

**Minutes**

**Tuesday, November 12, 2013, at 6:30 p.m.**

**Social Hall**

***Call to Order***

Student Senate met on Tuesday, November 12, 2013 and was called to order by President **William Nelligan** at 6:30 p.m. Members approved the minutes from the November 5, 2013 meeting.

***Agenda Items***

Committee Reports

**William Nelligan ’14** announced that the library now has two copies of President Durden’s book.

**Student Life Committee: Emily Pryor ’14** discussed the naming of the community space and Allison Hall and a focus on recycling and composting. The committee is also working to establish a more positive relationship with DPS. The committee is also discussing the use of Allison Hall. Alcohol in regards to Senate funding has also been a focus this week. The committee is also discussing a CSE partnership.

**Public Affairs Committee: Nasir Ellis ’14** announced and promoted the first A Contemporary Moment event in the Rector Atrium Wednesday at 5:30. The event will analyze big data and who has access to it.

The committee is also working to establish its fir New York Times Table Talk. The first event will occur Thursday November 21st with President Roseman in the Social Hall.

**Club Affairs Committee: Austin Davis ’15** discussed meeting this week with Club Sports Teams. The committee is working to bring back a service club to campus.

**Operations and Engagement: Nicole Wasson ’15** discussed the committee’s work in relation to planning the Senate Meet and Greet. The committee is also looking into relations with the Greater Carlisle Project to improve integration with the town community.

Presentation from Space Planning Committee (Allison Hall and HUB Cushies)

**Jerilyn Kidd** and **Becky Hammell** discussed work to improve the HUB (or “front door of the College”). The alteration to the Cushies area will foster a more modern meeting space in contrast to the outdated look of the Cushies. The space will be set up similar to the Cushies, but with different seating offerings. It will include bistro-style table seatings. In the next week, samples for the area will arrive and a group of students is being sought to advise the project.

**Ben Kaufman ’16** asked how the tables would differ from the setting available in the Underground.

**Jerilyn Kidd** responded that the tables are being included due to the recommendation of **Joyce Bylander**. The tables would also reduce cost.

**Ben West ’14** asked to what extent students are involved in the space-shaping process.

**Jerilyn Kidd** stated that she believed students should be very involved in the process and that they are usually a central part. Currently, there are three students involved in the Allison committee.

**Brenda Bretz, Beckie Hammell, Jerilyn Kidd** also brought up the Allison Hall Space Planning Committee. The committee has met every few weeks. The current committee was formed under **President Roseman**.The charge for the unused parts of the building is to use the space to meet students’ interests. They are doing a lot of information gathering and looking for student input. The issue is not just about Allison, but about overall student engagement and is being connected to other projects, such as HUB renovations.

The needs for Allison are currently only a Depot-like space, the main area, and a third area that will serve as an interfaith chapel space. There are various issues with regards to accessibility, specifically the inaccessibility of certain rooms and ramps. In the long term, the hall needs an elevator.

Ideas that currently exist: Peddler coffee shop, student activities space, a game room, space for the Handlebar/shop, etc. The hall has many versatile spaces. The downstairs zone is already on its way to full use. The hall will also need revamped furniture options.

The community room in the basement was painted and carpeted this summer. It still needs work, but the project is well underway. A sound system was also installed. It still needs permanent tables and chairs, but a lot of furniture options can be brought in for specific events. Input and financial support from Senate would be greatly appreciated.

**Josh Singer ’16** asked what other funding options exist.

**Beckie Bretz** replied that there is a small budget for soft furnishings, but not for the rest of the year. Student Senate funding would help to renovate smaller spaces for specific needs. The group is also working to renovate a kitchen space that could be sectioned off for use. A small working committee starting next semester could work to review options and make plans by the first of March in 2014.

**Austin Davis ’15** asked about the use of Allison Hall for service space.

**Beckie Hammell** replied that there was certainly storage space, especially in the short term. The group is also looking at other, long term storage options. The group is also working at other vacant spaces on campus.

**Michael Meyers ’14** asked if the soft furniture fund was being used for the HUB. The answer was no.

**Emily Pryor ’14** emphasized the importance of starting this work as soon as possible. Anyone interested in these projects should email her immediately.

**Ben Kaufman ’16** stated we should hold a moderated caucus about Allison Hall before we see a resolution.

**Emily Pryor ’14** added that the resolutions would focus more on financial allocations, as opposed to specific plans.

Presentation from Mike Johnson on retention data

**Mike Johnson** stated that **ESLC** has begun to discuss how to improve our retention statistics. The College is doing well with regards to admissions. The campus has increased rates of diversity among admitted students and international students. Dickinson has been providing, on average, a 38.1% discount rate to students.

