Minutes of March 22, 2013
Approved: April 19, 2013

Student Relations Advisory Committee

Minutes of Friday, March 22, 2013
11:30 to 1:00 PM
Bates Room – Michigan Union

Members Present: David Potter (Chair), Simone Himbeault Taylor, Jean Krisch, Donna Hayward, Beverly Fauman, Fred Askari, Ed Rothman, Nallasivam Palanisamy

Absent: Vice President Harper, Stacy Peterson, Charles Koopman, Lisa Low

Guests: Sarah Daniels (Assistant Dean of Students); Greg Merritt (University Housing); Kristi Begonja (First Gen); Carson Phillips (First Gen); Danielle Boshers (First Gen); Theresa Johnson (First Gen); Matt Statman (CRP Manager); Garrett Gibbons (CRP); Ashley Thomas (CRP); Ariel Britt (CRP)

Materials Distributed:
Agenda
Minutes of February 2013

Meeting commenced at 12:00 PM.

Chair Potter began the meeting by welcoming the two student groups, Collegiate Recovery and First Gens, followed by a brief roundtable introduction.

Simone Himbeault Taylor thanked everyone for attending, especially the students for sharing their stories. She then introduced Sarah Daniels, Assistant Dean of Students.

Sarah Daniels further thanked SRAC for their time, and updated the committee on the two student groups speaking next month, Student Veterans and Beyond the Diag. She briefly described the resources and support that these student groups serve for University of Michigan students.

Matt Statman, Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) Manager, introduced CRP to the committee, explaining that drinking and other drug use on college campuses are considered normal and are a result of experimentation and freedom. Mr. Statman described CRP as an organization that facilitates a supportive community on campus that is essential to recovery, and similar to a 12-step program but with a higher degree of student accountability. CRP began at the University in the School of Social Work and from generous support from Mary Jo Desprez, Director of Health Promotion and Community Relations with the University Health Services (UHS). Through a needs assessment of alcohol and other drugs-related topics of concern, students identified inadequate recovery support as their biggest challenge. The goals of CRP are to provide alternatives to drinking, change social norms, and “staying in the blue” for students in recovery. The University of Michigan CRP has 15-20 active members, with over 400 students that are ‘in need’ but not ready to change; overall there are less than 40 CRP’s on campuses nationally.
Current members of CRP shared their personal stories of the program, explaining how they initiated the task of seeking out help from the University when they were ready to change. While each member’s story was unique, they all agreed that they needed to make the first step and individually realize their problem. All members explained how they used various resources from the University website, such as CAPS, UHS, CRP to find active solutions. Furthermore, the staff and students involved in CRP at the University have served as a guiding community for social support when recovering in a college campus atmosphere.

Chair Potter thanked them for sharing their personal stories and opened the floor to questions/comments from the committee. Ed Rothman asked how faculty and staff at the University could further provide support by making opportunities more visible. More so, how could faculty and staff make students feel more comfortable and supported with these issues?

The students’ general response was to simply have faculty and staff acknowledge their availability and ‘open door’ policy. They stressed the importance of attracting students to resources rather than promoting these resources.

Fred Askari asked the CRP how their program is different from a 12-step program. The CRP explained that unlike a traditional 12-step program, the CRP has a set recovery plan that incorporates all other aspects of wellness (i.e., spiritual, mental, physical, etc.). The CRP also holds the students to an additional level of accountability and includes an intimate one-on-one relationship between the student and the CRP staff.

The committee then heard from the First Gens student group, represented by Gregory Merritt from University Housing. Mr. Merritt introduced First Gens, a group of first generation college students who focus on enhancing the balance of college life and home life. Currently, they have 10-15 active members at the University.

Representative members from First Gens discussed family issues associated with first generation college students, and how this student group serves as a resource to support these issues. They explained that while they are supported by their families to attend college, the families often have limited experience with college-related issues such as deciding on a major, balancing school and work, and the overall navigation of college life. First Gens provide outreach and resources to encourage students to have open discussions with parents regarding college and to reduce the stress associated with these dividing conversations.

Chair Potter thanked them and opened the floor to the committee for questions/comments. The committee agreed that the group name “First Gens” might not be the most salient name to attract members. Ed Rothman commented on the limited number of student members, and recommended that the group should connect with incoming/perspective students to increase campus-wide support.

The First Gens recognized their limited membership and the need to increase the number of undergraduate and graduate students involved. They discussed plans to address students during Orientation Week. They would like to hold an optional private meeting with first generation college students and their parents to address these common concerns. They also identified the
limited support at the University level for department counselors that address first generation issues.

Chair Potter and SRAC thanked both student groups for attending and sharing their organization's mission and personal stories.

Chair Potter concluded the meeting.

**Upcoming meeting topics:**
April 19th meeting:
- Student groups
  - Student Veterans
  - Beyond the Diag

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 1:05 PM.

Submitted by:
Kari L. Woloszyk, SACUA Student Support