ideas for sophomore advising to the task force.

Charge #4- The committee endorsed the yearly Conspiracy of Hope project, and the benefit it provides to both the campus community and the community-at-large. Other ongoing programs sponsored by the theme houses, clubs and societies help students connect with intellectual or recreational interests. All of these help promote an active campus community. The committee decided to table any specific plans for a student "Hall of Fame" or "Honors Day" to commemorate their accomplishments. Instead, the committee will continue to support existing programs that recognize student accomplishments, such as the annual University Leadership Awards Ceremony, sponsored by the university and held each April during Parents' Weekend.

Charge #5- In summer 2003 a new web-based calendar system was developed by ASUPS to complement the existing university master calendar, allowing faculty, staff and students to add items to it as the year unfolds. It is hoped the

system could collaborate with other calendars (athletics, academic talks, arts) and supplement other publicity formats (*The Tattler*, bulletin boards, flyers, etc.). In October 2003, efforts were still being made to provide a secure switchover from the existing calendar. SLC members hoped the server could retain events on the calendar after the date of an event had passed. Another possibility would be to have the ASUPS Director of Public Relations coordinate all publicity for student events. As a result, the problems associated with “flyer blindness,” a situation stemming from too many flyers posted around campus and a lack of publicity organization, could be solved. In February 2004, the events website was “up and running,” thanks to the efforts of Josh Haberman and Margaret Thorndill. Haberman completed the documentation and OIS provided a secure server for the site and plans to provide technological support. Members of the SLC hoped the website could eventually support a daily event log, accessible through e-mail, derived from the master calendar.

Charge #6- The Student Life Committee responded to the suggestion that the relationship between students and the Facility Services staff could be improved. The committee invited Craig Benjamin and James Vance, coordinators from Facility Services to meet with the committee to discuss the issues on October 29, 2003. (see Addendum for the questions and answers from the meeting) Craig Benjamin provided a very detailed presentation that outlined the various divisions, roles, and responsibilities within the framework of Facility Services. The FS staff had, on occasion, met with student groups to discuss issues of concern and to develop a working relationship. Craig and James thoroughly answered questions from the committee on covering employee absences, assessing responsibility for damage to university property, providing access to student areas for repair work. The meeting also covered issues on the distribution of staff after recent new building projects and how FS work orders could be disruptive to classes and other activities on campus.

SUGGESTED CHARGES FOR THE 2004-2005 STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE

1. To continue to explore ways to encourage campus conversations aimed at promoting greater responsibility, accountability and civility on campus.
2. Consider alternatives to decrease the number of cars on campus and develop parking management.
3. Consider the recommendations of the Advising Review report and the impact it has on students with disabilities, specific behaviors, or issues relating to academic performance.

ADDENDUM

Questions and answers from the October 29th meeting with Craig Benjamin and James Vance, regarding Facility Services:

Question # 1 What is the range of areas that comprise Facility Services?

Craig Benjamin provided a flow chart to SLC members illustrating the various roles and divisions within Facility Services. He explained that efforts are made to bridge schedules of the electrical/mechanical staff so that someone is always available should an emergency occur. He emphasized the importance of the role of Larry Repogle as work order coordinator on a daily basis from 7 AM to 5 PM, as well as Christine DeShon. He also explained that project management of new buildings and large remodels used to be contracted out but now are being done “in house” by George Paton and Chuck Cole (for example, Trimble Hall and the Science addition). This benefits the university in that we cut costs as well as utilizing the acquired expertise of university personnel.

James Vance explained that several years ago the decision was made to split academic and residential custodial staff and to keep certain people on day shifts to encourage opportunities to build relationships between residents and staff.

Question # 2 Through the Facility Services employees, have you heard any comments from them on their relationships with students? Does your staff have concerns about those relationships?

Question # 3 In general, is it your impression that the students respect the Facility Services staff?

Craig reports positive relationships in general and James said there has been significant improvement over the past several years between students and facilities personnel. Craig gave some examples of things they are doing to build connections: last spring, facilities staff arranged a series of meetings with Union Ave. residents for pizza and conversation facilities staff currently attend chapter meetings to discuss ways students can “move out” of residences gracefully and responsibly and they are working with DOS to get messages out to students re: responsible “move outs” that leave a minimum of trash behind. He credits the office of the Dean of Students with efforts to improve communication between FS and students.

Question # 4A (we had two number 4s) How are your staff members rotated in respect to their assignments? Are members of the custodial staff assigned to specific buildings? During employee illness or vacation, how are the vacancies covered?

James Vance said that custodial staff are assigned to specific buildings but are rotated every two years. Rotation increases staff familiarity with different buildings so that when

called on to fill in for illnesses or vacations, they have people familiar with the needs of different buildings. They are currently operating with a reduced staff due to injury.

Question 4B How are the challenges of maintaining university houses different than maintaining the residence halls?

James said that Union Ave houses are the greatest challenge regarding damage, but that this is a function of “use” and that the Union Ave. residents readily participate in working with Facility Services to make repairs. He said FS have the greatest difficulty accessing the approximately 60 student rental houses for regular maintenance and repairs, and that the dorms tend to have less damage and easier access for maintenance. In general, facilities staff use the last two weeks every May (prior to heavy summer conference use) and the last two weeks of summer to inspect, deep clean and repair all residential housing, which measures just short of one million square feet.

Every R.A. (resident assistant) in each dorm, every C.C. (community coordinator) of a group of rental houses and every G.H.C. (Greek house coordinator) has a vacuum and cleaning supplies that students can borrow.

Question # 5 In maintaining the residences, do you find difficulties in arranging work done by outside contractors?

Kris Bartanen clarified the intent of this question by asking “when there is damage and charges for the damage, are all residences equally dealt with and charged?” Craig explained that when there is damage to any kind of residence, an ITB (intent to bill) is sent to the party to be charged stating how Facilities Services intends to follow through. This gives the resident the option to participate in some way with the repair in order to reduce the fee. After the ITB is sent, then a process for the repair is organized which may or may not include student participation or outside contracting.

Question # 6 Given the addition of the new buildings on campus, how do you find the workload for your staff?

Craig and James stated that custodial services did receive an increase of 1.5 FTE for both Wyatt and Trimble Halls and they predict there will be an increase in staff to support the science building addition. No new maintenance staff have been hired .

Question #7 How does the Facility Services Staff work with the campus community with scheduling work that might be disruptive to classes or other activities on campus?

Craig stated that they do coordinate with the Music Dept. but that it is a complex problem. Currently they work to coordinate more intrusive, less routine work (i.e. construction, noxious fumes) so that it does not negatively impact the people most

immediately affected. He described a new effort to better inform people who are secondarily affected. Departments across campus are asked which buildings in particular do they want to be informed about when work is being done. The hope is that a system will evolve whereby Facility Services will e-mail those people/departments when an intrusion will be occurring. Questions were raised about the difficulties of informing faculty who may teach in different buildings and about whether a practice or policy exists about informing the campus community of potentially noxious fumes so people with allergies can take precautions. Craig talked about the dilemma of how to streamline information so as not to flood the campus and said they are working on protocol. Barry Bauska requested using plain, straightforward language (rather than acronyms or code) when making announcements via e-mail.