

**Notre Dame Student Senate**  
Executive Summary  
October 6, 2004  
Notre Dame Room, LaFortune

**I. OPENING BUSINESS**

- a. Chairperson Karla Bell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- b. Brad Tucker led the invocation.
- c. Neal Kumar was absent.
- d. Liz Kozlow motioned to approve the minutes; Marie Vervaeke seconded.  
*Without objection, the Executive Summary of September 29, 2004 was approved at 6:04 p.m.*

**II. PODIUM**

- a. TCEs—Vijay Ramanan, Jeremy Staley, Jeremy Lao
  - i. Vijay Ramanan, Academic Committee chairman, introduced the letter to the Senate, indicating a new plan for the Teacher Course Evaluations and their publication to students. Most people in this debate believe this evaluation has a significant impact, if done in the right way. They need to work with the faculty and administration to satisfy all the reasons TCEs are used, be it to choose classes, decide promotions or direct the focus of a class. A solution, in this situation, that favors students, might not be the best for all sides. Sometimes the publication would not be the best idea.
  - ii. That is why, for over three years, Jeremy Staley and Jeremy Lao have been working to develop a proposal that is favorable to all sides. They would like to see an additional sheet of paper be added to the TCE that has a list of questions compiled by students, processed by OIT and posted on a web server. In addition to the answers to these questions, a professor could post course information, syllabi, goals and background information. They would like to receive the most representative, whole picture of what students think about particular courses.
  - iii. Jeremy Lao, former Student Body President, added that their goal is to create transparency for courses and give students the most information that they can. There are too many problems with publishing TCEs as such. This proposal, Jeremy stated, would be sent to the Administration, but he would like student body support as to if they want this system, and when it comes to creating the details, help in creating those. Jeremy Staley, Academic Delegate, intimated that there is not much information currently, when students sign up for classes. They want to have what peer institutions have which is a system that will help students choose their courses better, and make expectations clearer.
  - iv. Liz Loo asked how this system would affect the University's evaluations of professors. Vijay Ramanan stressed that this would

be independent of the TCE that is sent to the Administration. Jordan Bongiovanni asked how student response would be monitored. Jeremy Staley said it would not be much different from the current TCE, but there will be no free response questions. Vijay stated that if they choose the right questions, then they can cover those areas. Vijay said that they have to be sure that the majority of students will fill this form out. He then asked if it would be seen as a hassle to students. Sarah Bates noted that they should consult professors as to the added time it would take to fill out this extra evaluation. Jeremy Staley thought that the benefit to this would outweigh the short time it would take to answer a few additional questions.

- v. Steve Cartwright asked about the nature of the questions: would they be student created, by the psychology department, through focus groups? Vijay noted that this system is in the preliminary stages and they will use students and different departments to hash out the details. Now, they just want to ask students if they are happy with this proposed system in general.
- vi. Jeremy Staley noted the great precedent set by other Universities. They collected a lot of data, and will look at their system when creating one for Notre Dame. There was some question as to the time frame for posting syllabi; Professor Colon noted that it should not be an issue. Beth Marchal expressed her concern of the information going straight to the website. Jeremy Lao said that they wanted to present all the informational; class information and student opinion. It is then up to the student to form their own opinion. Stephanie Pelligra suggested that they indicate whether the class evaluated was required or an elective. Jeremy Staley then asked the Senate to go back to the dorms and describe this proposal to students. He would like to make a gesture that the Senate approves the idea of the system. Sujal Pandya suggested that they might implement this in stages. A fairly easy change to make for next semester might be for professors to post syllabi and reading lists. Then, the changes could be made when a survey is developed.
- vii. Steve Cartwright inquired about the next step. Jeremy Lao noted that they will go to the Faculty Senate, Academic Council and administration. They need now to demonstrate student support. Philippe Colon added that they need to make the system flexible and easy for professors to use and change. They concluded that the group would bring it up in Faculty Senate that night, while over the next week, the Senators should talk to their constituencies about the system. The letter would be voted for approval next week.

### III. OFFICER REPORTS

- a. Mr. Adam Istvan, Student Body President

- i. Adam stated that his office was working on the Board of Trustees Report, and will present Thursday. He will give a summary to the Senate at the next meeting.

#### IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Committee on Academic Affairs
  - i. Vijay Ramanan noted the TCE letter they had been working on, but they will also be presenting a Dart proposal in the coming weeks.
- b. Committee on Diversity Affairs
  - i. Nick Coleman reported that the Diversity Commissioner training went well. Now, they are brainstorming for events and activities for Diversity Awareness week and GOBT week.
- c. Committee on Gender Relations
  - i. Lizzi Shappell noted their proposal to HPC regarding a brother/sister dorm event entitled: "Must Sex TV" a media presentation and debate.
- d. Committee on Residence Life
  - i. Brendan McHugh said that he met with Brian and Tom Moynihan regarding Napster. There are new problems—the music cannot be burned onto a CD, but only played on a computer within the university. He will be looking into other options.
- e. Committee on University Affairs
  - i. Katie Boyle said that they are working on reviewing the Counseling Center. She asked the Senators to ask their dorms about any experiences and email them to Steph Pelligra at [spelligr@nd.edu](mailto:spelligr@nd.edu). They hope to have enough feedback to present a report. Soon, the committee will have a resolution on anit-sweatshop task force.
- f. Advisory Committee on Academic and Student Life
  - i. Casey Stanton noted their meeting about getting people to think about Graduate school and higher education. It is a concern of the administration that people aren't getting excited about certain classes and what they are learning.

#### V. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Dihan Fernando motioned to adjourn; Liz Kozlow seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m. The next meeting of the Student Senate will take place Wednesday, October 13, 2004 at 6:00 p.m. in the Notre Dame Room, LaFortune.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Smith  
Student Body Secretary

