Student Relations Advisory Committee

Minutes of March 14, 2014
11:30 to 1:30 pm
Welker Room University of Michigan Union

Meeting Commenced at 11:50 am

Members Present: David Potter (chair), Vice President Royster Harper, Associate Vice President Simone Himbeault Taylor, Dr. Charlie Koopman, and Laurel Ruza,

Members Absent: Dr. Desmond Patton, Dr. Nallasivam Palanisamy, Lisa Low, Associate Director Donna Hayward, Alex Rubin, Sallye Ramsey

Guests: Associate Vice President of Student Life Loren Rullman and Oberlander (the architect for the new Rec Sports facilities)

Materials Distributed: None

David Potter thanked everyone for attending the meeting and opened with a brief roll call.

Associate Vice President of Student Life Loren Rullman began an extensive presentation about the goals and measures of improving the Rec Sports facilities with the sole purpose of bettering the campus community as a whole.

There was an emphasis on improving the locations to better represent the University of Michigan brand; the main purpose of the remodel is to
- create a better sense of community
- streamline the design and functionality of buildings and specific spaces
- promote a more welcoming environment with many functions

David Potter expressed his concerns about why he believed that there should be an increase in the amount recreational accessibility for older faculty and staff. He cited that there was not an ideal area for them to congregate on campus and as a result many (including himself) had turned to exercising at the more modern facilities located at the Washtenaw Community College.
David Potter stated that rec sports facilities are mainly populated by the people that live within that specific area and how one of the major obstacles of the new facilities would be attracting people from outside of the local community and incorporating them into the new and improved atmosphere. He also noted that he understood this was a task easier said than done because of the parking constraints on campus, which would limit the influx of people from other areas.

Laurel provided the committee with an indication on how a typical student viewed the rec sports facilities and equipment. She suggested that the quality of the equipment played a huge role in deciding where she exercised. She stated that initially she exercised in the CCRB but once she discovered that the IM building offered better exercise equipment she quickly relocated.

The architect started a dialogue by asking the committee what they believed needed to be added to the new facilities. Several suggestions followed:

There was a suggestion of the development of a café that promoted healthy eating while also serving healthy meals to students and faculty. A weekly class being taught for a few hours was also suggested; this could teach staff and students new healthier eating habits, which would improve the overall health of campus.

The role of technology within the new environment was also discussed. The committee believed that some of the benefits of an increase in technology were as follows:
- could create more efficiency
- promote healthier lifestyles
- become more interactive (make working out feel like less of a chore)

Laurel stated how the creation of new facilities would ultimately lead to a change in culture. Students and faculty would be energized and create new organizations to attain the most use out of the new facilities. For example if a rock-climbing wall were added it would be only a matter of time before intramural teams would emerge to compete.

David Potter expressed concerns about the autonomy of the athletics department; the lack of cooperation with rec sports in some instances creates glaring inefficiencies. Modern buildings that could support hundreds of students are restricted to be used by only a handful.

David Potter addressed some of the inefficiencies faced by each individual rec sports building on campus:

CCRB: While it is the most frequented, it requires major renovations. The equipment is seriously outdated and the layout of the entire building is confusing. It is also important to make the exercise spaces more gender neutral and not some male dominated.
IMB: Has the most modern equipment of the three facilities it is still not totally up to date. It’s also relatively small but is visited less frequently.

NCRB: Is in the worst shape of the three. It’s extremely small, every space within this facility feels cramped and the building in general is terribly ventilated. The equipment is also embarrassingly outdated.

Charlie Koopman stated that the athletic department’s lack of cooperation with the rest of the university creates an element of dissension. He suggested how implementing something as simple as a morning skate at Yost Arena could help promote a new sense of culture and community on campus while providing an important facility with more usage.

The presentation concluded and everyone was thanked for the attendance and participation.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 1:03pm

Submitted by:
Kendrick Bell, SACUA Student Support