

Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 40th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 16 November 2009 at 3:15 pm at Room 7324.

- Present: Prof Karl Tsim (Chairman), Prof Tai-Kai Ng, Prof King Chow, Prof Chi-Ming Chan, Prof Charles Chan, Prof Kar-Yan Tam, Mr. Benson Leung (representing Mr. Tsang Kam-Tim), Mr. Ken Tsui Hin-Kan, Dr. Grace Au (Member and Secretary)
- Absent with apologies: Prof David Cook, Miss Kelly Chan Ying-Tung, Mr. Tsang Kam-Tim
- In Attendance : Mrs Pandora Yuen (SAO), Ms Codana Chan (SAO)

Action

Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

1. Minutes of the 39th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs were confirmed.

Matters arising from the Minutes

2. Dr Grace Au reported that student societies, notably the Student Social Service Society, had been involved in some of the activities of the REDbird Award Program.

Medical Insurance for Non-local Students

3. Members noted that the proposal for compulsory medical insurance for degree-seeking non-local students had been endorsed by UAC. Starting from this semester, all degree-seeking non-local students were required to subscribe to the Medical Insurance Scheme arranged by the University. The premium was paid by students together with the tuition fee. Up to mid October, about 80 students had yet to pay the insurance fee amongst which some were TPgs whose tuition fee had been paid prior to the confirmation of the Scheme. These students would pay the premium together with the tuition fee in the coming semester. Follow-up actions were being taken on the outstanding payment for 30 Ugs.
4. Members were also briefed about the travel insurance arranged for exchange-in and exchange-out students. With effect from Fall 2009-10, Schools were to ensure that exchange-in students have insurance coverage for the exchange period. The exchange-in students would be asked to subscribe to an insurance plan if he/she did not have a comparable plan of his/her own. For exchange-out students, they would be required to subscribe to the University's Travel Insurance Plan. The insurance fee would be \$80 for one semester and \$160 for two semesters. Insurance fee for local students would be covered by University Exchange Sponsorship, while non-local students would pay the insurance fee on their own. As the Travel Insurance Plan would only cover student's travelling in the destination

country, students would be advised to arrange their own travel insurance should they take any trips outside the destination country.

5. Members noted that among those who did not pay the insurance premium, most were because they already had their own insurance. Follow up actions were underway to explain to the students concerned that the University Scheme was a group policy and would provide them additional coverage. Generally speaking, the implementation of the plan had been smooth. In future, collection of the insurance premium would be included in the student financial system in the ERP.

REDBird Award Program

6. Dr Grace Au gave a report on the progress of the REDbird Award Program. Members noted that the Program receiving support from the Drs Richard Charles & Esther Yewpick Lee Charitable Foundation had approached the second year. A total of 86 students had been enrolled as the second cohort. Seven REDbrid Coaches from the 2008 cohort, who had graduated from their studies, had applied for the REDbird Gold Award, and presented their ePortfolios to members of the REDbrid Award Program Committee. Five REDbird Gold Awards and two Silver Awards were granted. Members then considered and endorsed the design of the Gold, Silver, Bronze Award Certificates, together with the proposed wordings. Member were invited to access to SAO website for more information on the Program. The application for the winter learning trips was in progress and there would be more programs with cultural elements and on self-development.

Hang Seng Bank Green Ambassador Program

7. Members noted a report on the Hang Seng Bank Green Ambassador Program. The Environmental Week was held with IENV in April 2009 and participation was satisfactory. The first cohort of Green Ambassadors were appointed at the Green Ambassador Appointment Ceremony held in April, 2009. A total of 22 members were recruited as the second cohort. There was collaboration of this Program with the Live Green Living Learning Community in providing students with opportunities of diverse exposure to green and sustainable issues.
8. Members shared their views that the challenge of the Program was to widely spread the green message and to have students practicing green concepts as a way of life. There were also suggestions that more activities should be organized to involve more students in creating a green culture together.

