

**Minutes of the Student Life Committee
October 31, 2013**

Present: Faculty Members Brad Reich, Lisa Fortlouis Wood, Mike Benveniste; Library Liaison Eli Gandour-Rood; Dean Mike Segawa

Meeting was **informally called to order** at 8:20 a.m.

Previous minutes from Oct 10th meeting were unable to be approved, as Gandour-Rood had distributed them early that morning. Gandour-Rood apologized for tardiness, and Wood suggested that the minutes be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

Business:

Reich noted that the committee seemed smaller than usual; attendance at the committee meetings has shrunk from initial meeting.

Wood asked the group to consider the work of the Sexual Assault Working Group (SAWG) Report working group, noting that the working group (of Brad Reich, Lisa Ferrari, Eli Gandour-Rood, and Jenica Holt) had met.

Segawa discussed briefly the history of SAWG, which produced the report last year. He noted that there is interest in the group becoming a longer standing or permanent group on campus, and that he will need to consult with Kris Bartanen and Michael Benitez in the process of giving SAWG an official status.

Reich, speaking on behalf of the working group, noted that the group met with Dean Segawa and determined that the goal of the working group would be to review and prioritize the recommendations of the SAWG as contained within the report, which been reviewed by the working group and can be shared with the rest of the committee, although not yet with the campus at large. The working group's first impressions are that more information is needed, since there is a dearth of quantitative data, although there is a lot of anecdotal data and strong feelings.

Wood noted that it appears to be a large project to review and comment on these recommendations, and asked whether there are national projects on this same issue that UPS could look to.

Dean Segawa noted that due to massive underreporting (an issue not unique to UPS), it's unclear at times how much data we actually have on this issue, and how verifiable it is, but that UPS is planning to look at good or promising practices at other institutions, and review what scholarship that exists.

Reich asked whether UPS should be using a "total program" approach to inform our prioritization efforts, and Segawa affirmed that approach, pointing out that currently, there is a wide variety of efforts taking place around campus that are not coordinated including, for instance, ten different harassment responders, many of whom will not be approached in any given year.

Wood brought up the topic of campus culture, wondering whether there is a culture on campus that has victims feeling like nothing will get done, even though there are in fact programs in place.

Segawa agreed that there seems to be a disconnect on campus between what is available and the perception of what's available, and that there is not necessarily clarity or confidence (within the student body or among others) in the process

The committee discussed the dual necessity of the importance students needing to learn to work the system or persevere within a complicated system, along with the importance of the system (i.e the University) being as accessible as possible to the students.

Segawa noted that it would be helpful for the SLC (through the work of the SAWG working group) to try to determine what makes the most sense for the University to focus its efforts on, in the face of limited resources.

Benveniste asked if the committee had a sense as to whether there are particularly exigent areas which require more focus, and how the committee might determine those areas.

The committee discussed potential areas of concern, such as incidents of harassment by visiting faculty members which did not receive follow up. There was discussion of the campus as a geographically contained unit, and whether the focus of the University should be on incidents that happen on campus, or on any incidents experienced by members of the community, whether on or off campus. Given that the vast majority of students live within a mile of campus, the University hasn't yet been forced to draw a distinction between campus and off-campus.

Segawa pointed out that the Bias-Hate Education Response Team (BHERT) is collecting data points, no matter how minor, in order to get a better picture of what's happening on campus, and received information about 35-40 incidents of all sizes last year. He clarified the reporting response, which is that anyone who receives a report currently reports it 'up the line' to a supervisor (or academic department chair) until it reaches one of the 10 designated responders (who are identified by name online), who then work with the victim. Currently this system is advertised via the website and pamphlets, but it's unclear how effective that is.

Reich pointed out that the policy (found online at <http://www.pugetsound.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/policies/campus-policies/campus-policy-prohibiting-hara/>) is long and unwieldy, and that traumatized individuals may have difficulty engaging with the policy.

The committee discussed the possibility of alternative methods of engagement for victims, including a first responder hotline staffed by students, an assistant to our current ombudsperson (currently Grace Kirchner), or another point of contact that provides assistance. The committee also discussed the lack of information available to assess the campus response, and the possibility of surveying students about their needs and perceptions of campus resources. The SAWG-focused working group of the SLC will meet again on Nov 7th to further discuss prioritizations.

Segawa thanked the committee for its work, and pointed out that it's not the responsibility of the SLC to operationalize suggestions, necessarily, only to offer feedback and suggestions that other offices on campus can take action around. Also that it is vital to have the perspective of the committee, which engages with these issues differently from student life staff and administration.

The committee discussed the need for any permanently convened Sexual Assault Working group (or similar) to be connected to the SLC, perhaps with representation from the SLC.

Wood then asked the Campus Health and Wellness Services (CHWS)-focused working group to check in, and Benveniste noted that they are seeking greater clarity from the faculty senate on the charge to the SLC regarding CHWS. The committee discussed some of the challenges, including a lack of data, and lack of clarity around whether the working group is meant to coming up with specific recommendations, or qualitative evaluations, or both. The committee discussed the necessity of the CHWS working group meeting with CHWS staff to get additional information, and all agreed on the importance of clearer lines of communication to the student body about what services are available to them. Segawa will also meet with the CHWS working group separately to discuss how to proceed.

The SLC determined that it would meet again as a large group on Nov 14th, to discuss the report of the working groups, which will meet in the meantime on Nov 7th. As needed the full SLC will also meet on Nov 21st.

Motion to adjourn was seconded and unanimously passed at 9:25am.