



Student Fee Board

## MEETING MINUTES

**Date:** 9/30/22

**Topic:** Public Meeting

### Present:

- **Voting members:** Lawrence Miller, Xiaoru (Tony) Shi, Jada Quinland, Brian Johnson, Conor Kelly, Ava Philips, Sydney Gibbard, Dallas Zebrowski, Cierra Chandler
- **Nonvoting members:** Alexa Clayton, Zander Golden, Jolinda Wilson, Barry Bram

### Absent:

- **Voting members:** Dallas Zebrowski, Noah Robertson, Najee Rodriguez, Yidi Wang

### Agenda:

#### I. Call to Order and Opening Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 8:02 a.m.

#### II. Adoption of the Agenda

Motioned, seconded.

#### III. Adoption of the Minutes (September 23th, 2022)

Motioned, seconded.

#### IV. Public Comment

#### V. Old Business

##### A. Overview of Steering Committee Meeting (9-26-2022)

Lawrence: Ultimately, all the changes we voted on were approved: Removal of Director of Records, Creation of Equity Fund, Creation of 2.5 Special Funds to hold future special funds. The website reflects the new handbook. The last change accepted was moving the Equity Fund to 2.5.2. There were some concerns brought up by the Commonwealth Fee Board, especially if the handbook is the appropriate place for only University Park - related changes. My view is that because the handbook is an external facing document, it's the most appropriate place to put these funds, even if these don't affect everyone - also because the equity fund and ESF have the University Park language.

Other concerns brought up - Equity fund can be almost too specific, Commonwealth do not have the same resources or students (can't create something like a special fund). Our board is both a governing and allocating body. The Commonwealth fee board is a governing body for the allocating body. Ultimately, the handbook is also a place where Commonwealth can put their own changes for funds. Other than that, there were discussions of maybe moving the funds to a separate document - I'm thinking that can be paired with the document listing where student fees are going toward. The handbook goes into effect beginning now. Also concerns of having a reserve as a backend. That concern was not mitigated as the language was copied over from ESF. My view is that it is better to spend money on what students would better benefit from, rather than spend it all in that year.

Brian: Basis for their concerns?

Lawrence: The big point was that the changes would not affect Commonwealth. The handbook is an external-facing document.

Brian: Any way to alleviate their concerns?

Jada: It was kind of hard - the discussion went back and forth. Adding this specific section wouldn't affect them at all, for example. Just encouraging them to add something that will affect

them that doesn't necessarily affect University Park - which shows they can also bring in initiatives.

Zander: They don't have to follow something like the ESF, it's just a suggestion?

Lawrence: It's just to indicate that there's funding, not even a suggestion.

Zander: I can understand their concerns, but we aren't telling them to create something like the ESF.

Brian: They say these changes relative to University Park shouldn't be in there. But you don't need to create multiple documents.

Lawrence: I agree, especially with how there is only two special funds.

Sydney: Having conversations with how they could implement something similar would be a good conversation. Also adding a line that describes special funds as a whole that says, it is up to a fee board to review on an annual basis. I felt like there was value in providing transparency. We don't lay out everything about the funds, but we list some of our operating guidelines. The equity fund and ESF are different from Gender Equity Center coming to the Fee Board, so it is valuable to have that there.

Barry: Lawrence did an outstanding job facilitating the discussion. We're trying to get an in-person steering meeting in November - what is the intent of the handbook, vs. operating guidelines.

Lawrence: Can you send me an email about what you said, Sydney?

Also, we're going to try to save as much time for these meetings. Not just doing one change at a time.

Jada: Can we do this before the next steering meeting? Best if you approach them, instead of steering committee being the first place to discuss.

## **VI. New Business**

### **A. Handbook Changes**

#### **1. Specification of Majority**

#### **2. Formatting Changes**

Lawrence: First we voted in this last time. If you look in the Drive, you'll see that under Handbook, there's a folder of Handbook for Approval. There's one called Changes, which is the one I'm working out of. Anywhere it says UPFB, it has been changed to UPSFB.

Another change I'm drafting is the definition of a majority. My changes are in green. I added simple to majority. This wasn't a contention during the steering committee meeting, but it could have been.

