

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON FACULTY COUNCIL ON STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Faculty Council on Student Affairs met at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, **May 19, 2003**, in 36 Gerberding Hall. Co-chair Jeffrey Schwartz presided.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of March 12, 2003 were approved as amended; the minutes of April 28, 2003 were approved as written.

Updates – Jeffrey Schwartz

Academic support for student athletes

Schwartz said a statement (that could become a Class C Resolution) representing the council's recommendations on academic support structures for student athletes at the University of Washington, including faculty support where appropriate, will be developed and shared with the council in draft form. Summary of 2002-2003 academic year in FCSA

Schwartz and Fearn-Banks will be writing an Annual Report delineating the council's chief issues and accomplishments of the 2002-2003 academic year. Council members' suggestions for the Annual Report are welcome; they can be sent to either Schwartz or Fearn-Banks.

Communication between students, faculty and administration: ASUW representative Cammie Croft; Sam Castic, Student Senate; and David Moore-Reeploeg, student member of the Board of Regents

ASUW representative Croft distributed a listing of student survey results and recommendations for "Improving Communication with Faculty and Administration."

Croft said the results of the student surveys were presented to the Board of Directors and the Student Senate. "Overall, students are pleased with the dialogue that exists amongst themselves and their professors. Students feel their teachers are receptive and available for the most part. They do wish for faculty to be more accessible and not only receptive, but inviting. Indirect communication as a whole (in terms of E-mails, advertisements, publications, etc.) is decent. However, students respond better to direct communication, such as face-to-face interaction, and those dialogues are absent."

"In terms of communication with the administration, students feel detached and unwelcome. Students feel they have only one option when dealing with administration, and that is to react. Students want the opportunity to collaborate and create. For this to happen, students feel they need a 'seat at the table' from the very beginning." The recommendations for "Improving Communication with Faculty and Administration" are:

- Face to face interaction/individual meetings with the goal of being on a "name to name basis"
- Involvement of students in meetings and decisions, "not just the final consensus"
- Continued and improved indirect sources of communication (i.e., E-mails, memos, reports, publications, Websites, etc.)
- Interactive Websites
- Accessible office hours
- Department level advisory councils with attendance by students, department chairs, and department advisors, and then making the reports from these meetings widely accessible
- Develop strong relationship between student and faculty representatives
- More faculty speaker series for students to attend free of charge in the evenings
- Quarterly open houses by each department
- Increased faculty and administration involvement during freshman orientation

- Focus Groups/Think Tanks, especially at the Board of Regents level
- More developed syllabi
- Free luncheons provided by the faculty and administration where focus groups can be done
- Voicemail systems for teachers
- Clear articulation of course goals by teachers
- Group meetings with TRUE student representation
- Faculty and administrators should attend student events

Croft said the most telling questions are: What *is* communication [between students, faculty and administration]?, and: What improvements can be made in this communication? The survey and the recommendations address these two questions. Croft reiterated what the survey results showed: that the overall “dialogue” between students and faculty is “positive.” Students would, however, like to see more “reaching out” from faculty to students. She said the changes in Orientation “will put steps in place” to partially address this need. Croft said what students want, in a word, is “more *direct* communication.”

The students are far more negative about the status of their dialogue with administration. “We want to be part of discussions *from the beginning*. We want to be *at the table* in initial discussions. We would like to have more collaboration with administration than we currently do. And by administration we mean departmental administration as well as the administration higher up.”

Schwartz said, “You’re most optimistic, it seems, about student communication with faculty and less optimistic about communication with administration. Also, for your survey, weren’t you talking with people who are already involved?” Croft replied, “Yes. Students don’t even know who their administrators *are*.” Moore-Reeploeg asked, “What about the Board of Regents?” Croft said, “Students want *more* of a place than just your seat on the Board of Regents. You’ve done an excellent job, but students need more face-to-face communication with the Regents.”

Kravas said. “A key word in Croft’s discussion about student frustration was ‘reactive’ vs. ‘proactive’ participation in administrative decision-making processes. Students haven’t had input early enough in the process. They need to have a part early on in discussions focusing on issues that affect student life at the University.”

Moore-Reeploeg said, “If a student wants to be involved, it’s not too hard. Most administrators will sit down with you, though it may take a while. We need more students who want to be involved. And Cammie is right; students are left out of big decisions until the decisions are already made. How could this be addressed? Students could be in on the process from the beginning of the academic year, in order to be up on issues. Students could be working in the actual decision-making process. Only when students have *demand*ed it have they truly been involved. *I’ve* not heard about decisions until they’ve been made.”

Croft said, “Student leadership needs to actually say, ‘We’ll *be* there, during the process.’ Students helped create programs *for* students, so they’ve proven they can be proactive in assuming effective leadership. But we have to ask ourselves, ‘How can we convey our message – that students have to be involved – to as many students as possible, in a way that they’ll respond to?’ ”

Moore-Reeploeg said, “There’s a wide spectrum of involvement possible [in the communication effort that is needed]; and it goes beyond students, faculty and administration. There are so many people one needs to talk with: the Libraries, Student Affairs, the Undergraduate School, the Graduate School, and many other sectors of the University.”

Schwartz said, “The learning curve is one problem [in improving the communication between students, faculty and administration]. It takes awhile to learn the process. And students are only here [at the University] for a few years.” Kravas said, “Most students are bored by the vast majority of what administrators do. We need to figure out a way to involve them in the part they are interested in. When students voice an opinion, faculty and administrators *listen*. So administrators *need* students present when decisions are being made.”

