

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Student Affairs
1 December 2015, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm
26 Gerberding Hall

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from 3 November 2015
4. ASUW Report
5. GPSS Report
6. Student Affairs
7. Subcommittee Reports
8. Good of the order
9. Adjourn

1) Call to Order

Treser called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2) Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as written.

3) Approval of the Minutes from 3 November 2015

The minutes from November 3rd, 2015 were approved unanimously as written.

4) ASUW Report

It was noted the council has reached out to the members of ASUW Tacoma and ASUW Bothell (Associated Students of the University of Washington) and asked them to join the FCSA as ex-officio members. Representatives from those student government's thanked the council for the invitation to participate in their business, and explained they will be consistently unable to attend FCSA meetings due to their schedules and the commute distance to UW Seattle. After discussion, it was noted the council would like to explore every option in attempting to include student membership from UW Tacoma and Bothell.

5) GPSS Report

The GPSS representative was not present and so no report was given.

6) Student Affairs

Student-led protests

Suite (president's designee) explained there are several national protest-based movements currently ongoing around the United States. He noted the ASUW is currently progressing a homeless initiative to erect a "tent-city" at the UW Seattle campus, as one example of how national movements are touching universities and the UW specifically.

Protesting at UW Seattle

Suite explained several students have been arrested in the state of Washington for protest-related crimes. He noted there is a growing polarization of groups on opposite sides of several issues, which is blocking the path to civil discourse. After question, Suite clarified that large protests have been occurring at and around the UW Seattle campus, and that he has recently held meetings with very volatile students. Suite explained all this conflict is diminishing the ability of the UW and other universities to take up their educational missions. There was some discussion of social media and other internet forums, and how these often proliferate lack of civility and tend to depersonalize issues and lead to further polarization of groups.

Hevly asked if Suite had a sense of how the FCSA might play a role in engaging faculty and the professional staff in the process of addressing the concerns of student groups. He explained he would like to see faculty take a productive role in this issue, but if things are too heated or out of control, many faculty may simply choose not come to campus as often, given the many technologies enabling them to work away from the office.

Suite mentioned there was a faculty member who lost their job after trying to raise a controversial discussion in a classroom that went awry. He explained many faculty feel ill-equipped to manage a discussion of this kind. It was noted any missteps on behalf of faculty in the classroom venue are greatly magnified on social media, as well.

Suite noted one challenge is that there are growing numbers of groups that are tired of talking, and are seeking action, or "revolution," and this is becoming the trend nationally. It was noted this notion is not new. Treser explained what is new is the severe polarization of groups, and people not "coming to the table" to negotiate their demands.

Suite noted President Cauce's Race and Equity Initiative includes students, and was directed to include them early on. He explained many do not want to come to the table, and there is difficulty in getting impassioned individuals to sit down and have dialogues necessary for progress to occur. Suite noted the second forum of the President's Race and Equity Initiative is on January 19th, 2016.

There was some discussion of racial diversity having historical and geographical correlations, with a point that Washington has not been historically and is not currently an extremely diverse state. It was noted that there have been institutional barriers to people of color joining university communities for many years.

Treser asked if it is possible to engage the most vocal group on campus as one way to move forward. Suite noted they are called the legacy group, and that he has attempted to reach out to them.

Bryant questioned what scenarios are available for students to interact with faculty outside of the classroom. She explained these interactions may often help to remedy oppositional situations. Suite

explained several venues have been made available to student leaders at the UW for this purpose, and they know they are being heard by administrators and faculty. Suite explained there has been a comparatively minimal extent of animosity between student governance and administration at the UW, whereas at other universities the situation has been largely accusatorial and adversarial in nature.

After question, Suite explained the system he has in place currently is making progress to a degree, and more aid from the FCSA is not expressly needed at this time.

Hevly observed that students seem to feel though as if the quintessential higher education institution is inherently corrupt and must be “torn down” in order to ultimately improve. He noted perhaps stakeholders would feel more obliged to enlist in efforts towards improvement if they could work towards creating a “university of the future” with a built-in sense of freshness and novelty. Members agreed. Discussion subsided.

7) Subcommittee Reports

•DRS/Mental Health

Treser explained Gill and other members of the DRS/Mental Health Subcommittee have made a brief report, and have come up with some direction. They are interested in working with FCAS (Faculty Council on Academic Standards) on the issue of mental health at the UW.