Other than that, other formatting changes, reflected in yellow. Changing font, changes will be tracked using Appendix D. Added spacing to make funding start on their own page. Moved a bullet point over, added a comma. Things to make the document look better without adding big changes. Ultimately, we'll probably have some of these every week. Any discussion?

Any motions to adopt the changes as a slate?

Motioned, seconded, no objections.

## **VII. Topics of Discussion**

### **A. Office/Resource Access to Student Fee Paying Students in the semesters they do not pay Student Fee**

Lawrence: First is office/resource access to student fee paying students in the semester they do not pay the student fee. This summer and past fall, there was language on Campus Rec that made it unclear with how student fee paying students could use facilities during the summer. Grad students still had access during the summer, but that changed this summer. Explanation I was given was the fact that some of the students were paying the student fee, some weren't. Money given to office was from fall and the spring. The office was using the money across the semesters. Ultimately, this ended resolving itself. Grad students were given access to the building. But we need to add language - unless funds are used in fall and spring, they should move to the summer.

Zander: Campus Rec did speak about that. They would charge \$200. Campus Rec workers would pay \$90. I think this does need to be addressed. With grad students, I know alumni are not able to come into the gym because they don't pay the fee. But for those students who are taking summer classes, they should be able to use the gym, especially if not all the money was used in the spring.

Lawrence: Kyle?

Kyle: Also wanted to chime in. Larger issue of communication. They were telling us they were reverting to previous policy. Since 2017, our student fees have been paying for summer gym membership, but that wasn't the case during the pandemic. There was no notification, and we had no say. I think there are services we need to know about the length of services, like Student Rec. It doesn't make sense for that to be interrupted for grad students. It makes me wonder what other services coming from our student fee are being arbitrarily changed without communication.

Lawrence: For this fee funding cycle, is it this fall to summer 2023?

Barry: Yes.

Jada: GPSA did reach out to Campus Rec. Linda gave us an explanation that this was a big misunderstanding. But my understanding is that it was a previous policy that was reinstated. There could've been a communication issue, because some students were still getting in. The Provost office during the pandemic - if a student wasn't in class, they would have to pay an additional fee; during the pandemic, the Provost office was trying to subsidize for graduate students. Technically, the policy was its original form before the pandemic, and had to be reverted back to that.

Brian: I had a summer class that was on Zoom but listed as UP. This summer, I visited State College and went to the IM building. They said you have to be registered for classes physically here. In the end, I can understand that.

Kyle: I think part of what bothers me is that I haven't seen any documentation of what that policy was. I've talked with grad students, and I haven't met one that had to pay for the gym over the summer. The agreement is not clear, so it would help to have documentation on the Student Fee website. In the website, there was language in the archive that changed between September 2021 and November 2021, and it wasn't clear who qualified as a student. No students were involved with that as well. It was really confusing and felt disingenuous. This is a larger issue as well - what are other services that are changing without us students being involved in that process.

Lawrence: This is the language that changed. Membership for all students who pay fees - all undergraduate and graduate who are in classes. This was around September and November of last year.

Student Affairs: I think Kyle brings up some valid points, broader than Campus Rec. With regard to campus recreation, please understand that they download current active student database. There's a system piece to this. At the same time, the approach to this wasn't to exclude students,

but protecting students paying the fee. If you're a student paying the fee, but another isn't paying the fee yet has full access; there are questions as to paying the fee itself. I think it's a larger conversation. It's more of a complex issue than being denied something. We'll need to discuss the summer fee and other in-between topics. But wanted to assure you that Campus Rec never intended this to be exclusionary.

Lawrence: We're not blaming Campus Rec, the reason this is a pointed discussion is because we will probably be implementing language to be introduced across offices.

Jada: Point of information. Just to add, I've reassured Linda. Not blaming Campus Rec, we're seeing if this is a pilot for other similar issues.

Zander: I think we need to look at this internal database, and how often it's being updated. If someone is disenrolled, it'll show up is that they are revoked. For people taking summer classes online, why is that not updated as frequently? Who's updating, who's eligible to use facilities?

Lawrence: Point of clarification. While I do understand the metaphor of a non-paying member, if money trickles over from a previous semester, they would still be able to expect services.