McKinstry said, “I’ve been looking for a mechanism: to have things, so to speak, on a radar screen. This can be of great help in the Libraries. And it looks like Orientation will be drastically different this Fall. Those sound like good changes. As for improving student and administrative dialogue, there have to be specific issues on the table, such as credit limit and tuition, for the dialogue to be most effective.”

Student Senate member Sam Castic said, “Faculty tenure; financial aid, tuition; these are important issues to both students and administration.” Lewis said, “I did consult with the student body president on the financial aid maximum time frame policy, but this wasn’t recognized as consultation with students. This is part of the problem in communication. Knowing who the right person is to communicate with, and acknowledging communication when it does occur.”

Castic said, “Students aren’t blameless. Sometimes, there *has* been consultation with, say, the ASUW President, and that wasn’t communicated to the rest of the association.” Kravas said, “It would be helpful if the administration contacted student leadership *first, before* student leadership contacts the administration, on these issues.” Moore-Reeploeg said, “There’s a 210 credit policy that students are unhappy with. Students *are* happy with the changes in Orientation, however.”

Croft asked, “What actions are being taken to see that students don’t exceed 210 credits? We’ll have a task force this summer that will address this question, among others. We felt *slighted* by *not* being included from the outset in discussions on this issue.” Kravas said, “Where the initial spark comes from is important: for instance, at a Provost Council meeting, to be able to say, ‘We’ve *included* students in our process. I want to keep them informed.’ ”

Moore-Reeploeg said to Kravas, “You, on the Provost’s Council, and Ernest Morris [Vice President for Student Affairs], on the President’s Cabinet, could keep in touch with student positions.” Croft said, “There *are* student representatives on the faculty councils. This should help the process of communication.”

Croft said, with respect to the list of recommendations she distributed to the council, “There are some structures now [in place] to address some of these recommendations.” Croft went over the recommendations with the council. Schwartz said, “The [proposed] University Councils [growing out of the Rose Report] *would* have an equal representation of faculty and administration, and strong student representation as well.”

McKinstry said there is a faculty speakers series being offered by the Libraries. “We have a ‘Naked Lunch’ series, with up and down attendance. We could do something like that in the evening.” Croft said, “Yes, early evening would be a good time.” Asked for good focus group topics, Croft said, “Budget cuts; getting into classes; academic and financial issues; and the academic calendar.” Lewis said, “It sounds like you want two focus groups: one *before* decisions are reached, and one *after* decisions are reached. The latter focus group is concerned with the effect of the decisions.”

Moore-Reeploeg said, “There could be a forum once a quarter with the president and provost in HUB 310. I had student focus groups this year. A lot of this kind of thing *is* happening. The question is: How do we get this message out to a 40,000 student campus? It seems there are *always* more people to reach!”

Croft said, “It’s a constant struggle: how to do it? Most students have no idea what the Board of Regents refers to.” Moore-Reeploeg said, “A larger issue is: How do you get students involved? I’ve worked with this for five years now.” Croft said, “One can always do better.”

Kravas said, “Alex [the ASUW president] wanted to meet regularly with the president; but that was hard to do. We had several administrators who participated this year (such as Steven Olswang, Vice Provost, and Tim Washburn, Executive Director of Admissions and Programs). And Kay [Lewis] could participate when financial issues are being discussed. I’m committed to continuing this next year.”

Schwartz said, “It seems as if most of your questions deal with administrators and not faculty.” Croft said, “Yes. The chief issue with faculty is overcoming intimidation.” McKinstry said, “The Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) has very good information and data on these issues. The data from their surveys could be circulated. We, in the Libraries, look at that data when looking at our difficult issues.” On a separate issue, McKinstry noted that the election results showed a high participation. Castic said, “Yes: a 14% turnout (of all undergraduate and graduate students: up from 10% last year: unquestionably aided by online voting).” McKinstry said, “In 1998, for instance, we [in OUGL] went to 24-hour service, and got student input on that change with the help of OEA. (Predictably, students were extremely pleased with the change.)”

Kravas said, “There’s an OEA project called UW Soul, led by Cathy Beyer, in which students are paid to give their responses – to a variety of questions about their University experiences – over the course of their academic careers at the University of Washington, at certain intervals. The project has proved to be very revealing and helpful.” Castic, however, said, “I’d caution about putting too much weight on student surveys. Also, the students who usually vote aren’t typical of students at the University. The Student Senate is the most representative body of students.” Castic added that special elections can be called, but that would need publicity, and such elections are expensive.”

Schwartz asked, “What can FCSA do [to help the communication between students and faculty]?” Croft said, “You could forward these recommendations to faculty and start a conversation among yourselves.” McKinstry said she would be glad to take the recommendations to the Libraries. “We could have an asterisk detailing the process used to come up with the recommendations,” she said. Castic said, “The focus groups have proven to be successful, and very productive. They also help students overcome the intimidation factor in approaching faculty. It’s so important to get faculty and administration together with students, whenever possible. The free luncheons provided by the faculty and administration at the focus groups is much appreciated, and is a good incentive.” Moore-Reeploeg said, “We could come up with three or four specific actions: specific suggestions.” Schwartz said, “Yes, and faculty involvement will play a pivotal role in this dialogue and this process.”

Next meeting

There may be an FCSA meeting on June 16, 2003 [the council will be notified well in advance of the meeting, if it is to take place]. The meeting would start at 2:30 p.m., and take place in 36 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor
Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Schwartz (co-chair);
Ex officio members Croft, Feetham, Kravas, Lewis, McKinstry and Moore-Reeploeg;
Guest Sam Castic, ASUW Student Senate.

ABSENT: *Professors* Fridley, Herwig, Karmy-Jones and Williams;
ex officio members Hatlen and Morales.