Senate Minutes: November 13, 2012

A. 7.00 Call to Order
B. 7.03 Roll Call
   1. Quorum Met
C. Motion Passed to postpone passing Senate Minutes from 10.23.12 until next week
D. Minutes Passed: 38 - 0 - 5
E. 7.13 Dean Julianne Ohotnicky Presentation
   1. Title: Dean of Students
   2. She has been at Smith for six years
   3. Acts as a mediator between students and faculty
   4. Works with many offices on Smith Campus, including:
      a. Health services
      b. Counseling services
      c. Office of Multicultural Affairs
      d. Office of Student Engagement
      e. First Year Experience program
      f. Wellness Office
      g. Judicial Board
      h. Residential life
   5. Who works with Dean Ohotnicky?
      a. Campus Police
      b. Emily Nagoski
      c. Residential Life
         i. Area coordinators
         ii. Hannah Durrant
      d. Student Orgs
      e. Rae Ann Butera
      f. Multicultural Affairs
      g. Dean Tamzarian (Dean of International students)
   6. What are certain issues students would complain about?
      a. Housing complaints through Res Life
      b. Trouble balancing school work and other obligations
      c. Trouble scheduling an appointment with Counseling Services
         i. Dean’s job would be to get additional support in counseling services
      d. Other issues with Health Services issues
   7. Current Issues the Dean is thinking about:
      a. Health Services
         i. Considering issues of bullying
            1. Does it happen on our campus?
            2. If yes, how can the Dean’s office help students who are feeling bullied, or those who do not realize what they are experiencing but are concerned about it
         ii. Emily Nagoski from Wellness is creating programs that she is bringing to houses
            1. Called: Bystander Training
2. She is figuring out what each house needs as she meets with them

b. Sexual harassment response to Amherst experience
   i. Some students are angry at Amherst College for not responding appropriately to incidents of rape on campus
   ii. The Amherst student in question was upset that she was not taking her experience seriously
   iii. Apparently similar experiences have occurred at Smith regarding same-sex rape
      1. It happens on our campus, but it is not talked about enough
      2. Sexual assault is still very underreported on college campuses around the country
   iv. Some students are worried, because they are under the impression that Smith has the same sexual harassment policy as Amherst
      1. They are worried that the Amherst situation could occur here
      2. Dean Mahoney sent out an email with sexual harassment resources
   v. In 2011 the Office of Civil Rights wrote to all the presidents of all the colleges in the US
      1. It is known as the “Dear Colleague” letter
      2. It reminded colleges of the laws regarding sexual harassment, and what colleges and universities are required to do in these situations
   vi. Dean Ohoynickly likes new students, faculty and staff to review Smith’s sexual assault and sexual harassment policies at least every four to five years
      1. In summer 2011, Dean O asked Emily Nagoski to compare Smith’s policies with the “Dear Colleague” letter, to ensure that Smith is doing what the law requires it to do
   vii. Last year Dean Ohoynickly created a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
      1. SART spent most of last year doing research
      2. This year its responsibility is to review and update Smith’s policy
      3. SART team is split into two subcommittees
         a. One is a subcommittee for student policy and procedure
            i. Its primary role is to review existing policies and available resources for students
      4. The second subcommittee is the administrative section
         a. It is investigating how the administration is meant to respond if it receives a report
   viii. SART invites students to come to the college policy review
   ix. SART realized that some of Smith’s language needs to be altered in the information that they make available for students
      1. Smith would like to believe that Smith is extremely human and caring about these situations
   x. How would students on campus be able to have a voice on changing these policies?
      1. SART will have several students on an advisory group, who will make changes and present them to the college
   xi. How does a student get on this committee?
      1. SART will appoint several students
         a. One student from Senate
         b. One student appointed by the SGA cabinet
         c. One student from the Smith Students Against Sexual Assault
xii. If a student reports sexual harassment by someone, does this stay on record somewhere?
   1. Yes, does
      a. There is some misconception about that on campus
   2. The advisory SART subcommittees will ensure that there is more clarity in what Smith’s responsibilities are and how these situations will be handled
xiii. SART and SSASA will work together
xiv. How does Smith College define sexual assault?
   1. A lot of misconception about what sexual assault is
   2. The definition ranges
   3. By law, all sexual assaults are a form of sexual harassment
      a. Title Nine defines what sexual harassment is
   4. Part of Smith’s procedures includes an investigation
      a. This is a victim-centered understanding of what happened
      b. Its intent is to be fair to both the victim and the alleged perpetrator
   5. Any student who feels uncomfortable about any situation, regardless of what it entailed, is encouraged to reach out to Smith’s resources, regardless of how the law defines sexual harassment or assault
      a. Smith judicial system can take these matters into its own hands
      b. Any uncomfortable situation is reason enough to have a conversation
xv. Sexual Assault is not a provision of our Code of Conduct
   1. Sexual assault falls under conduct that is threatening or endangering
xvi. Is there a record for professors/any adult who might have sexually assaulted or harassed a student and is looking for employment elsewhere?
   1. Employment process does not always ask if there was any violation of conduct
   2. Smith might not be aware of faculty/staff members’ previous violations
xvii. There is no policy that prohibits faculty from sleeping with students
   1. Two grievance processes
      a. For Staff this process is through human resources
      b. For faculty it is through the faculty council
xviii. Pamela Nolan Young is the repository for reports of sexual assault or harassment
xix. Some students have felt uncomfortable taking a class with a professor, because the student found out that said professor has a history of sleeping with students
xx. What is the difference between faculty and staff?
   1. Faculty includes anyone who teaches in classrooms
   2. Staff includes everyone else on campus
xxi. Dean of the Students has put money towards ensuring that there is additional support hours in counseling services
   1. Students shouldn’t have to wait a week for an emergency meeting with a counselor
   2. The Dean is trying to address emergency responses so that they are much faster
   3. As of October 15, Smith Counseling had about 50 more people in the Smith counseling services’ system than it did a year ago
4. SAA, HONS, HRs, HCAs and HPs are trained to deal with certain situations, but it is not the same as seeing a professional counselor.

