Minutes of December 14, 2012
*Approved: January 18, 2013*

**Student Relations Advisory Committee**

Minutes of Friday, December 14, 2012
11:30 to 1:30 PM
Bates Room – Michigan Union

**Members Present:** David Potter (Chair), Vice President Harper, Lisa Low, Jean Krisch, Donna Hayward, Beverly Fauman, Fred Askari, Charles Koopman

**Absent:** Simone Himbeault Taylor, Stacy Peterson, Nallasivam Palanisamy, Ed Rothman

**Guests:** Jay Wilgus (Director, OSCR)

**Materials Distributed:**
Agenda
Minutes of November 30, 2012
Proposals to Amend the Statement
 - Proposal 4: Bullying
 - Proposal 5: Medical Amnesty

Meeting commenced at 12:00 PM.

Chair Potter motioned to approve the minutes from November 30, 2012; unanimous vote approved.

Vice President Harper thanked everyone for the hard work throughout the SSRR Amendment process. During a recent conversation with students, VP Harper became aware that despite all of the work done to engage students many still feel their voice is not being heard. The Institutional Advisory Committee (IAC) could be a resource to ‘seize the opportunity’ to meet with the Central Student Government (CSG) to increase interactions with students while proceeding with the SSRR amendment process. VP Harper and the CSG have planned to meet during the winter 2013 semester to create a “core planning group” to serve as both a resource to inform students and receive their input on the SSRR amendments. VP Harper suggested that with the help of the CSG, they can create more resources such as surveys, forms, and presentations that encourage student engagement and double the efforts to ensure all students are being heard and understand the SSRR amendments.

VP Harper also acknowledged that this process of learning how to engage all students at the University is an effective manner that should be documented for future policy change efforts that affect students. The SSRR amendment process can be a ‘best practice’ tool to ensure that any policy change affecting the student body can reach all students.

The committee first discussed Proposal 5: Medical Amnesty and agreed that the language was straightforward. Chair Potter commented that language discussing Medical Amnesty belongs in Section VIII – Related Procedures of the *Statement*. Adding new language to Section VII is a
larger mechanical change in policy and not an addition. Also in this section, it was recommended that Item H of Section VIII should direct students to a website that provides more resources and further explanation of the procedure. The committee agreed that the proposed language covers issues students have brought up in past situations and gives the necessary advice and protection.

Chair Potter motioned to approve Proposal 5: Medical Amnesty amendment to the Statement; unanimous vote approved.

The committee proceeded to discuss Proposal 4: Bullying as a violation of the Statement. The proposed amendment in Section IV – Violations, would replace the language in Item E to include “Stalking, harassing, or bullying – physically, verbally, or through the use of digital media”. This proposed language was “very impressive” but needs to be supported with the faculty Standard Practice Guide (SPG) definitions and guidelines. The proposal was created from the LSA student government in collaboration and sponsorship of the CSG.

It was discussed that an advantage of the proposed bullying language is that it places the responsibility on OSCR and residence halls at the University to enforce and discipline students when violating this policy. Donna Hayward questioned the ability of the bullying proposal to cover emotional abuse. Fred Askari further questioned the proposals ability to cover cyberbullying, evident on various social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter. He referred to cyberbullying as “only a couple steps removed [from bullying]”.

Chair Potter explained the importance of taking responsibility for the proposed bullying language in Section IV – Violations, Item E. This includes improving and bringing awareness to ‘Item U – Violating University computer policies’ where cyberbullying is a constant occurrence. The committee further discussed the ‘repetitive nature’ of cyberbullying as an immediate repetitive behavior that escalates very quickly due to the nature of electronic media. There needs to be a clear and distinct separation of conventional bullying and cyberbullying that addresses its repetitive nature and ‘going vial’ action through the medium network.

Chair Potter motioned to approve Proposal 4: Bullying amendment to the Statement; unanimous vote approved.

Jay Wilgus discussed the importance of the SSRR Amendment Process, explaining, “It’s one step to have policy, and another to educate students on the policy”. He explained that the policies within the SSRR do not include all definitions, rather web links will be used to offer students access to additional information about policy definitions. Ideally, he would like to develop working definitions for the policies with students. Mr. Wilgus stated that the static SSRR document becomes a ‘living’, useable tool.

