

**Minutes of the Student Life Committee
February 14, 2014**

Present: Faculty Members Brad Reich, Lisa Fortlouis Wood, Ben Lewin, David Latimer, Poppy Fry; Student Representative Ryan Del Rosario; Library Liaison Eli Gandour-Rood; Associate Dean Lisa Ferrari; Dean Mike Segawa

Meeting was **called to order** at noon.

The minutes from January 24th were unanimously approved.

The Committee had invited Assistant Dean of Students Debbie Chee to discuss her work with the First Year Experience Task Force (FYETF). Chee shared with the SLC information about FYETF, which began meeting in the Fall Semester 2013 to review the orientation program that first year students at Puget Sound experience. Currently the Puget Sound first year orientation has 3 components: an outdoor/away component (Passages), an on-campus component (Perspectives), and a one day 'academic introduction' (Prelude). The entire orientation lasts 9-10 days, and is very labor intensive for the University. The last review of the orientation program at Puget Sound was in 2001-2003.

Chee explained that the FYETF is undertaking a review of the length of the orientation and the larger programmatic content of the orientation. There are 16 members of FYETF, which was charged by Dean Segawa. The FYETF spent Fall semester meeting every other week for an hour, becoming familiar with the orientation program, and how/why it's done. We've read materials, done breakout groups, looked at how other schools do their programs.

FYETF has now for Spring 2014 broken into four smaller groups: 1) to look at passages. There are logistic concerns (resources/lack of facility to handle large group of students) that force Puget Sound to split this aspect of Orientation into two groups, which can mean repetition of effort. One idea is to move to an opt-out model for an outdoor component, but right now it's available to everyone, no extra cost. Another consideration is whether there could there be other variations of an 'outdoor experience'. Kate Cohn is taking the lead for this working group.

2) Second group is looking at Prelude, and Martin Jackson is taking the lead. Prelude used to be a two-day workshop, then one day, now it's 6 hours. Is there an opportunity to update it now along with the updated SSI rubrics?

3) Third group is looking at advising and registration, and Landon Wade is taking the lead. Questions include whether registration must happen during orientation week, and if not, whether the student conversation with their advisor during registration would switch to more relationship development, rather than being very focused on nuts and bolts of registration.

4) Fourth group, lead by Alana Hentges, is looking at "everything else" and at the relationship between all of the different elements. Could some things happen later in the semester? What HAS to happen during orientation?

Chee noted that the group will meet through the spring, will make big picture recommendations to Dean Segawa and various stakeholders on campus. The recommendations would not be for this coming fall but likely for Fall 2015.

Segawa noted that it might be possible to pilot something Fall 2014, but unlikely, given the timeline of this group. Orientation planning committee would probably need more lead time, so likely that something might be piloted Fall 15 and then fully implanted Fall 2016.

Chee noted that the current orientation program over all is about 20 years old (with some variation and review) but it's a very well established program, so any changes will take time and buy-in.

Wood asked what the SLC could do the rest of the semester to help the FYETF, and the committee discussed the relationship of the SLC to this group's efforts. It seemed likely that SLC would become more involved with feedback and decision-making next year, and there was discussion of how SLC could stay informed about the FYETF's progress. It was suggested that there could be a representative from SLC on the FYETF, who could communicate between the groups.

Segawa noted that it is helpful for SLC to be a middle ground, in between the content experts and the overall populace, and provide feedback on broader efforts.

Committee members noted that the SLC has been charged this year with charges along the lines of "How do you feel about efforts being made in X area," to which the committee has responded by requesting clarity about the goals of the efforts. Therefore, closer connection between SLC and groups could perhaps facilitate better understanding of goals in order to offer feedback about various group efforts.

Wood asked about the connection of the FYETF to the issue of the residential first year seminars, if there is one? Chee and Segawa noted that the FYETF will not be looking at those seminars, but that data on those seminars (from student and faculty experience) does exist. Chee was invited to return to SLC in the future to help discuss the residential seminar data.

The committee thanked Chee for joining the meeting and providing her expertise and knowledge.

After Chee's departure, the committee discussed the idea of having an SLC representative attend the FYETF meetings and report back. After discussion, it was decided that **Poppy Fry will attend FYETF meetings and act as a liaison between the groups.**

The committee then took up an extensive discussion on the role of the SLC, with various committee members offering reflection about the role of the SLC, the benefit of having deliverables, and the meaningful change that SLC could potentially bring about. One model was proposed of the SLC working within a framework of "Communication, Reflection, & Action," with the 'action' often taking the form of a report or a recommendation to another individual or department on campus. Further discussion revealed that many committee members would like to see the SLC determine what its boundaries are, so that the committee can determine its primary responsibilities, not just for the rest of this year, but in the future.

The committee noted that, while the SLC is an advisory committee, it would be preferable to have a solid understanding of what the committee's jurisdiction, power, and potential actions are, so to avoid a bureaucratic revolving door of reading documents, thinking about them, and producing a new document.

Dean Segawa confirmed that the SLC is an advisory committee for the Dean of Students.

Ferrari suggested that the Committee review the faculty by-laws and better understand the intent of the formation of the SLC, to determine whether any revision might be necessary, though she further noted that any revision of bylaws would be a large undertaking.

Wood noted that she will be absent for the February 28th meeting. The committee therefore resolved to schedule a replacement meeting on February 21st in order to devote a full meeting to discussion of SLC's mission, purpose, composition, etc. Members will review the faculty by-laws prior to the meeting.

Meeting **adjourned at 1:05pm.**