SGA Senate Meeting
10 April 2012
CC 103/104 7:00 – 9:00 PM

I. Call to order 7:04

II. Roll Call
   a. Absent: DongHwa Seo, Elizabeth Naismith Picciani, Catherine Aguilar, Madeline Britvec, Kathryn Malone, Kristen Delancey, Sachaly De Leon, Yiqian Wang, Danielle Maco, Kyra Smith, Sarah Mekle, and Rachel Garbus
   b. Quorum met

III. Minutes approved 35-6-0

IV. Speaker: David Belanger, Director of Student Financial Services
   http://www.smith.edu/finaid/prospect
   a. About him:
      i. 9 years at Smith
      ii. 3½ years as Director
      iii. 16 years in Financial Aid
      iv. 4 years at Plymouth State University
      v. 3 years at Dartmouth
      vi. Favorite quote: "To give away money is an easy matter ... and in any man's power. But to decide to whom to give it, and how large and when, for what purpose and how, is neither in every man's power nor an easy matter. Hence it is that such excellence is rare, praiseworthy and noble." - Aristotle
   b. SFS Overview:
      i. College Hall 106
      ii. Staff of 14
      iii. Financial Aid and Bursar Functions
      iv. Financial Aid Budget for 2011-12 $53 Million
      v. Financial Aid Budget for 2012-13 $56 Million
      vi. Financial Aid by student group
         1. Traditional students 64%
         2. International students 56%
         3. Ada Comstock 91%
      vii. Will be processing School for Social Work Aid and Billing on May 1st
   c. Who knows someone who is getting financial aid that should not be?
      i. Staff scrutinizes each aid application
         1. There to help families understand the process
      ii. Must apply on time
      iii. Deadline date for application is May 14
         1. 60% apply on time
      iv. Goal: To measure the family's ability to pay for an education. Willingness to pay may be very different.
      v. Strong support for financial aid from Carol Christ.
   d. Positive aid initiatives
i. New initiatives
   1. Protect Middle Income Families
      a. Recent adoption of higher income protections for incomes ranging from $80K to $180K
      b. Lower expectation from Home Equity
   ii. Prior Aid Enhancements
       1. Minimize student loans
          a. Average debt for students leaving Smith is $19,000
       2. Stabilize International Student Contribution
       3. Use Lower Needs Analysis calculation
       4. More realistic budget for Ada Comstock Scholars
       5. Net Price Calculator- Help applicants determine the actual cost
       6. Equalized cost of Washington Programs with those on campus

e. Financial aid appeals
   i. 30% decrease in appeals in recent years

f. Typical student financial aid concerns
   i. Too much loan debt
   ii. Expecting too much from my family
   iii. Policies are unfair (outside scholarship, tuition benefits, res life positions impacting aid)

g. Positives about Smith Aid Office
   i. Always can meet with a director
   ii. Reasonable response times
   iii. Individual attention
   iv. System of equity and fairness
   v. Walk-in availability for Directors
   vi. Women in Financial Independence Program
   vii. Outreach efforts for aid and billing requirements

h. What can they do better?
   i. Are they available on your terms?
   ii. Are students afraid to meet with us?
   iii. Would you ever “friend” us on Facebook?
      1. Do not currently have a page
   iv. Do we need a newsletter? Would you read it?
      1. No current newsletter

i. Questions
   i. How can you apply for aid if you did not need it in the beginning?
      1. 2 year waiting period for traditional students, not available for international students
      2. Appeals
   ii. What options are available for students with a non-custodial parent?
      1. Types of non-custodial parents
         a. If parents don't submit anything then it halts the process
i. If they will not submit, statements will be taken to waive the non-custodial parent.

b. If parents submit everything and then refuse to pay anything.

iii. Veterans benefits? (We do not have a veterans coordinator.) What services are available for veterans and their dependents?
   1. Smith does not have a lot of veterans.
   2. Two staff members who can help
      a. Have called Holyoke Community College for additional input.
   3. Veterans benefits are confusing for students, parents, and office.

iv. Are you need sensitive?
   1. Once here, everyone is treated the same.
   2. When a student applies, Smith is need sensitive.
      a. Not need blind.
      b. 95% of students who are admitted are not under need conscious policy.
      i. Some students are accepted or denied because of need conscious policy.

v. On average, how much aid is given to students on the Picker program and study abroad?
   1. Not really able to answer because of confidentiality.
   2. Only difference: students cannot receive work study during study abroad.

V. Vote on Diversity Committee Bylaw Amendments
   a. Feedback
      i. Many students in support or apathetic.

VI. Vote on Smith College UNICEF Club Charter
   a. Feedback
      i. Many houses say that this club should have more people involved at this point, more than one person in charge, and have more publicity.
      1. Is it difficult to publicize beforehand?
         a. Many clubs have
         b. Clubs that are not chartered can advertise and hold meetings.
            i. OSE can give a small stipend and help prospective organizations reserve a room 1 or 2 times.
         c. Some students may be worried about publicizing a group that may not be passed by Senate.
            i. Everyone is busy. Why go to a club that is not yet legitimate?
      ii. Many students interested
         1. Potential for growth.
iii. Well-established global organization
iv. Voting down a charter does not mean that the club can never be chartered
v. Organizations need a certain amount of people on their e-board to function/exist
vi. All clubs are open to Five College students
b. Charter passes 38-1-3

VII. Presentation of Organization Resources Committee percentage allocation change
a. One change
   i. Proposed increase in Student Activities Fee percentage for club sports
   ii. Increase of 1% (18.5 to 19.5)
   iii. Many club sports have been chartered recently and ORC does not want to slight established club sports
b. Do club sports get funding from athletic department?
   i. Most of funding comes from ORC/SAF
   ii. Some clubs receive a small amount from the athletic department

