

University Senate
Student Welfare Committee
March 28, 2014

Meeting called to order at 10:30 a.m.

Attendance: Karen Bresciano, Susanna Cowan, Kate Fuller, Michael Gilbert, Jim Long, Terri Dominguez, Ari Solomon, Timothy Lim, Eddison Buenano, Courtney Natri, Kevin Alvarez, Riana Pryor, Elizabeth Conklin, David Kaminsky, Larry Goodheart

Regional Campus Student Welfare

From ASG/GHC were Timothy Lim and Ari Solomon; from ASG/Waterbury were Eddison Buenano and Courtney Natri with advisor Jim Long.

Ari spoke about a variety of issues that included: the stressful day in the life of a Regional Campus student; lack of a lab at the Torrington Campus; parking problems at Storrs; need to expand and to inform students of research opportunities; deficient information about the Regional Campuses on the UConn website; more comprehensive information at student orientation; access to UConn health services; need for a nurse on campus for emergencies; lack of student input on the Hartford Campus move to downtown; and better coordination between student government at Storrs and the Regionals. Eddison advocated removing the reading day at Waterbury that creates a hardship for the many working students and called for better Regional Campus representation on university committees.

The committee concurred with Terri Dominguez's suggestion that at the scheduled April 25 the agenda include the formation of a task force to take on the issue Regional Campus student welfare.

President's Task Force on Civility and Campus Culture

Attorney Elizabeth Conklin, Title IX Coordinator and Associate Vice President of the Office of Equity and Diversity, and Dr. Michael Gilbert, Vice President for Student Affairs, spoke about the implementation of the December 2013 report of the President's Task Force on Civility and Campus Culture. Michael distributed two pertinent handouts.

Elizabeth spoke about issues of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault, including: sensitive responses; coordination and collaboration of services; one brochure for victims; development of a website; training for first responders and residential advisors; prevention and education; student bystander intervention and leadership; and training for management on how to deal with victims.

Michael discussed the implementation of the 50 recommendations of the Task Force. He stressed that the office of the Dean of Student Affairs is being augmented accordingly. Initiatives include: a new assistant dean with staff to support victims; addition of a trauma specialist; filling two vacancies in Wellness and Prevention; expanded student orientation on healthy sexual relationship, prevention of sexual assault, and alcohol and drug awareness; community response team; gender neutral bathrooms; revisiting juniors with information;

working with cultural centers and residence halls; and liaison of Student Affairs with the Regional Campuses.

In regard to a comment by David Kaminsky, Michael explained that the campus code extends off campus. Elizabeth added that the campus police are limited to the campus; the state police have jurisdiction off campus.

Ari called for the need for safety walks and blue lights at the Regional Campuses. Timothy Lim recommended diversity centers at the Regional Campuses.

Disabled Student:

Karen Bresciano offered to help with the needs of a disabled student whose plight this winter Kevin Alvarez highlighted.

Finals Policy

In lieu of a resolution of this perennial issue, Karen is now working behind the scenes for a resolution.

Graduate Student Medical Insurance

Larry Goodheart will report the following unanimously adopted statement to the Senate Executive and Heads of Committee at its meeting later today.

Graduate Student Medical Insurance

At its March 7, 2014 meeting with Dean Kent Holsinger, the Student Welfare Committee expressed grave concern about the implications of the proposed rescission in the University's subsidy for the medical insurance of graduate students. Although the rescission, if any, would not take effect until Fall 2015, the committee wishes to make the following points to the Senate Executive Committee at its March 28 meeting:

- graduate students, particularly those with dependents and families, will be faced with an overwhelming financial burden;
- it appears that the proposed changes were not communicated to graduate students in a timely fashion that would have lend itself to constructive engagement, and as a consequence graduate students felt blindsided because they were unable to plan and prepare;
- the proposed changes would have a deleterious effect on the University's ability to recruit and retain high quality graduate students;
- the Student Welfare Committee finds the proposed policy not in best interests of graduate students and the University.

Adjournment at noon

Submitted by Larry Goodheart