5. Smith College EMS and campus police are trained in how to deal with psychological crises.

xxii. Would it be possible to promote off-campus resources?
   1. Absolutely, and counseling services can always connect students with off-campus resources.
   2. Dean Ohotnicky has a responsibility to ensure that students are in their best “student states” as possible to be attending class and doing the work at hand.

xxiii. The Dean’s general response to a student struggling with personal issues is to have a conversation with student.
   1. Should they be here? What help do they need?
   2. What do students need to be here? Can they cope at the time, and if not, how can the school get to where they need to be so that they can get themselves well so they can be here?
   3. Smith has a responsibility as an institution to ensure that students are independent and working.
   4. If situations are life threatening, the Dean’s office may have a conversation with parents, and will definitely have a conversation with the student.
   5. If a person is at risk of harming themselves or other, Smith EMS is not allowed to leave this student’s side.
      a. They will take them to the hospital.
      b. The student will not be left alone.

xxiv. One of the biggest concerns with the Amherst letter was that the student in question felt forced into psychiatric care - does Smith have similar policies?
   1. Smith can ask the hospital to evaluate students, because they have a certain level of concern for the students.
   2. Smith cannot make a hospital hold a student.

xxv. Sometimes it can be difficult communicating to professors about these types of issues.
   1. In some cases the Dean of Students can discuss a student’s issue with a class dean, who can then discuss this with the student’s professors.
   2. Not all professors know what to do with a situation.
      a. Some are not prepared, well equipped or have that capacity.
   3. In some cases it is better to go to counseling, Rae Ann or a Dean.

8. Dean Ohotnicky’s Office Hours: make an appointment.

9. Some students have a hard time finding the Dean on the Smith College website, because it is difficult to spell her name.
   a. Just type “Dean of Students” on the Smith homepage and her information will appear.

F. 7.58 Electing a senator to the SART.

1. Description of Role.
   a. The group will be reviewing policies and procedures that are already in place from the student’s perspective.
   b. If there are policies that should be in place but are not, these changes can be addressed.

2. The members of the group will include: Dean Brazalias, Pam McCarthy (director of counseling services) Emily Nagoski, Rae Ann, a senator, a cabinet-selected student and a student from SSASA.

3. Committee hasn’t set any meeting times yet.
a. Rae Ann plans to start ASAP
4. This is not a senate-based committee
   a. All senators are invited to run for a position
5. Nominations made: Turner Willman, Rina Boswell, Lena Wilson, Jamie Keene, Kaitlyn Konzen
6. Votes cast
7. Elected senators: Katie Konzen and Turner Willman