Kyle: It seems like IT people inputs to the criteria, and it automatically filters the students. It also seems like there was some turnover. I think what I didn't appreciate in that process was being told that policy from before was x, and my experience was y. This is a bigger issue, this isn't just Campus Rec. I would love as a student to see documentation from 2017, 2018, 2019 of what the policy was. For example, do my fall and spring fees cover the summer? What was actually implemented? Larger issue with student services and how do we communicate those?

Brian: With regard to the online class example, my interpretation was that there was a simple error, rather than a system-wide error. As for the trickle over of fees, I think that makes sense.

Students who paid for fall and spring as full-time should have access to the facilities. I don't necessarily see the huge alarm here - if that could be better explained.

Lawrence: It's more about the principle, regarding anything student body is paying for. Making sure those paying for Student Fee are able to gain services in all the semesters they paid for. Tony, I don't know if you have any notes, but I'd like the ID committee to look into the language - tracking, definitions, who pays what? But this is a good starting point about what the concern is.

Barry: This has to be done in collaboration with the operating committee. You could have a preference, but you have to have a discussion with the offices impacted. Considering all options is great, but this has to be done in consultation with those impacted.

Lawrence: Let's have ID start thinking about these changes, especially in time for hearings.

## **B. What is an Out-of-Class Experience?**

Lawrence: In previous fee boards, this was never defined - what an out-of-class experience is for students. But it's used 8 times. I know that the way it's been historically used - out-of-class experience is something tuition shouldn't be paying for - something not related to a classroom. But then come the nuances - how to classify out-of-class experiences also academic in nature?

Brian: While some activities are educational and fit that niche purpose, they're still not in that direct classroom possibly.

Lawrence: If we go off of enrolled classes, what about other things tuition pays for?

Sydney: We have to be careful, as that may expand our purview. Those opportunities meant to enhance your student experiences but not necessarily related to enrollment.

Zander: What are some of the other gray areas, like non-credit-bearing opportunities?



Alexa: Anything related to research, any events that include recruitment.

Barry: Recruitment was a big thing last year. General discussion about graduate school being inherently an academic exercise. Recruiting students in the graduate school.

Jada: Two questions: 1) one of the deans of the graduate school is also having this discussion. Sydney, do you have an undergraduate council - do they deal with academic policies?

Sydney: We have an academic affair committee. We have students that sit in the faculty senate. But we don't have a council itself.

Jada: I feel in-class or out-of-class experiences may be too complicated to bring up in one session.

Sydney: Now I'm thinking about what that would mean for UPUA if we were to define these so narrowly that we wouldn't be able to have funding.

Lawrence: One thing from there is adding section 1.1, called definitions. I do agree construing this too narrowly can have some unintended consequences. For example, students being able to go to the faculty senate. Talking about credits as a governing body.

Things that you are enrolled in, things tuition previously covers are definitely academic. Gray areas are things like recruitment. Things tuition doesn't already cover - getting someone into a classroom, recruiting - is the question.

Barry: They parsed it out, with the graduate recruitment. No definitions to answer your question.

Lawrence: Other gray areas - students having control of their education.

Conor: Looking at budget.psu, they explicitly state administration work for example. We need to expand upon what tuition specifically covers - same with non-credit expenditures.

Jada: Also wanted to talk about internships. Some schools require those for graduation.

Conor: Some majors as well need a capstone.

Lawrence: Does UPAC cover transportation to conferences?

Alexa: No.

Brian: As it pertains to research, is the funding concerned with funding for a student to present research at a conference? Where does funding correlate with the research? If we talk about things strictly out of class, professors do participate in research. Students helping them - their work relates back to the classroom.

Lawrence: I haven't spent too much time thinking about it. We're focused on opposite of in-class experiences.

Cierra: I wanted to touch upon the research. It includes all activities specifically, commissioned by agency. Definition is quite broad. Maybe this term, out-of-class - maybe we should come up with another term?

Brian: This is a question worth raising. I think this may add more complexity however. However, we should talk more about things applicable to funding - like in-class experiences.

Lawrence: For research that's funded, transportation wouldn't apply as it is not in-class. This could be a starting example. It may be too broad to talk about tuition. Better to talk about what is in-class, then what is out-of-class.

