Revised Minutes

I. ATTENDANCE


ABSENT: Branton Cole, Shivani Gupta, Arvind Grover, Martin Gold, Colin Heitzmann, Bruce Karnopp, Susan Pritzel, Robert Simpson, John Su, Yvonne Tsai, Teshome Wagaw

II. OPENING REMARKS

Chair Burdi called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. He welcomed Professor David Schoem, invited to update the committee on the “binge drinking/substance abuse” issue, and MSA representative, Brett Schulman.

III. MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 1999 MEETING

Minutes from the January 15 meeting were approved without corrections. Burdi informed the committee that any changes or corrections to the minutes later identified should be sent to Colleen Brown.

IV. COMMITTEE MATTERS

Our committee gave some preliminary discussion to the following topics with some suggestion that they be considered as future agenda items:

Academic Ethics and Responsibilities

An open discussion was held on the reports of academic dishonesty and cheating within universities at-large. We addressed the subject of “high-tech cheaters”, who may be students using the Internet as their main research source for paper writing, often copying verbatim the information found on the Internet. Another concern was that the research material available on the Internet is not carefully monitored for accuracy nor validity. Our committee also talked about instances of bogus research, in which students electronically manipulate data to complete science experiments. Thus far to our understanding, there have been no surveys done by the University to measure the existence and extent of academic dishonesty.

Licensure of ‘Michigan’ products
Our committee discussed the licensure of ‘Michigan’ products being linked to sweat shops allegedly in Third World countries. We discussed inviting a representative from SOLE (Students Organizing for Labor and Economic Equality), a student group very involved with this issue, as well as Keith Molin, special assistant to the director of the Athletic Department. Mr. Molin is currently trying to negotiate among a University of Michigan leadership group designing a code of conduct with the apparel manufacturers of ‘Michigan’ products. We heard that MSA is also very interested in supporting the establishment of this kind of code of conduct.

GEO contract issues

IV. OVPSA MATTERS

Burdi spoke on behalf of the committee, commending Maureen Hartford’s constructive and productive efforts with the Code discussions on campus. Burdi was pleased to report that our committee was recommended by the OVPSA (and approved by the Regents at their February, 1999 meeting) to act as reviewers of proposed amendments to the Code. The committee gladly accepted this new responsibility. In this new process, our recommendations of Code amendments will be sent to the president, who will then make the final decision. The committee discussed and it was agreed that the Office of Student Conflict and Resolution will give us monthly reports. The OVPSA should have a set of proposed amendments ready for us by the end of this academic year.

Vice-President Hartford proceeded to give the committee an update of other OVPSA developments. She announced that the Civil Liberties Board’s Code review was in sync with those of MSA and OVPSA. Hartford indicated that she planned to distribute copies of these reviews (if available) at the next meeting.

The Vice-President also reported that the recommendation for increases in room and board rate went to the Regents this month and was approved. There will be a 2.3% increase in cost. The Provost also announced a probable 4-5% increase in tuition for next academic year.

Hartford next addressed the problem of Oxford Housing. Built originally as co-op housing to hold nearly 500 students, today Oxford Housing claims only 240 residents. This decline has been attributed to poor location. The University is now faced with the dilemma of spending money on infrastructure renewal or selling the housing complex, which amounts to $300,000 in yearly losses.

V. FOCUS TOPIC: ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

David Schoem, Assistant Vice-President for Academic Student Affairs, spoke in place of Marsha Benz, who was invited but unable to attend the meeting. After distributing several hand-outs, Schoem began the discussion by announcing that the binge drinking level among college students actually has not intensified in the last few years. However, the media attention on binge drinking has. According to Wexler Report data, binge
drinking is defined as consumption of four drinks or more at one given period for women, and five or more drinks at one given period for men. There remains some debate as to whether or not U-M binge drinking should be defined by volume of consumption or intent. University data gathered in 1993 showed that 63% percent of students drank moderately or less.

Schoem then described some of the approaches being utilized by the University to combat binge drinking.

1. Environmental Approach

This method called for an assessment of all aspects of campus life in combating binge drinking.

2. Target Group Approach

This approach targeted certain groups or events in which binge drinking was noticeably more prevalent. Some examples given were graduation, 21st birthdays, and the Greek System.

3. Collaboration with Students

This approach incorporated alcohol abuse education in specific areas of student life such as resident staff training, substance-free housing, and orientations programs, as well as encouraged student involvement.

The Binge Drinking Task Force was started last summer to reduce the rate of binge drinking among students in University residence halls. The Task Force is considering collecting more data on U-M students. Schoem also discussed some of the proposed methods the task force has made to curb binge drinking:

1. Policy and Legal Issues

The binge drinking committee is looking for more consistent and clear approaches to binge drinking violations.
2. Communication and Community Involvement

Their committee is looking for ways to get the Ann Arbor community, especially local bars and alcohol distributors, involved with this issue. College students have become a prime commercial target of the alcohol industry.

3. Prevention and Education

Their committee is searching for strategies to make students avoid binge drinking. Some suggestions have been creating more undergraduate courses and/or an interdisciplinary theme semester addressing alcohol issues. Our committee was interested in the latter suggestion, adding that proper financial resources would be necessary to carry out a theme semester. Currently, Michigan is one of the largest recipients of federal funds for alcohol abuse education.

Our committee offered Schoem several suggestions for dealing with this issue. Faculty and staff involvement was an important step. We thought it important to publicize to students the negative effects of binge drinking, such as financial loss and jeopardization of future employment. Working with local party store owners and campus bars to curb binge drinking was also considered. We also discussed having a conference similar to the recent all university/college Lansing conference, in which all alcohol abuse programs and groups could come together and discuss common and campus-specific strategies to address the concern.

The committee thanked Professor Schoem for his insightful presentation. With no further business on the table, the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

- NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 1999 11:30-2PM--BATES ROOM