

NOTRE DAME STUDENT SENATE

Executive Summary

February 27, 2008

Notre Dame Room, LaFortune

I) **Opening Business**

- a. Maris called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
- b. Erdina led the invocation.
- c. Liz, Colin, Mariana, Patrick, Victoria, Cipriano, Anna, and Andrew were absent.
- d. Maris entertained a motion to approve the February 20, 2008 executive summary. Ian motioned, and Erdina seconded. *The February 20, 2008 minutes were approved at 6:07 p.m.*

II) **Podium**

III) **Officer Reports**

- a. Ms. Maris Braun, Student Body Vice President
 - i. Liz has been working on the condolence gifts for the families of Timothy and Connor, with framed and blessed by Fr. Hesburgh pictures from the memorial mass. Additionally, she sent a letter to president and vice president at NIU. She is currently at a conference to learn about food. She sent out the Good Neighbor guide also.
 - ii. Maris said that last Thursday night they had meeting for environmentally concerned students, which was well attended. Working on a follow-up to the Green Summit to get together action goals and how to act on them.
- b. Ms. Sheena Plamoottil, Chief Executive Assistant
 - i. Sheena said that last Friday, CLC task force met with campus dietician. They came to consensus and decided various options would be plausible to educate students about eating right. Possibly imprinting new food pyramids on trays and color-coding the dining halls. Also, looking into putting up a discussion board about Catholic faculty hiring on the website. After break taking nominations for O'Malley and Irish Clover Awards, with forms up online this week.
- c. Mr. Thomas Noble, Faculty Senate Liaison
 - i. Prof. Noble said that Faculty Senate meets tonight and will be discussing the survey from Catholic faculty issue, which over 500 faculty responded to. The clocks in classroom motion is on the docket and should be voted. He will also make an announcement about the Health and Body Image Conference to help publicize it.

IV) **Committee Reports**

- a. Committee on Academic Affairs
 - i. Carol said they are working with OIT on print quota system. Also working on new online "TCEs" and will be meeting after spring break about that. Catholic faculty hiring issue, please send summary to her. Email went out Monday for members of clubs to serve on focus groups. Today, they finalized a survey to go out to students the week

after spring break. Also, please pick up comment boxes if didn't do so last week. Also working on initiative for excused absences for juniors/seniors who go on job interviews in business school.

- b. Committee on Community Relations
 - i. Colin couldn't be here but Maris said his committee is working on 3 initiatives including the Community Summit at ND downtown, bringing city officials and students together to talk about community issues. Also, moving on with transition to off-campus living seminar.
- c. Committee on Social Concerns
 - i. Karen said that the pre-symposium went really well. They are continuing to have meetings about possibly creating Student Service/Social Action fund for students to apply for a grant to support any service group had worked with previously. They finished putting together materials for Contemporary Topics about locally grown food. Also planning an event around a movie about Darfur.
- d. Committee on Gender Issues
 - i. Brenna said to please encourage people to attend the Health and Body Image Conference. Thanks for your support!
- e. Committee on Residence Life
 - i. Sheena said that Safe Spring Break week is this week and things have been going well. Gus said that WEEM is the Workout Equipment Exchange Marketplace. Speaking with Scott Kasmir from ResLife and RecSports so that when RecSports sells equipment at end of semester and dorms want to buy them, create a website marketplace for rector and RecSports to get together. Also, after spring break, resolution regarding 2 dates for rector to ask for matching funds. Continuing with "work in your workout" with RecSports. Erdina asked if foul play with rector/rectress, where do you go. Sheena suggested going to Student Affairs and it isn't part of ResLife committee.
- f. Committee on University Affairs
 - i. Callie thanked everyone who came to debate, had 60-70 people and it went really well. They are working on the environmental debate but they still haven't found any professors. Also working on 3 resolutions which should be coming up after break.
- g. Committee on Oversight
 - i. Ian said they are currently working on transitions, with no new developments.
- h. Committee on Multicultural Affairs
 - i. Ninny said that MAC has a resolution tonight and other than that if have any questions about cultural competency, please talk to her.

V) **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Student Senate Resolution SS0708-21 "On the Table"

VI) **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Student Senate Resolution SS0708-33
 - i. Karen said this resolution is supporting an addition of sexual orientation to the non-discrimination clause. Matt wanted to give

background of where it is coming from. In 1998, first big push to add sexual orientation to non-discrimination clause. Administration was against it. Over last 10 years, continued to have support from Student Senate with several resolutions being passed. Denise said this year made number of changes to make it a stronger resolution. The biggest change is to follow up with administration with dialogue. They have the support of Progressive Student Alliance group. Encouraging dialogue with other student organizations. Maris opened the floor to questions of content. Stephan said that while cite King's College and Holy Cross College, but HCC does not have an official non-discrimination clause in its academic planner/handbook. Student rights clause mentions it. Karen said that the non-discrimination policy might not be the legally binding one. Not sure in position to include it in right now. This came from last year's committee and kept in resolution from last year. Maris moved into general debate. Nick motioned to send back to committee to work on it. Scott seconded. Resolution SS0708-33 is sent back to committee at 6:33 p.m. with a vote of 15-9-0.

