Minutes of April 11, 2014
Approved: Oct. 31, 2014

Student Relations Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Commenced at 11:45am

Members Present: David Potter (chair), Vice President Royster Harper, Associate Vice President Simone Himbeault Taylor, Ed Rothman, Jean Krisch, Dr. Nallasivam Palanisamy, Aparajita Bijipurkar, Kyle Lady, and Laurel Ruza,

Members Absent: Dr. Charles Koopman, Dr. Desmond Patton, Lisa Low, Associate Director Donna Hayward, Alex Rubin, and Sallye Ramsey

Guests: Director of the Office of New Student Programs, Ann Hower and Director of Wolverine Wellness, Mary Jo Desprez

Materials Distributed:
Agenda
Minutes of January, February, and March
Reducing Alcohol Harm physical copy of presentation

Chair Potter opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and then asking for any last minute corrections to be turned in so all minutes for the semester could be approved.

Chair Potter then engaged the committee on issues of misconduct on campus and the development of new types of technology that could aid in better reporting these activities.

Laurel Ruza expressed that students within Student Government are developing a Blue Light app, which by using geo-location technology could aid in allowing victims to get help immediately especially in issues of sexual misconduct which are most common on campus.

Royster Harper suggested that the students involved in the development of this app should be directed to the right people to get this great idea refined and coordinated with the head of security for campus.
A discussion regarding the security of using geo-location technology was brought up. Several members of the committee suggested that there needs to be an increased understanding and responsibility when it comes to using technologies like this because there are potential threats and hazards.

Laurel Ruza also stated that it was important for students to use caution when it comes to using apps that display locations because not everyone will have your best intentions at heart and just assuming that someone is a student because they’re on campus could be potentially dangerous as well.

Reducing Alcohol Harm

First year students who are new to campus are at the greatest risk of alcohol related incidents so the recommendations suggested in this presentation mainly target this specific group of students.

Alcohol harm has a very significant impact on first year students. Almost half of all alcohol related incidents within the first 6 weeks of the school year involve first year students.

There is a positive correlation between the level of diversity within a university and the number of dangerous drinking related incidents because on average minority students on college campuses consume significantly less alcohol than white students.

A YouTube video called I’m Schmacked displaying the dangerous alcohol use that takes place on campus during Welcome Week was shown to the committee. This video serves as a negative recruitment tool that provides potential future students with the incorrect assumption that drinking is not only apart of our campus culture, but the best way for you to enjoy yourself.

A discussion ensued about how vital the level of communications between the university, the students, and their families plays in addressing the culture of dangerous drinking on campus.

Ann Hower explained to the committee how the Summer orientations for incoming students would be used to express the dangers more efficiently and get incoming students to understand that there are severe consequences.

Ann Hower also expressed how through collaborating with the Greek Life community agreements could be made to limit the amount of “hard liquor” being consumed at fraternity and sorority houses, which is where the majority of these events take place.

Ed Rothman stated that a more successful campaign would be to focus more on the immediate effects drinking can have on you instead of the long-term effects. Students
already understand and sort of dismiss the long-term effects drinking so focusing on health and wellness instead of “no drinking campaigns” would undoubtedly be more successful. Ed stated that because there are a lot of health conscious students on campus making the immediate effects of binge drinking such as weight gain, loss of endurance etc. more visible to students may serve as an additional deterrent.

Simone made a point that students may come to the university with an alcohol background and fewer relational experiences and use alcohol as an avenue to bridge the gap so to speak. So developing an understanding that you don’t have to be drunk to meet and socialize with others is essential.

There was a brief discussion about an overall increase in drug and alcohol use on campus. It was stated that the misuse of prescription drugs usually are the starting point and then it expands out to opioid drugs.

Several members of the committee inquired about in what ways could campus faculty help in decreasing alcohol consumption on campus. It was a general consensus that having faculty and administration on the same page about implementing deterrents to assist in reducing alcohol and drug abuse is essential.

Several key faculty contributions were mentioned:
- not canceling class on high risk holidays
- having exams near high risk holidays
- Friday classes

Chair Potter stated how the decrease in the number of required classes that meet on Friday have an immense impact on incoming students. Allowing students to have a 3 day weekend naturally invites more drinking. However he acknowledged that there were detriments that some members of faculty faced by having Friday classes mainly that it may be difficult for faculty who have other commitments besides teaching or even a loss of funding for graduate programs

Laurel Ruza expressed from the student perspective that there is a change in culture that occurs as you age on campus. Your drinking habits improve and you inherently become more responsible.

To end the meeting Chair Potter again thanked everyone for his or her attendance today and service to the committee this year.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 1:02pm

Submitted by:
Kendrick Bell, SACUA Student Support