Tuesday October 27, 2009

SGA Senate Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order 7:00 pm

II. Roll Call
   a. Missing/Tardy: 17
   b. Absent Senators: Nolvia Delgado, Jennifer Wachowski, Gabrielle Mohammad, Andrea Kang, Emilia Bates, Esther Brummund, Sarah Romano, Jillian Bergus, Denise Kim, and Elizabeth Rich
   c. Quorum met

III. Passing Minutes
   a. Minutes corrected
   b. Minutes passed

IV. Guest Speaker: President Carol Christ
   a. Ford Hall
      i. Fulfills our ambition to be the number one women’s college in the United States for science and engineering. If you don’t have classes in Ford do go over and take a look.
   b. Smith’s budget
      i. Recession mostly affects Smith’s endowment
         1. Used to be $1.5 billion, provides about a third of Smith’s budget
         2. Lost over $400 million of its value due to economic crisis
         3. Has now regained about half of that loss due to economic healing
      ii. Financial aid budget has been increased
      iii. Endowment value loss and financial aid budget increase have created dual stresses for the college
      iv. Budget reductions
         1. Goal is 10% budgetary reduction
         2. Will be accomplished through salary-freezing and energy-saving
         3. Budget reductions still being implemented
   c. Class of 2013 was largest number of applicants in Smith’s history
      i. 12% of class of 2013 are international students, an increase from previous years
   d. Strategic Plan
      i. Open curriculum
         1. Will be kept
         2. Pre-major advising system will be modified
            a. Name change to “liberal arts advising”
            b. This will put less emphasis on the major and more on the broader liberal arts education
         3. Future goal is that all students will develop an electronic portfolio during Smith career to aid in applications for higher education and jobs after Smith
         4. Faculty will identify a set of capacities (writing, critical thinking, cultural understanding, capacity for ethical reasoning, skill-building, qualities of character)
ii. Independent work
   1. More opportunities for individual, and group based independent study

iii. Center for Work and Life
   1. Resources for both reflecting on and learning to live a well-balanced and fulfilling life
   2. “Narratives of Success” program

iv. Areas of distinctive excellence which cross departmental boundaries: to be explored
   1. Environmental sustainability
   2. Community engagement
   3. International Study

e. New Executive Director of the Five Colleges
   1. New strategic plan for the Five Colleges being considered

f. New fundraising campaign for Smith started on July 1st, 2009. Main goal is to raise $200 million more for financial aid.

V. VP Eliza’s report SGA Cabinet Meeting with Board of Trustees
   a. Cabinet discussed:
      i. Community
      ii. Sustainability
      iii. More student input, more transparency
      iv. Improving transportation between Five Colleges
         1. Express buses
         2. In 10 years, a light rail system could be a possibility

VI. Announcements
   a. Political events
      i. Tuesday Oct. 27th: Conference call with Senator Kerry at 9 pm with 1-866-931-7845. Conference code is 727028
      ii. Trick or Can hosted by MassPIRG Campus Center room 106 from 4-6 pm meet at campus center 4:15 pm
      iii. Phone bank to voters in New Jersey and Virginia on Monday Nov 2. Smith Dems. Time and place TBA.
      iv. Fall Convention Massachusetts Alliance College Republicans of at Brandeis University www.macr.org

   b. Parties
      i. Immorality at Talbot. Friday Oct 31
      ii. Morrow 90s theme “doin’ it well” 10-1 on Saturday Oct 31
      iii. Smith Dems annual Halloween party “Sarah Palin’s Thanksgiving Dinner” 7-9 pm Davis Friday Oct. 30

   c. International events
      i. Stoves for Sudan Downtown Northampton Friday Oct. 30 Starting at 2 pm

   d. Fundraisers
      i. Model United Nations Henna tattoo fundraiser in Campus Center. From 12:30-2 pm on Friday Oct. 30. Cost is $1 per tattoo

VII. Senate announcements
a. Laptops must be used judiciously in Senate, must be closed during guest speaker presentations
b. Committee heads should send emails to VP Eliza with list of goals and plans for their committee by Friday, Oct. 30th

VIII. Committee Time

IX. Guest Speakers: Project COACH
a. Working with economically disadvantaged inner-city adolescents in Springfield, Massachusetts
b. Teaches students to apply athletic skills (being on time, looking out for fellow teammates) to their daily lives
c. Fundraising
   i. Inter-house dodgeball tournament
      1. Each house can have as many teams as they like
      2. 8 members per team
      3. Donation of $40 per team ($5 per person) to enter
   ii. Winner of dodgeball tournament will play a championship game between Smith and Mt. Holyoke’s winning teams

X. Adjournment 8:39 pm