Tony: There could be a lot of wiggle room. That was the difficulty before in the past year. The graduate recruiting example did receive some funding, but at the same time, it's not a credit. I'll schedule a meeting with the ID committee.

## **VIII. Committee Chair Reports**

### **A. Communications**

Sydney: Went through and went through some of the presentations, talking about what SFB does. Today, I'll set up a Doodle poll, and we'll take a look at these presentations. Also, there's some stuff in the communications folder, related to the website. We can also talk about what changes we'd like to see in the website.

### **B. Environment Sustainability Fund**

Lawrence: Noah said he had a chance to have a meeting.

Cierra: At this point, we're going to send out an email to organizations and then potentially present what the ESF is about.

### **C. Equity Fund**

Lawrence: I believe the equity fund didn't have a chance to meet. In pursuant to the operating guidelines, if Najee is not present, we will be voting for a removal. For the equity fund, we need to get work moving in general. We had a chance to talk with Brian from the Office of DEI to figure out what the equity fund will go toward. Also ensuring this is a one-time allocation, not a yearly allocation. I worry this would be a way an office would hire an employee.

Barry: In the handbook, it states this is prohibited from the equity fund.

## **D. Facilities**

Cierra: We met this week, reviewed what facilities does and did in the past. We'll want to hold focus groups for the HUB, look into well-being building and its feasibility.

## **E. Internal Development**

Tony: I was planning to have another meeting this weekend to discuss ID as well as discussion of out-of-class experience and how to track who has paid which fee each semester.

## **F. New Fee Request**

Lawrence: Dallas has class, but he did send me some updates. He said - I asked everyone to create a draft criteria sheet; then I will meld those drafts and submit to the ID by November 10th. Preliminary drafts by October 28th. Criteria - protects integrity of a process, specific enough.

## **G. UPAC Appeals**

Brian: I will be putting a Doodle poll out to set up an initial meeting, sometime next week. Not going to be much incredible UPAC Appeals work, but preparing for that now.

## **H. UPAC Chair Report**

Alexa: As of today, UPAC allocated \$1.6M. Total budget is \$4.1M. I can tell you how many budgets we have - 287. But we're going through them very quickly.

## **IX. Chair Report**

### **A. Equity fund**

- 1. Should we make sure that the fund isn't used for recurring costs (salaries)**

### **B. Subject Matter Experts**

- 1. Checking in about connecting with offices**

## **2. Meetings with Directors**

Lawrence: Equity fund we covered. As for SME, how have offices been in responses? CC me on the invites.

Tony: I sent an email to CCSG and Student Farm. I'll resend an email to both of them today.

Lawrence: CCSG just got a new president, not worried about them.

Zander: I should be meeting with Phil from BJC October 5th.

Lawrence: Everybody else gotten emails out? Any troubles with emails, cc me on the emails.

Next thing, meeting with directors. Need to make sure we have proper communication between the board and the offices. From our side, we want to make sure our funds are going toward what needs the money. Noah and I discussed an office (Katie is the director) - concerns with allocation last year, down \$5,000; didn't receive full funding; wondering if that was a penalty. This isn't the first time we've had issues with offices. How do we interact with offices in their purview with the university? Jolinda will give us a financial overview October 4th.

I will make some brief language about defining out-of-class experiences over the next week or so. I will be sending out the minutes of the steering committee. We can also send out the recording as well. Any questions or concerns, if offices have concerns with how their fees were allocated, make sure they reach out to me - we'll have a conversation between the three of us. We need to make sure that comes through the proper channels. If they have a concern with how much they received, there were justification letters. Best thing for them to do us talk to us and the board. If they get back to me before Friday, we can get them to come here as well during a Friday meeting. If you want access to their minutes or justification letters, reach out.

## **X. Comments for Good of the Order**

Sydney: Where is the sheet for the committee assignments?

Lawrence: Under committees, it's under committee assignments.

Putting meetings, previous fees will go on the website in the coming weeks.

You don't need to cc me on every email, just if you're having issues with reaching offices.

Brian: If you will send emails (SME's) today, send before 3 pm.

## **XI. Closing Roll Call**

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.