- ii. Please send concerns to Karen, Matt, and Denise to amend the resolution.
- b. Student Senate Resolution SS0708-34
- i. Carol said that her committee had a bunch of existing things that weren't finished from last year. They got a summary of what study spaces were on campus and found that what would probably be best is to talk to students. Investigated if they actual get student input when improving study spaces, and there they do not for the most part. Jim H. said that there wasn't one main problem or situation that needed to be addressed. It is more ad hoc and there wasn't any set system/procedure to follow with renovations. The resolution is to encourage communication between building managers and students. It encourages people who supervise these study areas to regularly assess condition of the area. Also encourages them to actively solicit student suggestions throughout the year, such as with signs or a suggestion box. Prior to major renovations, it is asking the building administrator to set out prior to renovation some sort of procedure to ask students for input on how best to renovate area. They didn't want to put any specifics since all renovations are different. It encourages cooperation between administrator and students. Carol added as an example the first floor library renovations, where there were some suggestions from students who came up to the building manager.
 - ii. Maris opened the floor up to questions on content. Sheena asked to define building administrators. Jim H. responded that it is those who are in charge of supervising study spaces in a building. It is basically whoever is in charge of renovations of study spaces. Gus asked if it includes rectors. Jim H. said the resolution is strictly for public areas on campus. Sheena said that the language across campus is building

manager, so that language may be better. Ryan motioned a friendly to change building administrators to facilities managers. Ian seconded. Jim L. made a point of information about if friendly applies here.

- iii. Maris noted there are four changes. Maris moved into general debate. Scott said that this is a carry-over from last year and feels like it is not a pertinent issue. Also, in reasoning, buildings are going to undergo renovations, there is no formal process to do so, which doesn't establish any process. He pointed out that Jordan was created with student input and same with Alumni's renovations. Ryan said that the resolution coming up in February is not necessarily a concern. As for student input, this is more of a foot in the door. It is making the administration more aware that we want to have input in these things. Carol wanted to point out the second-to-last resolved is that facilities managers should actively solicit student suggestions. Maris gave a point of information that if a resolution passes or doesn't pass there is still follow-up. By no means is the resolution an end goal, but it is a starting point. Maris moved into voting. Resolution SS0708-34 passed at 6:51 p.m. with a vote of 20-3-1.

c. Student Senate Resolution SS0708-35

- i. Ninny thanked everyone who came tonight, including professors and interested students. Erdina and Ezinne said that their committee has been working on this since the summer to research other colleges and universities and their Native American minors. Erdina said there are many relations between Notre Dame and Native Americans. Ezinne said they sent out a survey and got a response of about 429 people asking how interested in having area studies or ethnic studies available on campus. The 22% who are interested is a lot and shows it is an important class/minor to have. If the university offered Native American studies, what is likelihood of participation. 36% would take classes. Not very many offered right now. Erdina said that a contributor to the statistic is that maybe those who took survey may already have their courses figured out and may not have any room. Also asked why it is important for Notre Dame to have Native American Studies on campus, most responded it is important to have a variety of different studies offered and other ethnic departments. Erdina addressed if it is feasible. MAC has gotten a great response from those who would be interested, support from professors and MSPS and NASAND. They are looking at courses that are available right now, plus the minor would need to be housed somewhere. They are thinking of working with American Studies, whose dean has offered to give funds to MAC to address how it should be put together. Implementation, need support from Senators, inviting interested students, local tribe members, and interested faculty to get their feedback. They want to build stronger connections between Notre Dame and South Bend community. Then, need to seek funding and then establish a minor and a department to house it. Right now they

have a foundation but need Student Senate to build it up. Erdina yielded the floor to the professors in attendance. One of the professors who teaches Native American literature wanted to add that these are legitimate courses, not partial. Another visitor added her support, as a member of one of the local tribes, to help reestablish connections with the university and would definitely be interested in helping. A sophomore had taken classes specifically in Native American studies at the University of New Mexico. Right now majoring in American Studies since that is the closest. Trying to take as many classes that deal with American Indians as she is interested in teaching in the future. These classes create a dialogue about the topic. She is in huge support of this program.

- ii. Maris opened the floor up to questions on content or grammar. Maris moved in to general debate. Stephan asked if there is a mission statement for the program. Ninny responded that they felt it would be very selfish to write one on their own and they would like to work with faculty and local tribe members once the resolution is in place. Jim L. asked how prominent is this major/minor in other colleges or universities. Ninny responded that Stanford is a great example with a major, concentration, and minor. These have higher concentration of classes than we have at Notre Dame. Jim L. also asked how much of a hands-on approach will the minor/classes be. Ninny agreed and said that one of our professors actually does this right now. Professor Belovsky said that it is not just how they used to live in the past, but how we can learn from these cultures now. Megan asked why it changed from a concentration to a minor. Ninny said that she was confused between concentration and minor. Concentration has to be taken within something else. A minor is housed in a department but a student can start in it without any requirements on top of it. Stephan asked how implementation will work and a timeline. Ninny said that realistically it will take a lot of planning, especially with the administration, to work with the resources they have right now. Maris moved into voting. Resolution SS0708-35 passed at 7:13 p.m. with a vote of 22-0-1.

VII) ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Maris said that the last Senate meeting of this administration is March 27th. Campaigning should begin within the next 2 weeks, before Easter. Ashley Weiss will be in touch with Hall President/Judicial Council member of dorm. Take any interested members under wing and explain process to them.
- b. Ian invited everyone on behalf of Annual Fund to Thanksgiving in February.
- c. Carol asked to start bringing suggestion boxes back after spring break, labeling with what dorm it is from. Tara asked how specific should suggestions be. Carol responded the more specific the better would be great.
- d. Ian said to wear the free shirts tomorrow.
- e. Matt said that he and Denise welcome any input for the resolution before the next meeting on March 12th.

- f. Maris said that senators are still obligated to attend committee meetings, which go until the end of the year.

VIII) **ADJOURNMENT**

- a. Maris entertained a motion to adjourn. Gus motioned. Kelly seconded. *The February 20, 2008 Senate meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Caitlin Flynn
Student Body Secretary