

## **Committee on Student Life (CSL)**

**Friday, September 14, 2012**

Room 12-196 12pm – 2pm

Minutes taken by Lisa Stagnone

**Present:** Lizhong Zheng (chair), Danielle Guichard-Ashbrook, Barbara Baker, Andy Barlow, Gunther M. Roland, J. Meejin Yoon, Jit Hin Tan, Amy (Betsy) E. Riley, Oz B. Agar

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Lizhong Zheng introduced himself as the new chair. Introductions were made around the table.

*CHAIR:* What are the issues / goals for the committee? Last year we had wonderful discussions regarding many topics. What I didn't like about last year was that after the meeting we had the minutes but no action was ever taken. We need student impact. We need channeling from students. We need observations from them.

We have new members. This is the time to define how we operate. Will we be given responsibilities and follow up on them or not? That will be defined now. I spoke with Dean Colombo as well as Chancellor Grimson. The Chancellor will attend our meeting on October 12<sup>th</sup>. We can find out from him what he wants from us. Does he want to give us power? I attended the Chair of Faculty meeting this week and found that we are the only committee that does not have any power. We need to have more action from the committee.

Last year's topics addressed grad student issues such as stipends and transportation. They came to us and presented their finding, got our input before presenting to administration. They also presented to us how they re-routed the shuttle service schedules to later at night for safety reasons. Not saying that these issues worked favorably because of the committee but maybe from coming before us and providing the feedback they needed before presenting, resulted positively.

Other topics of discussion were the dining plan, orientation, MITX, 2030Plan and Walker Memorial. There were all addressed and deserve to be revisited.

New issues to address this year that were brought up last year were academic workload and flexibility to move between majors. A proposed topic that was given to me recently from Melanie Parker, Career Services was to help prepare students for job interviewing. Career fairs have already started. Let's talk with her about what actions need to be taken.

*CHAIR:* What would this group like to have as topics?

*Jit Hin Tan (Grad Student):* Two issues to address: GSC had an agreement with Housing not to increase costs over a 4 – 5 year term more than 3.5%. The agreement term is coming to an end and we are in negotiations. We are concerned that this may adversely impact graduate student life. The GSC would be happy to make a presentation to the CSL on this matter. Secondly, the GSC would like to introduce and promote both facets of a graduate student as an individual and a researcher.

*Amy (Betsy) Riley (Student '14):* Undergrad students have concerns with student mental health regarding sexual assaults.

*Barbara A. Baker (Sr. Associate Dean, Student Life):* It may be best to separate those into two topics, sexual assault, possibly Title IX, as one topic and mental health as another. Mark DiVincenzo may be a point of contact regarding Title IX. He's working with a team putting together a website with this in mind in supporting students.

*CHAIR:* Last year Mark DiVincenzo came and spoke on this topic. They also spoke on this during the Chair Faculty Meeting. From the view of COD (Committee on Discipline), they stated that most of the non-academic issues are related to sexual assaults and alcohol issues.

*Andy Barlow (DAPER):* We just had a staff meeting where Mark presented which was interesting because it gave you the view of the victim. Good presentation.

*BAB:* Title IX is a federal law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded educational program or activity. Specifically, the US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, has issued guidance / expectations for school related sexual violence. Mark DiVincenzo has worked with others to develop a website for MIT and he would be a good resource for CSL.

*CHAIR:* Students will benefit from this topic. And it's new with orientation.

*BAB:* Sex Signals is the freshmen program that they must complete during orientation. Prior to arriving on campus, they fill out the form online. They attend the hour and a half session which is live performance and interaction with discussion with their orientation leaders during orientation.

*AER:* VPR (Violence Prevention Response) seems like they're in the middle of creating a report they've been working on regarding assaults.

*BAB:* Kate McCarthy heads the office. That was a grant program which is in their last year now.

*Danielle Guichard Ashbrook (International Office, ODGE):* Several groups can come and talk about the trouble with alleged sexual assaults and alcohol. These are very serious issues. How are students being educated today?

*AER:* Freshmen programs are important in prevention. Most students are coming here fresh from their homes. They can read about it. They can talk about it but what they will do once they're in that situation.

*BAB:* With respect to alcohol, CDSA has a great program at MIT. Community Development and Substance Abuse (CDSA) program which is headed by Don Camelio is a resource to you. They have surveys and data that they can update you on.

*CHAIR:* At this time University of Texas is being sued over affirmative action in regards to admissions and race. A student didn't get in and based on the Supreme Court ruling was in effect due to the under-represented minority. It was a big factor. *\*US minority groups were represented by 2,178 undergraduates (50 percent) and 1,317 graduate students (20 percent).*

*JHT:* MIT filed a brief and will be part of this.

