

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME DU LAC

STUDENT SENATE

Executive Summary

March 25, 2015

I. Opening Business

- A. Matt Devine called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.
- B. Michael Wajda led the invocation.
- C. 6 were absent; 1 was late.
- D. Scott Moore moved to amend the minutes to read "Coin" instead of "Corn."
 - i. Ashley seconded.
 - ii. Minutes amended.
- E. Brian Cimons moved to approve last meeting's minutes.
 - i. Tom Taylor seconded.
 - ii. Minutes approved.

II. General Orders

- A. First Year Experience Course, *Senior Communications Specialist Ann Hastings*
 - i. Ann is working with Paul Manrique on the kick-off event for the new first year course. The event will focus on diversity inclusion. They will show 3-4 short films done in an authentic story-telling style, similar to the American Express commercials. They aim to show that there is no "typical" Notre Dame Student.
 - ii. They are collecting story submissions now through next Friday. If you are interested in sharing your story, fill out the form sent out via email. Filming will take place in early April.
- B. State of the Student Union, *Student Body President Lauren Vidal*
 - i. Lauren delivered the State of the Union.
- C. Student Union Annual Awards; Michal J. Palumbo Award
 - i. Kathryn Peruski read the nomination from the Student Union Ethics Commission, recommending Michael R. Wajda for the Michael J. Palumbo Award.
 - ii. Scott M. moved to vote.
 - 1. Elena Silla seconded.
 - iii. Michael Wajda was approved as the 2015 recipient of the Michael J. Palumbo Award by hand vote.
- D. Spring Board of Trustees Presentation, *Student Body President Lauren Vidal, Student Body Vice President Matthew Devine, and Student Union Chief of Staff Shannon Montague*
 - i. Campus Life Council Academic Task Force
 - 1. Four-pronged approach
 - a. Psychostimulant use on campus
 - i. There has been an uptake in the overall college population. We are looking further into psychostimulant use on our campus, but we anticipate it is lower than the national average based on anecdotal evidence.
 - b. Course loads

- i. Some students load up to 27 credit hours, including labs and research.
 - c. Faculty perspective
 - i. Professors do not believe that the difference in student stress levels is based on academics.
 - ii. They predict the changes in stress levels are related to extracurricular involvement.
 - d. Technological engagement
 - i. There is a positive correlation between technology use and student stress.
2. Campus Life Council Social Scene Task Force
 - a. Overprogramming on campus
 - b. The need for students to feel that they have founded a new club
 - c. Looking at the full picture of SAO's mission
 - d. Looking into the possibility of blocking off periods of time as "unprogrammable" times so students can eat, exercise, and relax
3. Campus Life Council Benchmarking Task Force
 - a. Comparison of research to other universities
 - b. Conducting internal research within our University
 - c. CARE Program
 - i. Identifies students experiencing severe stress or who are contemplating withdrawal from the University
 - ii. Looking at CARE in conjunction with the Residence Hall support system
 - iii. One recommendation was to provide an on-campus emergency contact, such as a rector, when completing ND Roll Call.
 - d. The University Counseling Center website
 - i. Looking at other institutions with better online resources
 - ii. Developing a more user-friendly interface
 - e. University Counseling Center intake data
4. Forward action
 - a. They are now doing independent research, looking at recently published articles about student stress on college campuses.
 - b. There was a study that perfectionism is positively correlated with depression.
 - c. Lauren, Matt and Shannon will compile this data to present to the Board of Trustees.
 - d. With the \$10 million donation to the McDonald Center, this is a great time to make recommendations for the improvement of resources on campus.
5. Discussion
 - a. Ashley asked about the nature of the recommendations.
 - i. Recommendations will include improvement of online resources, programs rooted in community-based therapy, and others.
 - ii. These recommendations will be made to the Board of Trustees and the Division of Student Affairs.

