



State Council of
Higher Education for Virginia

SAC MINUTES

Student Advisory Committee Minutes October 4, 2007 Meeting

Members Present: Luarnie Bermudo (ODU), Laura Castro (JSRCC), Todd Eley (UVA), Chris Inzirillo (CNU), Jung Kim (VCU), Seth Levey (W&M), Josh McDowell (DCC), Monty McGee (NSU), Regis McKoy (RU), Andrew Shelnut (GMU), and Ryan Stamper (WCC).

SCHEV Staff Present: Kathleen Kincheloe and Kirsten Nelson.

(For brevity, after first reference, only first names may be used.)

- Kathleen Kincheloe opened the meeting by explaining the Council's responsibility for coordinating the statewide system of public higher education. She touched on specific duties of Council members and staff and discussed the agency's interaction with individual institutions.
- Kathleen specifically spoke about SCHEV's systemwide strategic plan for higher education, disseminating an *Advancing Virginia: Access, Alignment, Investment* brochure and inviting SAC reps to share it with members of their student body at their home institutions if appropriate.
- Kirsten Nelson provided a legislative overview via PowerPoint. She touched on important higher education bills introduced in 2007, including Two-Year College Transfer Grants, Intellectual Diversity, Financial Literacy, and campus gun bills.
- Todd Eley (UVA) asked about budget cuts, saying he wasn't sure if all students were aware of the Governor's recent decisions. Monty McGee (NSU) stated that his institution had information about the budget cuts on its web site, but he didn't think students were feeling the effects of the cutbacks yet. Several students agreed, saying that many students on campus might not pay attention until student activities were impacted.
- Laura Castro (JSRCC) mentioned that immigration issues as they relate to student access and affordability were important concerns to students on her campus and to her personally. Seth Levey (W&M) said he understood both sides of the story and would be interested to see what happens during the 2008 General Assembly session.
- Committee consensus seemed to be that SAC representatives would be interested in visiting legislators during the session, even though many might also attend with their institutions or other political organizations.
- Kirsten Nelson explained that the Council and SCHEV staff had been hearing how difficult it can be to get in touch with students via mass communication. She asked representatives for their suggestions, which included mass email, plasma TV displays on campus, and campus events such as resource fairs. Most reps agreed that they did not want their institutions to send them text messages.
- **Kirsten Nelson and Kathleen Kincheloe asked that all representatives speak with students on their respective campuses to brainstorm on how colleges and universities can provide important information to students without overwhelming them or inundating them with messages.** Their request related not only to campus safety instructions, but also to messages about financial literacy based on the following bill language:

Institutions are required to promote life skills in the areas of economic education and financial literacy through existing courses, freshman orientation, and other appropriate venues. The bill expands the subjects covered to include savings and investments, predatory lending practices and interest rates, consumer fraud, and identity theft and protection.

- Representatives also discussed notifications related to emergencies on campus. Several reps commented that it was their impression that freshmen were taking advantage of emergency notification options far more than upperclassmen. Chris Inzirillo (CNU) suggested that this could be due to feelings of invincibility or apathy. Andrew Shelnut (GMU) mentioned his surprise that commuter students were signing up for emergency notification at faster rates than the residential population on campus. Monty McGee (NSU) mentioned a campus shooting in 2003, suggesting that it took a traumatic event to motivate some NSU students to gain awareness about campus safety. He added that as time passed, the student body seemed to forget.
- Monty also raised the question of whether campus police were accountable for their performance. Is there a record of their efficiency or response time? Kirsten Nelson responded that if campuses have a police department (as opposed to a security team), it must be accredited. She added that in 2008, SCHEV will institute a reporting requirement whereby all public institutions will have to share their goals and progress toward campus safety issues, so we may know more in the future.
- Several reps brought up a community policing initiative on their campuses, which Kirsten Nelson stated is one of the best practices recommended by many law enforcement and campus safety experts.
- Chris Inzirillo (CNU) asked if other institutions have medical amnesty policies. He stated that some members of the CNU student government are looking into amnesty policies that would prevent the institution from punishing students for alcohol consumption if the incident leads to required medical attention. The idea is that students will be more willing to come forward to seek medical attention if they do not fear judicial action. Andrew said his concern is that students might view such action as encouragement to drink more than they normally would or more than the legal limit, thinking they have immunity.
- Several students, including Seth Levey (W&M) and Monty McGee (NSU), stated that their institutions had implemented or discussed such initiatives. Everyone agreed it was important to strike a balance between encouraging students to seek medical treatment and enforcing campus regulations and state and federal laws.
- Reps also mentioned Steer Clear and other transportation programs designed to safely transport students who had been drinking and did not feel comfortable driving. Several students stated that similar concerns about balancing safety with personal responsibility were raised in conjunction with these types of programs. Reps reported that students often referred to these safe rides as "drunk buses."
- The committee agreed to nominate reps for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair. **All nominees will submit a brief written paragraph to Kathleen Kincheloe stating why they want to serve in a leadership position for SAC. Nominee paragraphs are to be emailed to Kathleen no later than Friday, October 26.** Kathleen will then distribute a single document containing election information prior to the next SAC meeting. A secret ballot vote will take place at the next meeting. Those who cannot attend my vote via email.
- Nominees are as follows:

<u>Chair</u>	<u>Vice Chair</u>
Todd Eley	Luarnie "LJ" Bermudo
Seth Levey	Laura Castro
Regis McKoy	
- Following a group discussion, **SAC reps agreed to hold their second meeting on Tuesday, December 4, 2007** in SCHEV's office in Richmond. An exact meeting time will be sent via email to all reps.