•Student Conduct Code

Laws explained on December 3rd, 2015 a meeting will be held with several members of the Faculty Appeals Board (FAB), Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (CSSC), Student Life, the Faculty Senate, President’s Office, and the FCSA to discuss the Faculty Appeals Board and other components of Phase II revisions to the UW Student Conduct Code, as well as related processes.

Suite explained this meeting is meant to be a venue to discuss the FAB and CSSC process, and the how the two entities work together in the future to carry out the student conduct processes of the UW. A member explained every time the CSSC and members of the FAB meet together, there is conflict and the two do not get along. It was noted Rolf Johnson (Chief of Staff, President’s Office) has asked that each party meet and take part in civil discourse over the matter.

Laws explained this meeting is separate from discussions over the Student Conduct Code, as it is more focused on process, and especially related to the working relationship between the FAB and CSSC. Suite noted almost every conduct case completed by the CSSC recently has been reversed by the FAB.

Treser explained the FCSA is a neutral third party in the discussion. He explained all parties need to agree on what is best for the students, as there is divergence of opinion on the question. Suite noted the issue is that there are varying opinions on “role and scope.” He explained roles are becoming muddled. Treser noted the FAB is an appeal board, and they review the case brought to them, they are not tasked to reinvestigate the entire case and the processes which brought the case to them.

Treser explained serving on the FAB is a thankless job, which is also very time-consuming, and faculty do not receive buy-out for their time.

Suite noted a “hearing examiner” has been hired for the FAB to help manage the high administrative burden associated with its work.

It was noted many of the cases that come to FAB are Title IX-related (sexual misconduct), and are difficult to evaluate effectively. Discussion ensued. Bryant explained that many students simply do not understand the parameters around what they can, cannot, or should not do as students of a university, as many students do not actually read the conduct code which applies to them.

It was clarified that revisions to the Student Conduct Code have not been in response to frictions, but have been part of an ongoing years-long process to achieve compliance with newly-implemented federal law.

Laws explained transparency in the conduct process may decrease friction. Lopez explained it would be beneficial for Laws to explain during the upcoming meeting who he represents (FCSA), and why this body is present at the table, which is to be a “neutral observer” – as defined by council members.

Suite noted distrust is a key element in the problem. Campbell pointed out this may be due to a professional staff vs. faculty mentality. Treser noted neutrality must be achieved for the FCSA to continue holding the position it has held in the conflict.

After question, Suite explained Phase II of revisions to the Student Conduct Code will begin with the CSSC. He explained he has asked them to start that process by assembling a committee. Laws questioned if there is a deadline for Phase II to begin; the answer was not immediately known.

Laws explained the council’s energy is well-directed in this issue, as settling the dispute will ultimately benefit students. He noted if any member has questions about this meeting or the student conduct process, he and Lopez are available for questions electronically or after the meeting.

8) Good of the order

It was suggested that the FCSA should continue to address student athletes and their feeling of not belonging or feeling welcome to the university community, as the topic came up often in the last academic year.

Suite requested the FCSA invite Mark Jenkins (Director, Hall Health Center) to a council meeting to discuss problems with the “class-excuse policy.” It was noted the UW Counseling Center should also be consulted with on this matter.

Laws suggested the council limit who they invite to meetings, filtering invitees based on their relevance to the council’s work, energy, and direction. Lopez agreed and noted the council must be deliberate in its invitations.

Hevly noted the Faculty Legislative Representative (FLR) may be able to provide some student debt-related information, student debt being one of the topics the council has agreed to address during the academic year (2015-2016).

There was some discussion of inviting Patricia Kramer (chair, Faculty Council on Academic Standards) to join an FCSA meeting.

The council requested the council support analyst investigate if a resolution on student debt brought in the 2014-2015 academic year was ever acted upon and report back.

Collins noted the other members of the council should be spoken with concerning alternative invitees to the FCSA.

9) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Minutes by Joey Burgess, jmbg@uw.edu, council support analyst

Present:

Faculty: Jasmine Bryant, Christopher Campbell, Bruce Hevly, Chris Laws, Sara Lopez, Chuck Treser

Ex-officio reps: Kathleen Collins

President's designee: Denzil Suite

Absent:

Faculty: Holly Barker, Mabel Ezeonwu, Anthony Gill

Ex-officio reps: Roy Taylor, Martha Tran