- b. Jimmy noted that the block of unprogrammable time at Brown University was an interesting idea to explore further.
 - i. Jake Wittenburg noted that this would just force everything to be pushed into 22 hours instead of 24.
 - ii. Kristen Gates noted that this could encourage students to pick which activities are most important.
 - iii. Lauren added that the 2 hours of free time could be used for students to go to the gym and take time for themselves.
 - iv. Kevin McMannis noted that a block in the evening could push everything back and result in students staying up later to get everything done.
 - v. Kevin Coleman noted that it would be difficult to implement because student work shifts at campus jobs throughout the day.
 - vi. Katie Arndorfer expressed an overwhelming attitude that the University Counseling Resources are not helpful because students have not been able to connect with their counselors.
 - 1. Grant Humphreys has heard the same thing.
 - vii. Elena suggested greater efficiency in the UCC because now it takes a long time to get into see someone in the UCC. She also suggested increasing resources for concerned friends.
 - viii. Scott M. suggested adding 10-20 staff psychologists.
 - 1. Currently the UCC works with psychologists, psychiatrists, and counselors. Many students are unaware of UCC walk-in hours. There are blocked off times when psychologists do not book any appointments.
 - ix. Scott M. also suggested looking at demographic enrollment trends. International students, specifically Asian students, have higher levels of stress and mental illness. It is worth looking at how much money is allocated to those groups.
- c. Ashely noted that the number of cases of depression on our campus is not publicized. If people were more aware, there would be a stronger sense of solidarity. We are all good at composing ourselves, so those who are struggling often feel more alone.
- d. Ryan Rizzuto suggested limiting the number of clubs freshmen can sign up for at their first Activities Night so they are not overextended so early on.
- e. Wynn Stoxen noted that RAs may be an underused resource.
 - i. Michael noted that it is all of our responsibilities to look out for our peers and neighbors. Behavior shifts are often a cause for concern. Even student leaders, not necessarily RA's or hall staff, should look out for students in need of support.
- f. Elle Steichen has heard complaints from students who have visited the UCC and do not trust the advice they receive from counselors.
- g. Kristen suggested hiring nutritionists to work in the UCC who could work with students with eating disorders.

- h. Jimmy suggested having freshmen in the First Year Experience Course take a trip to the UCC so students can physically visit the Center.
 - i. Grant suggested using the First Year Experience Course to teach freshman to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy stress.
 - j. Jake is on the Design Committee for the First Year Experience Course and will bring these suggestions to the next meeting.
 - k. Kristen suggested discussing UCC resources during Frosh-O.
 - 6. Lauren will be sending a survey to the student body to compile data from the student perspective.
- E. SS1415-16, *Student Body President Lauren Vidal and Student Union Chief of Staff Shannon Montague on behalf of Student Body Vice President Matthew Devine*
- i. A resolution concerning an open letter to the University of Notre Dame's peer institutions
 - ii. An open letter will be sent to all of the ACC schools.
 - iii. Lauren moved to amend "To Whom It May Concern" to the name of the receiving institution.
 - 1. All in favor. The letter was amended.
 - iv. Scott M. suggested that the Department of National Engagement and Outreach send multiple letters throughout the year.
 - v. Scott M. voiced his concerns regarding the wording of the letter.
 - 1. Matt responded that the wording has been approved by the Diversity Council and the Muslim Student Alliance.
 - 2. This is a letter of solidarity and a recommitment to our Catholic values.
 - vi. Michael asked about the process of Senate sending an open letter.
 - 1. The letters will be sent to our peer institutions in the ACC.
 - vii. Michael asked about the possibility of a letter to address an African American student at the University of Virginia who was beaten by an excise policeman.
 - 1. This letter was not intended to be about the specifics of cases.
 - viii. Michael noted that the senior exit survey from last year indicated that only 8% of students did not feel like they were part of a community at Notre Dame. He suggested removing the word "many" when discussing students who do not feel welcome in our larger Notre Dame family.
 - ix. Michael moved to consider this discussion informal, so we can abandon parliamentary procedure and Matt can field questions.
 - 1. All in favor by hand vote.
 - x. Jake noted that his constituents from St. Edward's Hall felt that paragraph 3 was very inward looking.
 - 1. This paragraph is intended to encourage similar reflection at other peer institutions.
 - 2. Ashley thanked Matt for drafting this letter. She agreed that it is important for us to reflect on this, but she suggested including forward action on our part or a call to action for other universities to be reflective.
 - xi. Kevin M. noted that it was never determined whether the incident at UNC was a hate crime or an issue over a parking spot.
 - xii. Martin Walsh expressed his support for this letter as a great way to call people action.

