

Minutes: UAC Executive Board Meeting

April 2, 2014

Attending: Donna Witt (President), Avery Pavliska (President Elect), Amanda Mather (Immediate Past President), Bonnie Bustos-Rios (VP Programs), Ashlea Schroeder (VP Communications), Jaclyn Upshaw-Brown (Secretary), Jeana Goodson (Parliamentarian), Amber Skinner (Historian), Mary Broussard (APUS), Trina Gregory (AGLS), Tarah Kennedy (Architecture), Casey Schumacher (CLED), Jackie Perez (Engineering), Marco Valadez (Liberal Arts), Dave Kincaid (BIMS), Morgan Jones (Academic Affairs), Stephanie Bullick (Student Affairs), Irene Scott (Global Program Support), Jennifer Lightfoot (SBS), Mary Teel (Scholarships & Financial Aid), Meredith Simpson (Corps of Cadets), DeeAnn Eller-Wiggins, Faegen Lee.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Minutes approval: The minutes from the March meeting were approved.

Officer and Committee Reports:

President – D. Witt

- Aggie SERU survey is ongoing; advisors are asked to encourage students' participation. Participants will be entered into drawings to win gift cards to the Bookstore. There is a competition between A&M, USC, and U. of Pittsburg for the highest participation rate.

President Elect – A. Pavliska

- Reminder that the UAC Awards Banquet is May 1, 8-10 a.m. in MSC Ballroom 2400. The invitation with an RSVP link will be going out next week. Early RSVPs will be greatly appreciated.
- Awards nominations are due April 3 at 5 p.m. All packets are to be submitted electronically.

VP Programs – B. Bustos-Rios

- Symposium Committee is working on wrapping up from that event; evaluations will go out soon and the report will be shared with the Board and next year's VP Programs. Final registration count was 197.

VP Communications – A. Schroeder

- Asks that pictures from UAC events be submitted for the web site.

Secretary – J. Upshaw-Brown

- UAC polo shirt orders will be upcoming.
- Upcoming social opportunities are in the works in the Membership Committee – a happy hour on April 24 and then something in the daytime early in summer.

Treasurer – C. Vela

- Working on finalizing the budget now that Symposium is over.

Immediate Past President – A. Mather

- EIS will be doing some maintenance on upcoming Saturdays, so Compass will be unavailable during those times.
- UAC Officer nominations are due April 9 by 5 p.m. The nomination form will go out once more. Nominees must have a record of active participation as a committee member or chair, plus two years' experience here at A&M. Elections will happen in the last week of April.

Old Business

Updating UAC bylaws: A committee will be convened to propose changes/updates.

New Business

C. Schumacher – Seeks input on a new process for course substitution approvals. HLKN is looking at a new policy of having the students go to departments to receive approval of subs for Core courses that don't come in automatically. This will be piloted with about 500 students; they will be given a form to take to the department where the course will be approved. The hope is to keep students more accountable for their classes/degree evaluations, and perhaps to speed along the process of having courses evaluated. When she asked the Board for feedback, she did not meet opposition from the departments. The signed form will be attached to request in UAS; HLKN will also keep a database so they can keep a history of courses approved from specific institution. Concerns focused mainly on whether they would be relinquishing their departmental freedom to approve subs for non-core requirements and that some departments have different contacts depending on which course it's being subbed for. She said the focus would mainly be on core classes.

Announcements

Academic Success Center – M. Jones

- ASC has hired a new Program Coordinator for SI and tutoring. He'll start April 21.
- Offering a "last chance" workshop on 4/16 from 4-6 pm in HULL 117 mainly targeted at students who have made no contact with ASC and would like to work on study skills before finals. Registration is open through ERS.
- HUR has hired a new Program Coordinator for the Undergraduate Leadership Scholars capstone; his name is Antoine Jefferson. The program is still under development, but those interested can contact HUR for details.

Scholarships and Financial Aid – M. Teel

- Freshman awarding is complete; this process included about 11,600 students.
- Summer supplemental funding form is available for students to fill out; they must notify SFA of certain outside scholarships; not required. Can only get FA from one institution at a time in summer.
- SAP and Selective Service now required for certain contracts/exemptions -- notifications are going out to students
- Veterans Certifications Updates -- Hazlewood happening now; others in April. Processing for fall Hazlewood will happen in early June.

Disability Services – S. Bullick

- DS will be seeking volunteers to proctor finals in the testing center; volunteers usually sign up for a 2-hour time slot. They will really appreciate volunteers. Information about how to sign up will be emailed to the UAC Bull soon. Board members who have volunteered in the past noted this is a great opportunity for a bit of quiet time.

C. Schumacher

- Is there more the UAC could be doing to help support Veterans/the Veteran Resource and Support Center?
 - D. Witt – feels like there's a disconnect between veterans and advisors after attending the VRSC training and hearing student veterans' stories.
 - J. Goodson – A section should be added to the New Advisor Handbook, which is still in need of updates. A discussion followed of the continued need to move that resource online, perhaps in a format offering modules similar to the Student Organization advisor training. A quick fix could be to list useful resources on UAC website.
 - Troops to College Committee – D. Witt will be serving as advisor liaison and will endeavor to explore options for how the advising community can get involved and better serve this population

of students. Past opportunities have included breakfasts/lunches where veterans could interact with advisors.

- Encourage UAC members to attend trainings/workshops related to mentoring or working with veterans.
- There is a need for both training (many students' frustrations had to do with lack of advisor awareness of options for veterans, such as substituting service for KINE and/or elective coursework) and opportunities to interact with students and improve their perception of advisors' enthusiasm for helping them.
- Could a flag be added to the dashboard to indicate a student is a veteran (similar to what has been done with the Honors indicator)? Not all student veterans identify themselves as such when meeting with their advisors.
- Should a position for a VRSC representative on the Executive Board be added to the bylaws? They fall under Student Affairs, which has two representatives, but it would be an option. M. Broussard suggested that this could be handled in a more broad way, such as rotating representative positions within represented divisions to give each area a chance to have a representative on the Board without making the Board larger and larger; other groups may also feel they would like to be included. This would be a good discussion to have at the new Executive Board's Retreat in summer 2014.
- One student at the panel discussion indicated that at a previous institution, there was a specific advisor contact for veterans; could each College/Department be asked to have a representative? VRSC is keeping a list of volunteers who wish to be identified as veteran contacts. Those interested in being added to that list should contact Col. Smith or Debbie Pack.

M. Broussard

- Reminder to please submit nominations for President's Award for Academic Advising.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.