

## Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 41st Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 15 Jan 2010 at 2:30 pm at Room 5015, Student Affairs Office.

Present : Prof Karl Tsim (Chairman), Prof Kar-Yan Tam, Prof Tai-Kai Ng, Prof King Chow, Prof Chi-Ming Chan, Prof Charles Chan, Miss Kelly Chan Ying-Tung, Mr Benson Leung (representing Mr Timothy Tsang Kam-Tim), Mr Ken Tsui Hin-Kan, Dr Grace Au (Member and Secretary)

Absent with apologies: Prof Kristiaan Helsen, Mr Timothy Tsang Kam-Tim

In Attendance: Mrs Pandora Yuen, Ms Codana Chan (SAO)

### Action

1. This was a special meeting to further discuss SU's request to extend the chanting time during the student societies election campaign period.
2. Members were briefed about the background of the issue. At the last meeting on 16 Nov 2009, the Committee on Student Affairs considered a request from SU on behalf of the student societies to allow chanting from 6 – 7 pm during the whole election campaign period. Mr Ivan So, the Acting SU president, and Mr Chow Long Man of House IV attended the meeting and presented their request. After discussion, SAO was asked to contact SU for the following information for further consideration of the Committee:
  - Proposed location of chanting during 6-7 pm
  - Proposed time-slots to control the total number of societies chanting at the same time
  - Proposed layout plan showing a chanting-free passage way from the Academic Concourse to the Atrium
  - A self-monitoring plan
3. SAO was also asked to check with ARR on class schedule of classrooms near the Atrium during the 6 -7pm period.
4. It was reported that there were classes in classrooms near the Atrium during 6 -7 pm in the past. Although the class schedule for the coming Spring Semester was not yet available, similar scheduling was anticipated.
5. The SU proposed to allow chanting at the whole of Atrium and Piazza during 6 -7 pm. They said 27 members of SU Exco and SU Council would be on duty to monitor the noise and the election activities.

(A paper detailing the information provided by SU and ARR was tabled at the meeting.)

## Action

6. Members were of the view that in considering SU's request, the guiding principle was that classroom teaching should not be affected and that there must be control over excessive noise. Students should be encouraged to explore and use other ways and means of promotion, instead of mainly chanting. As there would be classes going on around the Atrium, students should consider other locations.
7. The Committee then invited Ivan So, Acting SU President, and Chow Long Man of House IV to join the meeting and answer questions raised by members. Ivan distributed a copy of the SU Regulations for Election Period 2010. He drew members' attention to the Section on Penalty/Actions to enforce the rules. He re-assured the Committee that the SU would enforce the rules to control the noise and other negative elements. They would impose penalties including warnings and banning the use of the Atrium for 5 consecutive days in case of any violations of the rules.
8. Some members suggested to Ivan to explore some gentler means as alternatives to chanting or shouting. Other means such as using the E-Board or other visual devices to promote the proposed cabinets were suggested.
9. Ivan said he anticipated that chanting during the evening would not be as rigorous as during lunch time because many students would have felt tired after activities for the whole day. He said most societies would just want to say good-bye to fellow students after class and the way they do it would be gentler.
10. Members conveyed to Ivan and Chow Long Man that our major concern was noise affecting classroom teaching. In view of this concern, it would not be possible to allow chanting at the Atrium. However, chanting at the Piazza could be considered. Ivan expressed that this was acceptable and undertook to work out an exact location at the Piazza for this purpose during 6 -7 pm.

(The Committee thanked Ivan and Chow Long Man for the re-assurance of self-control and self-monitoring. They left the meeting at this point.)

11. The Committee continued to discuss the request. The Chairman invited the student members to express their views first. The student members agreed to allow promotion activities during 6 -7 pm on the condition that there was adequate noise control and that classroom teaching was not affected. Miss Kelly Chan further suggested that not more than 7 members of one society should be allowed to conduct promotion activities at the same time. The number of societies should also be limited. She shared her observations that in the past, noise level generated by the House promotions was very high. She suggested the Committee to consider limiting the number of Houses to one or two per day so as to control the noise level. SU should be asked to ensure that students not complying with the rules would be penalized. SU should ensure that the 6 -7 pm time slot was strictly followed.

Action

12. Other members of the Committee had similar views. It was suggested that students should be requested or encouraged to use other gentler promotion means as alternatives to chanting during the 6 -7 pm period.
13. After discussion, the Committee agreed on the following:
  - a. Students will be allowed to conduct promotion activities, such as saying good-bye to their fellow students, or other gentler activities during 6 -7 pm at the Piazza only. SAO will work out the exact location at the Piazza with SU. SAO
  - b. Noise generating activities are strictly prohibited at the Atrium, except during the lunch time.
  - c. SU should self-monitor the noise level and the promotion activities. SU should also ensure that the activities are conducted in an orderly manner and there must not be any physical conflicts. In case situation is out of control, SU will be required to limit the number of societies and restrict the number of students per society to 7. Further restrictions may be imposed, including termination of the 6 – 7 pm promotion period immediately.
  - d. This arrangement is for this year only as a trial. Whether this arrangement would be continued next year depends on assessment by the Committee.

(The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.)