

Student Life Committee Report

Academic Year 1996-1997

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Student Life Committee - Barry Anton, Chair, Bill Haltom (Fall, 1996) Judith Kay (ex-officio), Sunil Kukreja, Carol Merz (Spring, 1997), Laura Thornburg, Carrie Washburn (ex-officio for Dean Cooney) & Students: Elizabeth Mileti, Laura Folkwein, and Helen Shurke

The Student Life Committee (SLC) reviewed their responses to the charges set forth by the Faculty Senate. The three senate charges were: 1) serve as a liaison among students and faculty to the Dean of Students' Office, 2) advise the Dean of Students and 3) evaluate the Residential Life Survey (work with diversity committee). The SLC acted as a liaison by inviting students from relevant groups to each meeting. Students also came to the SLC when a crisis emerged (e.g. the graffiti incident). The SLC also acted as a liaison and assisted the Dean of Students by pulling together the necessary students, staff and faculty to discuss the co-curriculum, which is a shared enterprise between these three groups. Dean Kay expressed her appreciation to the committee, indicating that the SLC is in a unique position to generate fruitful conversations about how faculty, students and staff can collaborate to improve the intellectual life of students outside of the classroom. Nevertheless, the SLC requests that the Faculty Senate clarify its charge to the SLC "to serve as a liaison among students, faculty and the Dean of Students" and "advise the Dean of Students."

Regarding the third Faculty Senate charge to the committee to evaluate the Residential Life Survey. The SLC was unable to do so this year because the final reports were not ready for review until late April. It was the SLC members' understanding that the survey was commissioned for the president and that the president may make recommendations to the SLC and/or other groups next year.

The report from the Residential Life Task Force is available on the News and Announcement Section of the University Web Server at <http://www.ups.edu>. The first report summarizes results from the housing portion of the survey. The second report summarizes the campus climate portion of the survey. Hard copies of these summaries are available in the Dean of Students Office, Wheelock Student Center 208.

In addition, a copy of Ira Fink's executive summary is available from the dean of students.

In addition to the charges set forth by the Faculty Senate, the committee generated three additional charges that were proposed by faculty during the summer faculty conversations with president Pierce and which would assist the dean of students and her staff's efforts to improve the quality of students' experiences outside of the classroom. These included: a discussion of the Wheelock Student Center. The committee discussed several issues including: the need for mailboxes for on and off campus students, The Cellar and Rendezvous Room, 2) ways to improve the Bookstore, and 3) ways to enhance intellectual life on campus.

The committee is pleased to report that bookstore hours were extended this past semester, perhaps as a result of SLC discussions; that providing benches and physical spaces for informal conversations between faculty and students is being considered by John Hickey and others, and that the continuation of the diversity theme year to enhance the intellectual climate on campus was supported. To enhance the impact of the diversity theme year concept, it was recommended that ASUPS constitute an Ad Hoc committee on the diversity theme year. This committee would write a faculty guide to help integrate guest speakers into classroom experiences and to find ways to improve participation in diversity theme year activities by various constituencies around campus.

The Student Life Committee recommends that:

The Faculty Senate encourage faculty members to announce co-curricular events and lectures at the beginning of their classes whenever practicable.

The Faculty Senate encourage ASUPS to develop a guide for faculty on how to advertise their events and invite speakers to their classrooms, and to develop a guide of faculty expertise on current issues to assist ASUPS programmers.

The Faculty Senate help educate the faculty about the diversity theme year and encourage faculty involvement.

The Open Forum be revived with a specific faculty coordinator appointed by the Academic Dean in consultation with the faculty senate executive officers. The Open Forum could apply for funding to the Academic Vice President. Faculty serving as coordinators for the Open Forum would receive explicit "service" credit from the Academic Vice President.

The faculty members assigned to the SLC be those faculty who are also involved in other ways in the co-curriculum (e.g. the diversity theme year advisory board, the advisors to ASUPS or the student media, advisors to clubs to student clubs or organizations, NCBI, faculty serving as advisors to fraternities and sororities, etc.

The SLC proposed that the following charges to the SLC be considered by the Faculty Senate for next year:

To continue to explore ways to enhance the intellectual life on campus.

To solicit, on an as-needed basis, from the Office of Institutional Research, data from the Residential Life Survey that might assist the SLC in its deliberations.

To continue to develop ways to involve faculty in the co-curriculum and improve the coordination of co-curricular programs among various constituencies across campus.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Anton
Chair