G. First Charter Presentation: Bearded Ladies
1. Their purpose is to create circus art and share circus skills
   a. They want to create a space to share talents, learn skills and eventually create performances
2. Could people learn how to do circus skills?
   a. Yes, there is something for everybody
   b. The Bearded Ladies are up for teaching skills to people who are interested
3. Would they be performing for student groups or houses?
   a. Ultimately that is their goal
   b. So far they aim to have one performance per year, and hopefully this will progress as the org builds
4. Start-up cost:
   a. They would need to purchase some equipment for roughly $500-600
5. Maintenance cost
   a. $1000
6. How many people do they think will be interested?
   a. At least 13 people are interested
   b. They have not had many meetings, but there has been a lot of interest among undergrads and adas
7. H. 8.19: Accessibility Issues on Campus Discussion - Lili Siegel
1. An incident occurred on campus this weekend involving Lili
   a. It was an incident that has happened before
   b. It is an issue that Senate can take some steps as students towards addressing
   c. Lili’s intent is not to critique only the students who were involved in this, but to draw attention to the broader issues at stake
   d. The incident was as followed:
      i. Lili and her friend made plans to go to Weaving Voices - a social justice safe space open forum
      ii. Lili asked for the lift down to the basement of Sage Hall, and was told by the students working there that they did not know where it was or how to work it
      iii. They talked to facilities management and told Lili and her friend that because it hadn’t been used in a while, they were not sure if it was working
      iv. As a result, Lili and her friend left the event without ever attending
2. On behalf of Lili and other students who might go through similar problems, she is exhausted about this issue
   a. There is a tendency for students to go around and say that the administration needs to do better
   i. Instead. Lili really encourages the senators to inform all students that planning an event in an inaccessible space is not a safe space for students
3. She suggests that a committee or a separate working group make a list of different buildings and their accessibility features
   a. They could then provide this list to all student orgs
4. Lili encourages senators to come up with other ideas
5. We could also investigate updating some of Smith’s facilities
   a. This would be a long-term goal
6. If Smith is going to discuss physical disabilities, we can widen the range to mental disabilities
7. Proposal to require all orgs to outline in their charters that any event held must be
   accessible to the entire community
   a. This way, orgs that purposefully do not book a space that is accessible to everybody
      can be penalized
   b. Accessibility needs to be a bigger consideration in planning events
   c. The issue is not that orgs are purposefully excluding people who are differently-abled, but this issue is often overlooked
   d. We could bar inaccessible locations for orgs to book through the colleges
8. This is a conversation that needs to be had more on campus
   a. Bring more awareness
   b. It might be good for Smith to eventually have an academic space where we can talk
      about disability, in a historical or theory-based context
      i. Something for the Curriculum Committee
9. Facilities should work to maintain all of the available options Smith has, regardless of how
   often they are used
   a. Disability committee to discuss this issue with facilities management
      i. Look at the bigger picture
   b. Smith could update its signage so that it is more accurate
   c. Work orders cannot be done for public spaces
      i. Individuals are encouraged to contact Facilities Management about any
         public spaces

I. 8:53 Announcements
   1. Dining Committee Update:
      a. Met with Cathy and Pat
         i. Brought them some concerns that have been voiced
         ii. Asked for chobani in the dining hall for grab and go
         iii. Nutella in the dining halls was in the works last year, but this year they are
              considering getting a chocolate-flavored peanut butter
              1. It would be cheaper
              2. We could have Nutella for brunch
         iv. Chapin is open for lunch Sundays from 1.30-4.30pm
         v. Dining Services is looking to get 100% cage-free eggs throughout the dining halls for
            next semester
         vi. The nutritional information will be corrected on the website menus when possible
            1. Sometimes what they order is not what arrives
            2. Deliveries come on Tuesdays
         vii. Looking to organize a cultural potluck
   2. Elections and Appointments Committee
      a. Sent out an email to entire student body to ask for feedback on the election vans and polls
         i. Was it helpful?
         ii. Did the student body like that?
         iii. Responses so far have been really helpful
         iv. Send responses to: lhillsamar@smith.edu
   3. Last week was the lighting walk with Dean O and Campus police
a. Discussed making changes to the lights as opposed to adding lights

4. Many bicycle accidents have occurred on campus
   a. Campus Police is planning to have an information session to address this
   b. December 4, 5:30 - 7pm, campus police will be hosting a campus police meeting event in front of the CCC

5. SGA is selling tickets for shuttles to and from Bradley airport for Thanksgiving (Tuesday and Wednesday of next week)
   a. A schedule is available on the SGA website
   b. $10 one way, $15 round trip

6. This week is Thank a Smithie week

7. Nosotras event: **10th Annual Taste of Latin America!!
   a. Celebrate Latin@ culture with music, yummy traditional Hispanic dishes, desserts, and beverages
   b. At the Smith College Campus Center, Carroll Room
   c. From 5:30pm - 7:00pm
   d. Pre-Sale tickets are $5.00;
   e. Tickets at the door are $7.00

J. 9.05 Adjournment