

Student Senate Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

1. Roll Call at 8:34 pm.
2. Officer Reports.
 - a. President.
 - i. Thanked everyone for showing up to our last meeting!
 - ii. Will be implementing the Senate Constituencies, emailing the 30 or so constituents soon. Senators should follow up with the State of the Senate email with individualized emails.
 1. Leslieann asked whether it would be better to send out these individualized emails at the beginning of next semester, and Jessica said that was fine, envisioned the general email to go out now, with an individualized email introducing themselves later next semester.
 - iii. Next semester will probably be on Tuesdays again next semester, tentative date for the first one on January 18 or 19th. New schedule forms will be passed out next semester.
 - iv. Will be emailing the student body to gauge interest and find out who's interested in the Immigration and Asylum Clinic.
 - v. Will be planning for Dean Moroni and Dean Modeste to come next semester.
 - b. Vice President.
 - i. Post Finals Exams Party on the 21st at Pourhouse.
 - ii. Thanked people for helping out with the Holiday Party.
 - iii. Preview of spring semester programming, asked for input on creative ideas and events.
 - iv. Plans in motion for the immigration and asylum clinic.
 - c. Treasurer.
 - i. Said that the date is not set in stone yet, but tentatively planned to have budgets due by January 27, with the budget committee to meet that following weekend.
 - d. Secretary.
 - i. Talked about State of the Senate email, asked for people with ideas about what else should go in the email to contact him.
 - e. Parliamentarian.
 - i. List of casebook orders will not be available until Fall 2010.
 - ii. Outline gathering was successful, with dozens of outlines.
 - iii. Wiki update.
 1. A dozen people have joined the Google Group to work on it. Probably will have a subcommittee of the IT committee to work on this.
3. Committee Reports
 - a. Computer and Library.
 - i. Nothing to report, but download ExamSoft.
 - b. Graduation.
 - i. Meredith said that they will be holding post-exam part on the 22nd, informal champagne reception in Lenfest Café.
 - ii. Kicking off full programming next semester, Around the World on Jan. 21st. Also Sweet Treat Date Auction on February 12th.
 - iii. JD/LLM buddy program, "Foreign Affairs."

- iv. Gave details about Date Auction and encouraged everyone to go. Ben spoke about Grad Ball. Signed a contract with Capitale, negotiated a better deal than last year. Will provide more food for the same price. May 16th, 2010.
 - c. Housing.
 - i. Nothing to report, covered in Dean MGK's email.
 - d. Faculty-Student Committees.
 - i. None met during the interim time period.
 - 1. Jean asked about the frequency on which these committees met, and Jessica said that a number of them didn't meet frequently, some don't meet unless there is pressing business before them. Suggested that Senators contact their committees to find out their schedule.
 - 2. Curriculum committee will be considering shortening the spring semester from 14 to 13 weeks, and also will be approving the JD/MBA in three years program.
4. Post-Exam Feedback Discussion
- a. Shana talked about how a number of professors don't give very good feedback, when it should be a useful tool for students to use to improve and learn. Poses a number of example questions to elicit Senator feedback on some ideas to present to the faculty. Also question about whether to couple this issue with other academic concerns.
 - b. Jess put 10 minutes on the clock, limit responses to 45 seconds. Will probably try to steer through the Student/Academic Affairs Committee and submit to the faculty.
 - i. Oscar spoke about wanting individualized comments to help people improve. Also spoke about concerns by the faculty concerned about if the students would actually take advantage of post-exam feedback.
 - ii. LDP said it would be helpful to see grade band answered (an "A" answer, "B+" answer, etc.) to see what wrong answers look like, and seeing where students went wrong and where they did well.
 - iii. Jean said that looking at it from a faculty perspective, might be resistance to do this or low student participation. Might be alternative ways of doing this, hold a small section to go over the exam if people wanted to discuss it, instead of requiring individualized comments on every exam.
 - iv. McCormick said that faculty don't really have a perception of best practices among themselves. Suggested they get together and try to come to a consensus and then also provide them with student consensus of helpful practices.
 - v. Mia said that all paper-based classes should just provide that kind of feedback, such as seminars and essay-based classes. Also said that a number of professors sent out an e-mail asking which students wanted individualized feedback so they could note it.
 - vi. Ron said that he likes having his paper back to look at it, which is useful.
 - vii. Gradman brought up that there could be a policy that faculty are now currently required to give back exams if requested, and maybe we could publicize that a lot better.
 - viii. Shana said that some of the resistance might be because it could be a lot of work, whether some aspects could be traded off to make less work.
 - ix. Eric said that the meetings to go over exams were probably a way to address that, so that professors don't have to do so much unnecessary work.
 - x. Jean said that the problem with model answers was that she often got them next semester when they weren't useful and forgotten what she had already written.
 - xi. Charles brought up the point that some professors are secretive about their exams, and may not publish model answers, etc.

- xii. Mia said that if the professor could make a summary of good parts of a student's exam, not just a generic model answer. Also thought it would be useful to have a structured grading procedure, concern that some professor just make it up as they go along.
- xiii. Jorge said that a pass/fail grading system would take off some of the pressure of differentiating so much and allow more time for individualized comments and feedback.
- xiv. McCormick said it would be nice to get a list of professors that already had best practices. Shana said that if people had a particular professor in mind of giving great feedback to email her.
- xv. LDP said it would be nice to have feedback on their feedback, but it also brought up an issue where evaluations were always before exams. It would be nice to have them afterwards so that student could evaluate the exam and feedback as well.
- xvi. Ben spoke on the third question, whether this feedback issue should be tied together with other academic issues, such as what professors expect from students, a detailed syllabus and reading list during course registration. Ben gave examples of 15-20 page detailed syllabus required of the professors to send out to students, done at our peer schools.
- xvii. Meredith said that this was an issue that was brought up on the Student Services committee, with some pushback from the faculty about the amount of work for this. Another issue was the publication of the exam schedule early on to help in course selection, for students that are concerned about that.
- xviii. Shana asked whether this should be packaged together. Meredith said that we should try to get this passed in small doses, expecting some resistance.
- xix. Mia said that asking for a syllabus, reading list, and exam schedule is not unreasonable, students shouldn't be afraid to ask or expect this.
- xx. Ben said that Dean Rigas reported that the exam schedule is often delayed because they are waiting for professors to determine what kind of exam they will be giving (so they can schedule rooms, proctors, etc.). Ben said it would be harder for them to say no to three things, so present it as a package.
- xxi. McCormick said it was important to see what our peer schools are doing, and would be nice to get that information beforehand.
- xxii. Jessica asked for a show of hands whether people thought we should present just the exam feedback issue by itself or coupled with other academic issues. Seemed like a 50/50 split.

5. New Business.

- a. Public Interest Umbrella Committee had expressed serious concerns about the current e-mail opt-in system, will be discussing the issue next semester. Asked for Senators to get in touch with their constituents about what people thought about the opt-in e-mail system.
- b. Ben said people should particularly contact those here last year, who remember how the old system was and could make a good comparison.
- c. Jessica said that a proposal was in the works to get an announcements feature into LawCal for groups to announce events a week in advance, etc.
- d. Eric asked whether there was any possibility of having the Senate taking on the role of sending out emails on behalf of groups for major events, maybe each group could get one or two emails sent.
- e. Mia said one of the major concerns was opt-out vs. opt-in.
- f. Gradman said that a similar idea to Eric's would be to restart the Black Letter to advertise for groups.

6. Announcements.

a. None. Good luck with exams!

7. Adjourned at 10:25 pm.