The goal of the College is to do everything possible to retain students after their first year. 80%-85% of students who depart, leave the College under their own decisions. Over the past five years, the first year retention rate stands at 90.8%, which is short of the 93% goal. Increased retention rate can improve the finances of the College through the payment of tuition and fees (NTR-Net Tuition Revenue). POSSE students tend to have better retention rates. The reasons for this may help provide information about how to increase retention. International students also have higher retention rates than the average.

In order to improve retention rates, **Johnson** recommends a proactive approach to prevent an actual issue from emerging.

**Caroline Kapustynski ’15** asked how these retention statistics compared when considering the presence of Greek Life.

**Mike Johnson** said that it was hard to discern a cause and effect relationship.

**Adam Laird ’14** suggested the expansion of mentoring system for students, as well as greater cohort building to encourage the development of close knit groups. He also raised concerns with the advertising of Carlisle to incoming students.

**Josh Singer ’16** asked if we should aim to create more close knit groups or an overall improved sense of community.

**Mike Johnson** replied that every student may be receptive to different experiences and that it is important to acknowledge all of these aspects. He also voiced a belief in the importance of overall community.

**Michael Meyers ’14** asked about the reasoning for students leaving the College. He also asked how the admissions team could improve the advertising of the College.

**Michael Johnson** said that statistics of voluntary versus involuntary exits were consistant across the board.

**William Nelligan ’14** discussed the importance of setting specific expectations. He said the highest set expectation regarded faculty-student relationships and the lowest set expectation was housing. He added, “Are we who we say we are?” He concluded with the idea that the campus experience should match the expectations set.

**Nick Toole ’16** stated that orientation and social life were vital in regards to retention and that there are a lot of holes in the processes.

**Howard Keenan ’16** noted that a lot of schools on the list are more competitive in regards to admissions and acceptance rates and added that he believes Dickinson is making the right moves moving forward to raise its prestige.

**Sara Sweeten ’17** emphasized that this is a discussion about first year students and that expectations must be met in the first year.

Dan Confer to speak about housing

**Dan Confer** came forward to discuss housing.

**Adam Laird ’14** asked about senior housing that would serve to also mentor incoming freshmen.

**Dan Confer** said that this recommendation existed at one point. He said that there has not been much discussion about the topic.

**Nasir Ellis ’15** asked about the purpose of building new dorms, as opposed to renovating old ones.

**Dan Confer** said that the current structure of building prevents innovation through renovation, so it is more efficient to start over for certain buildings. Smaller renovations are done on a yearly basis. There is also difficulty altering buildings that the College leases versus buildings the school owns.

**Jared Warzala ’16** asked about the interclass housing changes of last year and whether they were a success.

**Dan Confer** expressed that the data shows that the system is overall functioning properly and that there were only two systems that appeared suspicious. He also highlighted the importance of separating the facts from the emotions. While there are implications that need to be considered, the process is functioning as expected.

**Mac Dinsmore ’16** asked if **Confer** was aware of retention rates on Greek Life. He did not.

**Michael Meyers ’14** asked about the burden of removing off-campus housing.

**Dan Confer** replied that off-campus houses were mostly used as overall when the College did not have enough beds to provide. He also added that off-campus houses have additional risk. His goal was to provide appropriate housing for all students. On-campus residence also provides support for other financial needs.

Presentation from Lindsey Lyons and Tyce Herrman on Senate/CSE partnerships

**Lindsey Lyons** brought forward data to show that 62% of applicants care about sustainability in their college application process. Two years ago, 80% of students recognized the importance of sustainability in their decision to attend Dickinson. By virtue of attending Dickinson, all students are at least passively supporting sustainability efforts. Sustainability has been an important part of the strategic plan since 2005. 22 organizations on campus are meeting to discuss sustainability. CSE has worked together with Senate a multitude of times over the past few years. A big issue for the College’s sustainability is faculty commuting. RidePost allows for private ridesharing across a wide range of levels.

**Michael Meyers ’14** said that all class presidents would be willing to advertise RidePost. He also asked about cups provided by Dining Services.

**Lindsey Lyons** said that Dining Services was transitioning to recyclable cups, because the College cannot compost its current cups.

The RidePosts can be integrated with most social media platforms. The service has been very productive to its few users. **Samuel Pollan ’14** suggested that all people should utilize this service.

**Nasir Ellis ’14** emphasized the importance of this as a tool for freshmen.

**Emily Pryor ’14** echoed these sentiments. She asked if CSE has considered bringing these to first year advisors.

The link should be embedded in the same place that weekend shuttles are listed.

**Sara Sweeten ’17** suggested creating a poster campaign to raise awareness.

**Austin Davis ’15** suggested posting pre-break trips to the Compass.

***Good of the Order***

* Thursday the 21st will be the first Senior Campaign event.
* The last event for the semester will be December 5th.
* Thursday, the senior class cabinet will be meeting to discuss a schedule for Senior Week.
* Pi Phi and the African American Society will be having an Apollo Night on Thursday at 7 p.m. in ATS.