- xiii. Chris DeSapio also offered his support for the letter. Regarding the word “many,” using this word indicates that we believe that those 8% who do not feel included are significant.
- xiv. Lauren moved to close informal discussion.
 - 1. Peter Durbin seconded.
- xv. Lauren moved to table this letter until a later Senate so edits can be made.
 - 1. Kevin M. seconded.
- F. SS1415-17, *Morrissey Major Senator Brian Cimons*
 - i. A resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Body regarding election endorsements
 - ii. Brian C. proposed an amendment to strike the second and third sections of the resolution.
 - 1. Scott M. seconded.
 - 2. All in favor of considering only the first section.
 - iii. Discussion
 - 1. Kathryn Peruski spoke on behalf of Judicial Council.
 - a. This is not an amendment that needs to be addressed today. Election amendments should be considered in the fall.
 - b. Kathryn expressed concern that she was not consulted until the final stages. She also expressed concerns about lack of consultation with other members of the Student Activities Office.
 - c. She suggested discussing this further with the Athletics Department.
 - d. The phrasing “student government” can be left to interpretation and should be clarified.
 - e. Individual student endorsements are allowed nowhere in the constitution. There is a concern about harassment for endorsements. There would need to be an additional amendment to allow endorsements from individual students.
 - 2. Ashley suggested a resolution to redraft this entire section of the Constitution, with the approval of the Judicial Council President.
 - 3. Michael asked if Brian had spoken with the Office of Compliance about student athletes being involved in student elections.
 - a. No, he has not.
 - 4. Michael expressed concerns about the effects of student endorsements and competition for those endorsements.
 - 5. Zach Waterson, the incoming Judicial Council President, is fully committed to exploring this further during his term.
 - 6. Lauren encouraged Senate to take more time to think about this to ensure that the right decision is made.
 - 7. Ryan noted that endorsements from the members of the Student Union may have more influence on voters than on endorsements from athletic teams.
 - 8. Kevin Bond expressed the importance of keeping Brian C. involved in this conversation next year.
 - a. Someone else will have to bring this to the floor in the future, as Brian will no longer be a member of Senate.
 - 9. Ashley moved to close discussion.

- a. Grant seconded.
- 10. Jake moved to table this resolution.
 - a. Kevin M. seconded.
 - b. 13 voted in favor of tabling, 13 opposed. Matt voted nay.
 - c. The resolution was not tabled.
- 11. Ashley moved to vote.
 - a. JP Bruno seconded.
 - b. The resolution was voted down by hand vote.

III. New Business

- A. No new business.

IV. Announcements

- A. Senate gave Lauren and Matt a round of applause for all of their incredible work this year.
- B. There will be sexual assault prayer service this Friday at 5:15pm at the Grotto. Senators are encouraged to lead walkovers from their dorms.
- C. There are 31 days until the Fisher Regatta.
- D. Notre Dame Day is coming up. A possible \$1 million is available to student clubs and organizations.
- E. The SUB movie is *The Hobbit*.
- F. The last lecture series is coming up next week, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at 7pm in Washington Hall.
- G. Knott Hall is protesting the fencing around Knott Quad.
- H. Howard Hall is hosting a pop-top drive next week. They will be collected and sent to Uganda for women to make bags that can then be sold.
- I. Please empty your binders of information from this year and leave them on the shelves.
- J. Matt will send out information about taking professional photos.
- K. We do not yet have the names of the new senators from Knott Hall and Sorin Hall. Current senators, please pass those names along to the incoming administration.
- L. Thank you for all of your work this year! It has been a privilege to serve with all of you.

V. Adjournment

- A. Jake motioned to adjourn.
- B. Ryan seconded.
- C. Meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine L. Wood
Student Union Secretary