*DGA:* Depending on the presidential election outcome, new laws may be in effect. If Obama wins, you can expect to see kids in high school in the US before 16 years old can get temporary employment which is considered a protected stay and get work permission. They have no green card, not considered international guests or temporary citizenship. They can get funding as students. If they get work, we need to watch this because it will affect several million people. If Romney gets in, he'll throw this out and it will make for an awkward situation for the ones who are here. They won't get any funding. This will be a major immigration proposal. Undocumented as well as legal students get lumped into that group. It's probably 30 to 40% of graduate students and 9% undergrad.

*CHAIR:* An interesting topic is students working off campus. There are some complicated policies when it comes to this and it depends on what department you are in it seems. Stanford as well as Harvard do not really mind but MIT has a policy that maybe we should discuss. Have you heard of students affected with this issue? Some students get paid to work off season and some don't. Say you want to be a bartender and work 4 hours a week off campus. You need approval for this. There is no performance factor why would you need approval? Should we look at this? Do students go outside to find work?

*DGA:* Faculty with student RA's do not do anything else but that. There is a restricted policy. If you work outside of campus financial aid can take what you earn.

*AER:* It can create a disincentive to make money.

*\*Quoted from the MIT Facts 2012 Booklet*

*JHT:* Graduate students may be paid for work that also receives credits

*JMY:* Architecture students either get credits or get paid.

*AER:* Some scholarships require that students don't work.

*Gunter M. Roland, Physics Dept:* Grad students usually don't have time to work.

*CHAIR:* What about MITx? What is the student opinion? How do people feel about open source education? Is this a cloud of their degree? Their future jobs are affected.

*GMR:* I see no immediate change. edX will affect people in the future. This is worldwide. They're not trying to make online useful in residential education. The model of education will change. No clue of what it will look like ten years from now. It's inevitable. Better that MIT is in front leading the way instead of trying to catch up from behind. These are for certificates only.

*AER:* Why pay now for a degree when you can stay home and get your degree in a few years?

*CHAIR:* What are the benefits? It's used courseware that's not uniform quality. There's no control over what's out there. Good material can be buried under useless information. Will it have negative effect on classroom teachers? Go to classroom and run a video? That's a bad classroom experience.

*GMR:* I spend a couple of hours preparing for one class. Now you have many people preparing for hours on one class and putting it all together. Maybe it's better to have James Woods or Clint Eastwood narrating?

*CHAIR:* Topics to discuss in the future: Workload and flex major. Research Communication requirement. Do we have a contact or someone know of someone who could find out more information?

*BAB:* DUE may be able to offer information. I guess *I could check with them.* ***ACTION ITEM RESULTS:*** *Barbara has provided the contact name of Kathleen L. MacArthur Office of the Faculty Support. Assistant Dean, Communication Requirement.*

*Oz B. Agar (Student 2013):* We would like to bring up the topic of the dining plan. Specifically, the lack of vegetarian / vegan options as well as special needs. Food allergies and cross contamination are hard to control but need addressing. There are not enough options for vegans and vegetarians. It comes down to allergies, religious life styles and pricing equaling the

quality. Maybe when we address this we can meet at Maseeh (unannounced) to have this meeting. Cost of meals at \$12.00 per meal for lunch and dinner. We averaged it out that only 80% of the meals get eaten. Is it poor management or are students getting bled? Maybe we should have a follow up meeting with dining or send out a survey. Next House has good food and they have a student involved with dining keeping an eye on things. Maybe we can invite him to our meeting? We need an opt-out option or insure proper services.

*JMY:* What about socializing during eating?

*OBA:* I don't see dining at a social interaction. You get your food. You eat with the friends you walked in with.

*BAB:* That's interesting because I was just speaking with a housemaster this morning and they stated that they've seen more interaction with students since the dining plan.

*OBA:* I guess I can agree then with that. Faculty has improved socializing at meal times. If I see a faculty member that I need to speak with I will approach them in the dining hall.

*CHAIR:* Some people have a conflict with this time and day for our meeting. Shall we put out a doodle to see if we can find a more appropriate time? I will be on travel next week. We'd like to ask Melanie Parker to come and speak to the committee. Can I ask for someone to fill in in my absence? Maybe Andy or Gunther would be able to run the meeting?

Andy Barlow has accepted this task.

*CHAIR:* We have some committee members that can't meet at this time. Are you open to maybe find another time / day to meet? We will send a doodle out with suggestions.

Also included with these meeting minute: Meeting Schedule / Topics for 2012 – 2013.