

Student Welfare Committee
University Senate
2019-2020 Annual Report

MEMBERSHIP

Senate Members:

Maureen Armstrong, Chair, Dean of Students Office
Terrance Abney, Residential Life
Gerry Berkowitz, Plant and Landscape Architecture
Alexis Boylan, Art & Art History
Maria-Luz Fernandez, Nutritional Science
Peter Gogarten, Molecular and Cell Biology
Andrea Hubbard, Pharmacy
Donna Korbel, Center for Students with Disabilities
Morty Ortega, Natural Resources and the Environment
Angela Rola, Asian American Cultural Center

Additional Members:

Cinnamon Adams, Graduate School
Rebecca Bacher, CLAS Academic Services
Kelly Bartlett, Waterbury Campus
Kanu Caplash, Undergraduate Student Representative
Jennifer Tibbets, Registrar's Office
Michael Gilbert, Vice President of Student Affairs (Ex Officio Member)
Kay Gruder, Center for Career Development
Sara Harrington, University Libraries
Kelly Kennedy, School of Business
Katherine McCarthy, Admissions
Tina McCarthy, Student Health Services
Daniel Pfeiffer, Graduate Student Senate
Delaruelle Tarpeh, Undergraduate Student Representative

Meetings

September 5, 2019
October 3, 2019
November 14, 2019
December 5, 2019
February 6, 2020
March 5, 2020
April 2, 2020
May 7, 2020

TOPICS CONSIDERED/ADDRESSED

Concerns about late night transportation/lack thereof for students

Mike Jednak, Associate Vice President of Facilities & Operations met with the SWC to discuss late night transportation options for students. He provided information on the late night usage of buses.

Essentially, there is limited to no ridership on buses after 10 PM (maybe 1 or 2 riders for 17 buses). Running buses for this number of riders is cost prohibitive. Moving forward Transportation would consider conducting a survey to gauge student interest in late night transportation. They are also exploring/considering a limited late-night service route (e.g. Student Union, library, Hilltop) and investigating a way to test out a rideshare program

Regional campus students at Storrs

Nathan Fuerst, Vice President, Enrollment Planning & Management met with the SWC to discuss the Regional campus students at the Storrs campus. He shared data on the cohort, provided historical context for the program and an overview of data collection and tracking of this population for retention purposes. Members of the SWC shared concerns about this model and the lack of a designated home office for this group at Storrs. It was suggested that we identify ways to holistically support this group prior to their arrival for example, scheduling of classes to accommodate two campuses, making adjustments prior to the start of the semester to set them up for success. It will be important to track this program/population over time and it would be helpful for the SWC to check in on this group during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Extended cafe hours in library during final exam period

Students expressed interest in having extended hours at Bookworms Café during final exam period when the library is open 24 hours. SWC members reviewed data on library usage per day/hour during final exam week over a period of two years. Based on the data, SWC recommended Dining Services to expand the operation hours of Bookworms Café during the final exam period to extend later into the evening. Dining Services agreed to this proposal and planned to expand Bookworms Café hours during the May 2020 final exam period. SWC will reach out to Dining Services in fall 2020 to keep this proposal moving forward.

Hartford Campus evening security

Maggie Silver, Deputy Chief of UConn Police provided an overview of security services at all regional campuses. Initial topic was on Hartford campus, specifically a reduction in evening security. Deputy Chief Silver provided clarification that at the Hartford Campus there was a reduction in services hours of the security guard, not police officers. She provided an overview of services offered and how the UCPD collaborates with local agencies in the respective areas of each regional campus. The SWC members suggest that we look into providing information about all campuses (e.g. parking, safety, information desk) for campus changers or students taking classes at campuses other than their home campus. This topic will carry forward for further exploration on how to best disseminate the information.

UConn Bookstore

The SWC committee intends to carry this topic into the 2020-2021 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and remote operating. Overarching questions to consider:

1. Is the UConn Bookstore serving the needs of students
2. transparency of text book pricing prior to course registration

UConn PIRG is interested in the topic and SWC chair Maureen Armstrong met with two members of this organization to discuss the PIRG textbook campaign. The bookstore topic will carry over to next year.

Mental Health and Wellness

Dr. Chetan Joshi, Interim Director of SHaW – Mental Health met with the SWC group to provide an overview of the services offered to students. He discussed current options for care provided to students, collaborative relationships with off campus providers and suggestions for how to help students who are struggling. The SWC suggested more ongoing training options be available possibly through the HR Learning at Work series.

Needs and issues of international undergraduate and graduate students

Rae Alexander, Director of International and Scholar Student Services met with the SWC to discuss the needs and issues of this student population. ISSS serves matriculated students as well as exchange students, graduated students on OPT (visa sponsorship), and visiting researchers and faculty and their family members (visa sponsorship). She provided an overview of her office and how it supports students. Discussed programming options to help students engage with greater UConn community and the challenges the students may face.

Dimensions of Wellness

The SWC is interested in exploring opportunities to utilize holistic dimensions of wellbeing models across the University. Karen McComb, Director of Health Promotion and Community Impact was due to attend the April meeting but due to conflicts with her schedule and the COVID-19 pandemic this topic will become a fall agenda item. Karen McComb will join the SWC to discuss this concept and the work her office is doing in this area.

Respectfully Submitted

Maureen Armstrong, Chair Student Welfare Committee

April 27, 2020