

[In these minutes: Medical Amnesty, Green revolving fund, Excused absences]

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SSCC) MINUTES

OCTOBER 18, 2012

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Adam Matula (chair), Brandon Breuer, Nicole Conti, Gyaltsso Gurung, Joe Inhofer, Vivek Nagaraj, Evan Vogel, and Moshe Volovik.

REGRETS: Nathaniel Schwab.

1. CHAIR'S REPORT

Adam Matula noted that the resolution on the voter ID amendment was approved by the Senate and he will present it to the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) next week to see if MnSCU can collaborate with the University on this issue as it affects all students.

The Educational Policy Committee (SCEP) is looking at the student release questions due to an inquiry from MSA to have more faculty release the responses. If the questions refer to the person teaching the class, then the responses are considered private data under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA). To provide automatic release, either the questions or the MGDPA would need to be modified.

The first meeting for the Minnesota Student Legislative Coalition (MSLC) was last night and Support the U Day planning began. They will be working to have exemptions for missing classes for Twin Cities students.

2. STUDENT ASSOCIATION/ASSEMBLY UPDATES

Joe Inhofer said that RSA is working on constitutional revisions, took a trip to Valleyfair, and is planning more events for the semester, such as trick or canning.

Brandon Breuer noted that Duluth has new campus street signs. UMDSA will be focusing on a get out to vote rally.

Evan Vogel noted that Morris just finished its fall break. MCSA voted to oppose the voter ID amendment and is working on a campaign to stamp out the stigma towards mental health.

Gyaltsso Gurung noted that CSA has four goals for this year – improve student services, attend more club functions, increase CSA committee involvement, and establish more clubs.

Moshe Volovik said that MSA had a Q&A session with the President, discussed a tobacco-free campus, and approved its budget.

Nicole Conti reported that next week is open access week at the libraries. GAPSA discussed the marriage amendment but did not have quorum at the meeting to take action. It will have a listening session with President Kaler on November 28

On the issue of the voter ID amendment, MSA and MCSA have voted to oppose the amendment. RSA has not discussed the topic. GAPSA, CSA, and UMDSA have discussed the topic and will be informing students at get out to vote rallies.

3. MEDICAL AMNESTY FOR STUDENTS

Members made the following comments on the topic of medical amnesty:

- Speaker should be invited to the next meeting to address
- Would this be a city or state law change? Would each campus need to adopt it separately?
- Medical amnesty is a good thing as it allows students to ask for help
- How would this policy affect international students?
- Would it involve a change for campus police or city police? How would enforcement be different?
- If students want to push for this item, then they need to provide a good rationale

4. GREEN REVOLVING FUND/SUSTAINABILITY AT EACH CAMPUS

Members made the following comments on the topic of sustainability:

- This is a pressing issue in the Twin Cities for groups such as Campus Beyond Coal
- Morris champions sustainability through two windmills, a green revolving fund that was started last year, and a biomass facility
- Moving towards alternate energy sources should be an issue for the entire University
- Invite someone to speak about a green revolving fund
- Crookston will have a sustainable dorm opening soon and has many clubs in this area
- Other institutions should be consulted which have large scale programs already running
- Sustainability should try to limit the use of another fee for students to pay for these improvements

5. REPORTS FROM STUDENTS SERVING ON SENATE COMMITTEES

Members discussed the issue of students serving on other Senate committees providing reports to SSCC on a regular basis. It was decided that members would take the list of committees and email their thoughts on how often reports should be provided so that a final decision could be made at the next meeting.

6. EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR SENATE

Adam Matula noted that the Student Senate passed a resolution in 2010-11 to provide class exemptions for senators, but the request was rejected by the administration. One reason is because the exemption was too broad. With a new President, he proposed resubmitting a request, but only for one exemption per semester for either a Student Senate or University Senate meeting.

Members made the following comments:

- Students serve to make a difference and to participate in shared governance
- Senators should be exempt for all Senate service, not just once per semester
- Faculty Senate opinion should be sought since it would be helpful to have that group support the students
- Senate needs to understand why there is pushback
- The student voice should be able to be heard at Senate meetings without repercussions
- Buy-in is required from the new administration
- What is the policy for Student Representatives to the Regents?

7. DISCUSSION ON GRADE INFLATION

Adam Matula noted that there were no changes made to grading after the discussions that were held last year.

Members made the following comments:

- Not all students will support designating S-N grading as the only option in some courses
- Student input is important if this topic continues to be discussed
- Grade distribution should be review for each course

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Members made the following suggestions for future agenda items:

- Open source journals and access
- Fare-free zone for the light rail
- Advocacy for the University in a budget year

9. OTHER BUSINESS

With no further business, Adam Matula thanked all members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate