

Meeting Minutes – University Senate

Student Admissions, Aid and Affairs Committee

Date: April 21, 2016
Time: 4:00 – 5:00 PM
Location: 272 Hillman Library
Facilitator: Robin Kear (Co-Chair)
Note Taker: Chyongchiou (Cho Cho) Jeng Lin (Co-Chair)

Attendees:

Elected members: Lance Davidson, Ray Jones, Robin Kear, Julius Kitutu, Steve Levine, Cho Cho Lin, Juan Taboas, Anna Mary Williford

Student representative: Nasreen Harun, Julia Helgert

Staff Association Council: Hillary Koller

Chancellor’s liaisons: Kenyon Bonner, Marc Harding, Alberta Sbragia

Senate Appointment:

Guests: Kim Barlow (University Times), Joe Kozak (GPSG), Stephanie Hoogendoorn (Office of the Provost)

Agenda Items

1. **Discussion of committee report on graduate students.** (All)
 - Robin presented our report and recommendations to the Faculty Assembly on 4/12. We received a unanimous endorsement (with 1 abstention). See the [University Times coverage](#).
2. Student government groups reports (10 minutes each)
 - Nasreen Harun, Student Government Board (SGB)
 - Favorite programs and moments from the past year: TEDx talks at Pitt, SGB Safety Fair, Mental Health Awareness Week, It’s on Us campaign, ACC student government interactions.
 - Initiatives in Progress
 - Public Health Certificate
 - Contraceptive Accessibility
 - Undergraduate Research Fund Expansion
 - Student Organization Space Accessibility
 - Marketing and Branding of SGB
 - Communication with Students
 - Freshman Academic Advising
 - Sexual Assault Awareness
 - Student Code of Conduct Revisions
 - Recreational Facility Improvements

- Bike Safety
 - Civic Engagement Dinners
 - By the Numbers This Fiscal Year
 - 26 Undergraduate Research Grants awarded
 - 150 Competitions supported
 - 70 Off-Campus Conferences supported
 - 159 On-Campus Programs supported
- Julia Helgert, College of General Studies (CGS) Student Government
 - After 45 years at Pitt, our previous director and the founder of the McCarl Center for Nontraditional Student Success, Dr. Sherry Miller Brown, retired last May. Our new director Adam Robinson started in September. Adam has a lot of great ideas and this year we've worked with him to find creative ways to inspire CGS students to get more involved and raise awareness for all that CGS has to offer.
 - This year our main initiative has been to continue our most successful annual events and incorporate new events to encourage our students, non-traditional and traditional, to feel like part of the CGS community.
 - We kick off every year with our annual welcome back bbq – which is hosted on the back patio of Posvar with cookout food, games, karaoke, and a photo booth! This is always one of our most well-attended events and it's always a lot of fun. This is always my favorite CGS memory because it's such a good way to start the year.
 - Our annual CGS Homecoming Pre-fireworks event also had great attendance this year. We start out tabling at the welcome back reception in the cathedral and then move over to the Pittsburgh Athletic Association for a student and alumni dinner. This year we had Pitt's a cappella group – The Pitches and Tones – perform, which was a really exciting new addition!
 - Every November CGS participates in National Nontraditional Student Week. This week is an opportunity to spotlight the lives of our unique population of students and alumni. During this time, CGS students are urged to attend a variety of workshops, lectures, films, performances, and networking socials that empower them to successfully manage the culture of higher education. Each year has a new theme and this year, the focus of the week was to engage students in thinking about the relationship between Pittsburgh and the rest of the world.
 - Moving on to the spring semester, our first CGSSG hosted event for the spring semester was "Monte Carlo Night at CGS" in January. The event featured blackjack, roulette, and a number wheel, where students could win tokens to redeem for prizes. This was the first time we tried an event like this and students really enjoyed it!
 - CGS was happy to receive funding for a Year of the Humanities Event, which was called *Humanities in Continuing Education!* This event took place on Wednesday, March 23 and had three parts:
 - An Osher Lifelong Learning sponsored lecture on Baroque Art
 - A student/alumni panel on the role of humanities in professional lives
 - A student visual art exhibition. CGS students submitted their own photographs and videos to be featured at the event.
 - We hosted our annual CGS Excellence Reception on April 15 in the Pittsburgh Athletic Association. This event recognizes extraordinary CGS students, faculty and staff. CGS students nominate faculty or staff members who have made a difference in their academic pursuits to receive Student Choice Awards, which were awarded

at the reception. For the third consecutive year, all five of our CGS advisors were nominated. CGS scholarships are awarded to students. Our new CGSSG President Jessica Sevcik and council members were sworn in as well.

- For our last event of the semester, we wanted to experiment with an off-campus event. We've organized a walk through Highland Park taking place tomorrow called "make finals a walk in the park" to encourage students to take a breath of fresh air and de-stress before finals week!
- The CGS Student Ambassador Program was established to assist nontraditional first-year and transfer students with their college transition by pairing them with an experienced CGS student who provides guidance and support throughout the new student's first year.
 - The Student Ambassadors reach out to new CGS students through email to answer any questions they may have and let them know about upcoming CGS events.
 - Ambassadors are matched with students who share their major, which serves as a way to make their guidance more helpful and relevant
- Overall, this year was definitely a year of transitions! Like I mentioned, our new director and aside from 2 council members, we had a completely new board this year. We stuck to traditions that have been our biggest success in the past but also branched out and tried some new things as well.
- Our biggest challenge is always trying to find time to all come together despite our council members' busy schedules. Most of our members are part-time and live off campus so the time commitment can be challenging at times. We also had a huge goal to be more active on social media this year but that did not turn out like we'd hoped due to limitations by our communication department. We did not get full approval to use social media until the middle of the year.
- For next year, we're looking to do some restructuring to CGSSG, with the goal of creating individual positions within the organization. For example, a marketing position who will run our social media, community service position, event planning position, etc. We'll really be focusing on this initiative over the summer!
 - Rather than hosting events that are "one-size-fits-all" and expecting traditional and nontraditional students to be interested, we're going to experimenting with hosting some events that are tailored more specifically for traditional students and others that are tailored more specifically to nontraditional students.
 - We're in the very early stages of trying to organize a student-parent organization where CGS students with children can come together and have a support system on campus.
- Joe Kozak, Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)
 - Goals
 - Increase University Partnership/Visibility
 - Increase Programming Efforts
 - Increase Communication
 - Increase University Partnerships/Visibility
 - Coordinate with other University Dept.
 - Community and Gov't Relations
 - Pitt Alumni Association
 - Undergraduate SGB

- CSSD
 - Internal/Climate Surveys
 - GPSG Climate Survey
 - Orientation Survey
- Increase Programming Efforts
 - 1 social event per month
 - 2 personal/professional development events per semester
 - Reached 17% of our population through programming (Only known through Eventbrite)
 - Including other events GPSG reached ≈21% of unique GPS students
- Increase Communication
 - Transitioned to @pitt.edu email address
 - Calendar added to Pitt Mobile App
 - Revised Website and social media
- Other
 - Graduate and Professional Community Report to Provost's office
 - Worked with SAAA on recommendations to Faculty Senate
 - Proclamation from Pittsburgh City Council

Action Item:

A chair or co-chairs are needed for next year's committee.

Next Meeting: September 2016