VIII. Presentation of Curriculum Committee Bylaw Amendments
a. A couple small changes that would go into effect next year
   i. Chair must have been on committee for one year in order to run
      1. ORC has similar requirement
   ii. Revision of the qualifications for membership in the committee
      1. Have not had liaisons for quite a few years
   iii. A graduate student may sit on committee for overlapping curricular concerns
   iv. Adding member of steering committee
b. Questions/concerns
   i. Why are the requirements for the chair being changed? Why not a semester (Is this limiting)?
      1. Requirement proposed so that students have a better understanding of the Curriculum Committee
      2. Very few students are on for one semester before elections
      3. Committee makes long term goals, so knowledge of past decisions is important

IX. Presentation of SGA Class Cabinet Bylaw Amendments
a. Cait Kirby - Senior Class President Presents
b. Adding in a “record keeping” piece
c. Every single class president already sits on the Rally Day committee, so now that responsibility will be incorporated officially into the charter
d. Shared responsibility of website upkeep
e. Allows for any student in the class to be elected to be a representative on the Rally Day Committee
f. Historian should submit 3 articles to archives each month

X. Discussion about recent incidents of racism and homophobia on campus
a. Mac Hamilton, chair of Diversity Committee, here to answer questions
b. Questions
   i. Any legal updates?
1. She assumes it will stay under-wraps unless it goes to the DA.
ii. What are the rules on campus for punishment of hate crimes? Is this a hate crime?
   1. If this is determined to be a hate crime, it will be sent to the DA/state

   c. List of demands-- Google doc
      i. Has been sent out to students
      ii. Please add your input

   d. All houses will have a meeting in coming weeks with trained facilitators

   e. Discussion
      i. A lot of people say that administrative response is completely ridiculous
      ii. Students are confused about what is actually happening
         1. Lots of hearsay
         2. Want a clear explanation, not 10 emails

   iii. What has the administration’s response been/What have they done?
      1. Read the last email from Carol T. Christ for list of coming events
      2. Smith Stories Project--archives
      3. All Campus Meeting is next Monday at 4:15PM in the JMG

   iv. It took a very long time to address the issue

   v. Past history, but no general protocol
      1. Why is there no protocol in place?
         a. Students should not have to force administration to react
         b. Protocol is dealing with event as a crime
            i. It is commendable that there have been this few major events in the last 50 years
            ii. Administration needs to know who committed the crime in order to punish that person

   vi. Many students have class during Friday’s events and many students wish they were at a better time

   vii. One student was upset that the meeting was not mandatory in her house, but a meeting for a house party was mandatory

   viii. What is the plan for the All Campus meeting?
      1. Opening remarks by President Christ
      2. Faculty panel
      3. Student responses/feelings
      4. There will be no other events at the same time. All students are greatly encouraged to attend
         a. The gym will be closed at that time
         b. How can students find out if they have to work at campus jobs during the event?
            i. All students will be notified
         c. Work study job sites are being encouraged to shut down

   ix. Student wanted content of note to be shared
1. She was very active in helping draft letter
2. Wants to be kept anonymous
3. Has received a lot of support from her friends

x. Why do we need administrative approval?
   1. What can the administration do at this point about the isolated incident?
   2. List of demands is helping, as will the All Campus Meeting
      a. List should be finalized soon and then if it is not approved it should be

xi. Steve Goldstein response to Open letter was received by some students
xii. Spurzem letter was the spark, but it was never fully resolved
   1. All Campus meeting should have happened immediately after the letter controversy

xiii. Would it be valuable to speak about this issue in classrooms?
   1. Many professors have not addressed the issue
   2. We need to make sure the professors know what is going on.
      Many professors do not know.
      a. What has the faculty received?
   3. Professors are trying to stay on schedule
   4. For many professors it would be hard to tie this into the class material
   5. Not all professors are equipped to or comfortable dealing with these issues
      a. Might cause more hurt than good
      b. In classes where it fits it should be discussed
   6. Social work school as a resource
   7. Professors should actively be against “isms” in their classrooms
      a. but students may be silenced to the point where they cannot express their views and learn
   8. Although it may be inconvenient, it should be addressed
   9. Residential means that we learn with whom we live with
      a. Entering into a community means you have certain responsibilities

xiv. We cannot force people to become informed
   1. But, we should try and be aware of them
   2. We should not force people to believe what they don’t
      a. A big difference between having thoughts and acting on them

xv. Many students only felt they understood after the open letter
   1. It is ridiculous that after this many letters in, students are still confused

xvi. Writing hate letters is not the “disease,” but a symptom
   1. There is a cultural problem at Smith
   2. We need to have dialogues in smaller groups
We are going to be going out into a hateful world after Smith.

1. We are always reminded of the real world.

There is a difference between an attack and expressing views.

Smaller groups at a future Senate meeting? Most senators in support.

XI. Open forum

a. Does ASL count toward latin honors?
   i. Yes, but only at Hampshire College
b. Update on Tea House?
   i. Botanical Gardens head has been emailed

XII. Announcements

a. Last day of SGA elections is Friday smith.edu/voting
b. Please go to the All Campus Meeting
c. Hosts are still needed for Discovery Weekend/Open Campus
d. Judicial Board is accepting applications from juniors/seniors for next year

XIII. Adjournment 9:10
ndowner:
Viewed, and added that ASL counts for Latin honors at Hampshire

jkline:
Added the word "Million" to IV.b.v.
Belanger had said the deadline was the 15th, but I am not 100% positive I heard correctly.
(IV.c.iii.)