

**Minutes  
Student Life Committee  
March 28, 2002**

**Attending:** Kris Bartanen, Darrel Frost, Duane Hulbert, Diane Kelley, Ben Shelton, Ryan Sweeney, Carrie Washburn

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m. The minutes of March 14 were approved.

The committee turned to discussion of the draft Student Bill of Rights. Kelley reminded the committee of Betsy Gast's question in prior minutes about what the task of the committee was with respect to this document. Sweeney asked what the committee's charge is; Kelley and Bartanen noted that the Faculty Senate asked the committee to consult with ASUPS about the feasibility of the Bill of Rights. Frost reported that the draft shared with the committee is the most current version. Shelton noted that students are interested in feedback from the committee about the document. Sweeney noted that students would like to see this document approved by the Board of Trustees so that it would stand on par with (or closely beside) the Student Integrity Code. Washburn asked what the Bill of Rights would govern: How would it differ from the Student Integrity Code? Would one take precedence over the other? Why are two documents needed? Shelton suggested that, even if the two documents are redundant, the Bill of Rights is expressed in the voice of the students and is empowering both in its title and in its voice. Sweeney offered that the Bill of Rights would clarify some of the vagueness or ambiguity of the Student Integrity Code. Washburn asked why, if there is vagueness in the Integrity Code, students do not go through the established process for amending the Code rather than creating a new document. Sweeney, with Frost concurring, noted that the Student Integrity Code governs the behavior of students while the Bill of Rights governs the behavior of the University. The Bill of Rights is a synthesis of rights and responsibilities.

Hulbert, pointing to Article IV on the right to be free from discrimination, noted that some provisions are stated elsewhere in University policies. He asked what issues are exclusive to the Bill of Rights and not contained in other documents, suggesting that the committee's work could be more easily taken up if the exclusive provisions of the Bill of Rights, or places where the Bill of Rights extends beyond current policy, could be highlighted. Washburn asked if drafters had looked at how this document lines up with the Faculty Code. Frost explained that the drafting committee had not looked at other policies, but had brainstormed what rights students wanted to see expressed. Drafters see benefit in there being a central location for students to read explicitly what rights they have.

Looking to the content of Article IV, Sweeney asked what the drafters saw as a working definition of "discrimination" noting that, depending on the definition, Article IV and Article II might at times be in conflict. Frost explained that drafters believe that students should not be treated differently based on factors like ethnicity and that, of the factors listed, prior conduct history was one that is an extension of current policy. Sweeney noted that such a provision might clash with practices where background checks are required, e.g., to do some kinds of volunteer service with children. Bartanen asked what was the issue of concern to students that generated this factors being added to the list. Frost noted that some students expressed concern that some administrators may look at them differently if they have a conduct record and that this could result in unfair treatment. Sweeney and Bartanen explained that simply having a conduct violation on one's record is not a decision-making factor, but that in some situations—e.g., selection of Resident Assistants or Study Abroad eligibility—a pattern of conduct problems is a relevant matter. The committee then discussed some differences between unfair judgments and judgments made on relevant factors, concluding that perhaps the words "unfair treatment" should be substituted for the word "discrimination." After further discussion, there was more sentiment for retaining the list of discriminating factors than for eliminating it.

Washburn and Kelley asked what would happen if someone violated a provision of the Bill of Rights. Shelton expressed hope that the statements of rights could be affirmed even if the document is not perfect and would need later additions to clarify process. Kelley suggested that the committee could note in reporting out on the feasibility of the document that there are no provisions regarding its implementation.

Kelley again asked whether drafters would be prepared to assist the committee by showing where the Bill of Rights was redundant with existing policies. Frost said three members of the drafting committee are very familiar with the Student Integrity Code, but that the Dean of Students might be able to highlight the differences between the Bill of Rights and University policies and codes. Bartanen responded that asking her alone to do the detail work of the drafting committee or the Student Life Committee was an undue burden. Kelley suggested that the committee's role was not to look at the draft Bill of Rights in light of all University policies and so would need to report to the Faculty Senate "to the best of our knowledge."

Noting that there are only two committee meetings left this semester, Kelley suggested that there would not be time to go through all fifteen articles with the depth of discussion the committee had this day spent on Article IV. Hulbert suggested that special attention might be directed to those articles where language emphasizes "students have a right to choose . . ." (Articles 6, 9, 13, 14). Washburn said that we could give what feedback we do have to the drafting committee at the end of the semester. Sweeney noted that the committee could ask the Faculty Senate to recharge the committee with looking at an amended draft in the fall. Frost suggested that committee members email their questions to Kelley in advance of the next meeting in order to move things along. Kelley agreed to this suggestion and will compile questions for the April 11 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kris Bartanen