Living Learning Community(LLC)Program

9. Members heard a report on the progress of the LLC Program, and noted that the 8 LLCs in Hall VII had started their learning activities with very satisfactory student participation. They also launched a freshmen program to open up the activities to new students. Evaluation data would be

discussed with DeanUG for future improvement of the Program.

10. As to whether the LLC Program would be extended to new halls, Halls VIII & IX in the future, Dr Grace Au said that it would depend on the resources available. The LC Assistants, who were senior students, were trained to acquire the skills to coach the other students, and in future the role of the LC Coordinators would be taken up by PG students, so as to save costs.

HKUST CONNECT

11. Members heard a progress report on HKUST CONNECT. It was noted that there would be much collaboration with community organizations, education institutions and corporations to enable students to connect their service with their academic experiences and realize their unique role in the community. A Launching Ceremony would be held on 8 Dec 2009. All members of the campus community were welcomed to participate. A website would be launched soon to promote campus wide involvement, especially faculty input and participation in addition to those from student volunteers.

Student Societies Election Campaign

12. Members considered a request from student societies on election campaign period and chanting time for the coming year. Mr. Ivan So, Acting SU President, and Mr. Chow Long Man of House IV were invited to attend the meeting to present the request. Mr. So confirmed that they would like to withdraw the request to extend the campaign period from 15 days to 18 days.
13. Their only request was to add a chanting time of one hour 6-7 pm at the Atrium, on top of the chanting time during lunch hours 12: 45 pm – 2 pm. Mr So said that many students finished class during 6-7 pm and they would pass by the Atrium. Therefore, it was good timing for the student societies to promote their proposed cabinets to their fellow students. Mr. Chow also expressed that chanting was very important for it could promote team spirit and morale of the students, and demonstrate the enthusiasm and power of those who stand for election. They said students were proud of the unique features of the campaign period, which had become a tradition of active student participation. Mr. So said that more chanting time would help space out the societies in chanting, thus controlling the noise level. However, members were concerned about noise disturbance as there were still classes during 6-7 pm around the Atrium. Members were of the view that unless with proper scheduling, it would be difficult to control the noise level by simply extending the chanting time with the hope that student societies would automatically space out. It was noted that there was no information let alone evidence that chanting would increase the voting rate or improve the performance of the student societies. Members had a discussion on whether there were alternatives to chanting. Some members felt strongly that students should have different forms of campaign activities to reach different groups of audience instead of only one dominated by chanting.

Action

14. After discussion, the Committee felt that more information was needed in order to further consider the request to chant at 6-7 pm. SAO was asked to contact the SU for the following:-

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- a. The proposed location of chanting during 6-7 pm, together with a schedule of assigning different societies to chant at different locations during the period.
- b. A proposed layout plan of the Atrium, showing the area to be clear of any election activities. The layout should also show that a passage way is provided to those who do not want to pass through any chanting.
- c. A plan by SU to self-monitor noise and blocking of passage way.

SAO was also asked to check with ARRO on the class schedule of classrooms around the Atrium during 6-7 pm.

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Roy To Community Service Award

15. Members were briefed on the Roy To Community Service Award which was established in 2008 in memory of Roy To, a UST graduate who passed away in a service trip to Inner Mongolia. There were 9 nominations this year and Mr He Yuheng had been selected for the Award in recognition of his exceptional commitment to community service and the sustainability of his projects. An award presentation was scheduled for 8 Dec 2009 during the HKUST CONNECT Inauguration. Members considered and endorsed the wordings in the certificates for the award recipients and the nominees.

Student Enrichment Activities Fund

16. Members noted that a total of 16 applications had been received in the Spring Semester. The applications were initially screened and classified into four categories, for substantial support, partial support, token support and no subsidies, depending on their impact on the campus community. Out of 9 selected projects, 2 had been completed and 2 had declined the subsidies. A total of \$126,300 had been approved and \$84,641.02 had been committed. It was suggested that students should be well informed of the criteria for the award. Members were shown the SEA Fund web page showing the selection criteria, and other information. Upon completion of the projects, students were required to submit a report to SAO. Selected stories would be publicized in the C.H.E.E.R.S. for sharing.

(There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.)