The webpage linked to the SSRR will include all violations with relevant supplementary definitions and appropriate links. This will include Merriam Webster dictionary terms, the original student’s proposal definitions, and link to the state of Michigan government website for corresponding state and federal laws. The link to current state and federal laws will also provide support services that can further help students understand and act responsibly with the policies. These definitions will give a sense of the policy terms, along with all-encompassing definitions.
It was suggested that the SSRR webpage and associated links be tested (i.e. pilot trial) with the committee before going ‘live’ to all students online. Chair Potter suggested that they create a video depicting various scenarios of what conventional bullying and cyberbullying are and how to respond. There needs to be more interactive tools on OSCR for the SSRR, including an introduction video of the SSRR for students along with a tutorial. This could be a very useful way to explain the policies beyond text, while also integrating new resources (e.g. videos, podcasts, etc) to educate students on the SSRR.

The committee responded with various ideas to promote the SSRR such as through Ctools (e.g. ‘How much do you know about cyberbullying?’ quiz), the University homepage website and links throughout the University of Michigan sites. This can serve as a constant reminder and an easy way to access the policies of the SSRR. It was suggested that the University use social media to raise awareness and educate students on the policies of the SSRR and OSCR. They could also use student athletes, clubs and other student organizations to promote, via social media, the policies of the SSRR such as “think before you click” campaign for cyberbullying. Overall, it was agreed that they need a new platform to update the currently static SSRR and OSCR website with social media that is student driven.

Mr. Wilgus concluded with the upcoming SSRR amendment milestones and deadlines, which included the Consent Agenda Revisions (Proposal 4: Bullying and Proposal 5: Medical Amnesty) to be voted on during the January 2013 meeting. Also in January SRAC will meet with OGR for a private consultation, followed by the SRAC review of the SSRR and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

VP Harper indicated that she plans on meeting with student’s mid-January to discuss the SSRR policies and procedures, including the amendment process before finalizing or debuting any amendments. She discussed a ‘soft rollout’ of the amended SSRR to the entire University community soon.

Chair Potter opened the floor to the committee for matter’s arising. Donna Hayward questioned the future of recreational sports and facilities such as the Union, and the possibility of a new campaign to increase support. VP Harper explained that the students, faculty and staff must first reach a financial agreement on funding. The committee’s opinion was less ‘do we need it’ and more ‘how do we fund it’. It was recommended that a separate committee or group create a funding strategy that the University community could support, and possibly present this strategy in the future to the Regents.

The recent purchase of Blimpe Burger on campus by the University was brought to the attention of the committee. The University and local community regarded this land purchase as a sad decision, and the loss of an Ann Arbor and University of Michigan landmark. Many alumni and current students enjoyed this establishment and are disappointed to see it close.

The committee discussed the athletic program at the University, particularly the high intensity impact of football considering the expanding league for the 2013-2014 season. There is an increasing awareness and concern that due to the longer season, more games and practices will result in more physical contact, thus increasing a student athlete’s chance of injury.
Again, the committee expressed the life of student athletes at the University and the idea that the University has created an independent athletic world that is very different than other students. All students have good logic on the policies at the University, but we need to change this perception of student athletes vs. students. SRAC could have a voice on these issues by creating a relationship with the administration, governing faculty, and student bodies in order to gain student's trust. The committee agreed that we must treat all students the same, and bridge the gap between student athletes and students. The purpose of athletics at the University is to bring the student community together to build a sense of belonging, tradition and pride for the University. Questionably, how do we keep everyone under one entity at the University? Overall, it was agreed that there should not be two sets of rules for student athletes and for students, rather one overarching set of policies and guidelines for all students.

Notes for Follow-up/Upcoming Meetings

- January 18, 2013 meeting to vote on Consent Agenda Items (Proposal 4: Bullying and Proposal 5: Medical Amnesty)
- January 25, 2013 meeting to discuss the Sexual Assault policy, possibly completing the process by February 2013.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Submitted by:
Kari L. Woloszyk, SACUA Student Support