

Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 55th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 7 Jan 2014 at 3:30pm at Room 7341 (Lifts 13-15).

- Present : Prof Karl Tsim (Chairman), Prof Christopher Leung, Prof Lam-Lung Yeung, Prof Yaping Gong, Prof Henry Lam, Mr Kenneth Chan, Miss Jessica Ng, Mr Alex Tsang, Mrs Pandora Yuen (Member and Secretary)
- Absent with apologies: Prof Agnes Ku, Prof Kar-Yan Tam, Prof Shing-yu Leung
- By Invitation : Prof Kevin Tam
- In Attendance : Ms Grace Ling (SAO), Ms Daisy Kwan (SAO)

Welcome

1. The Chairman welcomed new members – Prof Yaping Gong, Prof Henry Lam and Prof Shing-yu Leung and thanked outgoing members – Prof Kristiann Helsen, Prof Stanley Lau and Prof Kevin Tam, for their contribution.

Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

2. Minutes of the 54th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs (CSA) was confirmed.

Report from Panel on Sponsored Groups and Projects

3. Ms Grace Ling reported on the meeting of the Panel on Sponsored Groups and Projects. A proposal, including the following, was tabled for CSA's endorsement:
 - a. Terms of Reference of the Panel
 - b. Selection criteria and procedures
 - c. Guideline to Sponsored Groups and Projects and other operational details such as application form
4. The Chairman requested the Panel's regular report to CSA and Mr Kenneth Chan expressed the need to ensure the presence of at least one student member during selection meetings.
5. Grace sought advice from CSA for the handling of membership screening process proposed by some student groups. CSA Members discussed the issue and shared that it would be difficult to conclude at this stage as decision need to be based on the group's nature and justification tabled for the screening process. Members proposed to endorse the Panel's proposal and further discussed the matter when more information were made available.
6. Prof Christopher Leung moved to pass the proposal. Miss Jessica Ng seconded. Members unanimously endorsed the proposal.

Proposal on Promotion Activities and Chanting for Election Campaign 2014

7. Grace presented a power point on Student Election Campaign to provide new members with background for discussion, including purpose, general practices over the years, situation last year and the following issues that need addressing:
 - a. Safety concern/ issue – The congested and blocked passageway would be potential hazards particularly for passers-by coming up to the Atrium from LG1

- via the escalator.
- b. Noise nuisance – FMO expressed concern towards the high noise level during lunch that created nuisance to passers-by. The congestion coupled with the presence of big decorations created further safety concerns.
 - c. A long promotion period meant other campus users could not use the Atrium during the 15 working days period reserved for promotion activities.
8. Jessica highlighted key changes to SU’s Selection Campaign proposal in response to issues last year:
 - a. Three different time slots were proposed for chanting during the campaign period to disperse noise.
 - b. On-site monitoring would be strengthened with a team of 37 student representatives from SU Executive Committee and SU Council. Penalties would be issued straightly to violators.
 - c. Number of counters would be increased from 59 to 66 to accommodate increased number of student societies.
 - d. More space to be assigned for big decorations to avoid congestion and facilitate a Big-Dec Design Competition.
 9. Members discussed the proposed changes. Prof Lam-Lung Yeung appreciated SU’s attempt to regulate sound level with three time slots but worried the longer chanting period would led to complaints and suggested lowering the noise level to below 90 dB. Jessica expressed difficulty to balance student societies’ needs and noise complaints. Grace shared that experimenting on the new proposal might provide new insights to future approaches to chanting.
 10. Prof Yaping Gong suggested shorter timeslots and including a reminder device to alert societies when noise level went over the noise limit. The Chairman would like SU to remind societies to respect safety guards on site as he observed some students yelling at the guards last year. Alex explained that students thought the guards were interfering with their promotion activities. Jessica agreed to reiterate the message to societies and encourage them to respect staff on site.
 11. The Chairman enquired about the storage of big decorations and Alex shared that SAO would facilitate storage at common rooms prior to the campaign. Members commended the showcase of students’ creativity with the big decoration competition and the Chairman reminded SU to ensure fairness and openness of the competition. It was also suggested that the works of winners to the competition be shown for a longer period if feasible as demonstrations of good designs.
 12. Pandora expressed appreciation to efforts from students and staff. She sought confirmation from Members for a longer occupation of the Atrium, from 15 to 18 days, in principle that other users could use the Atrium during the extra three days for polling. Members had not objection as long as users respect the venue usage and each other.
 13. Alex proposed for Members to endorse SU’s Proposal. Christopher seconded. Members unanimously agreed to support SU’s Proposal.

Revised University Regulations for Academic Integrity

14. Members received for information the revised University Regulation for Academic Integrity from CUS Secretariat, and noted the following key changes:
 - a. the dropping of automatic transcribing of any act of academic misconduct and automatic dismissal for two acts of misconduct,
 - b. the inclusion of sanctions that may be imposed by the School or the Provost, and
 - c. the nature and distribution of sanctions across administrative levels.

15. Members supported the revision and agreed with its basic spirit. In particular, the removal of automatic transcripting and dismissal, so not to affect student's life and career in the long-term, was most welcomed.
16. Some Members cautioned the revision might create a grey area attracting abuse by students, who wrongly took it as having room for negotiations on the sanctions imposed. Others commented that it might encourage instructors to report on cases, thus allowing the system to play the educational role through mentoring as appropriate.
17. Student Members suggested care when presenting the change to the student body to avoid wrong interpretation that the change indicated increased tolerance to academic dishonesty, increased room for negotiation and lower risks in committing dishonest acts.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05pm.