



Student Fee Board

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 1/20/23

Topic: Public Meeting

Present:

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

Absent:

- **Voting members:** Noah Robertson

Agenda:

I. Call to Order and Opening Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 8:13 a.m.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

Motioned, seconded.

III. Adoption of the Minutes (January 13th, 2023)

Motioned, seconded.

IV. Public Comment

V. Old Business

VI. New Business

A. 8:15-8:45 - University Park Undergraduate Association

Nora: Our mission is to represent the voices of all at UP.

Carter: We are structure similarly to the US government: 3 branches. We have different departments in executive branch. Our first-year council - we want to invest in future talent, helping them grow into a better leader.

Nora: Primary body - legislative branch. There are 5 committees of the student experience. We also have 40 representatives, including academic representatives.

Carter: Final branch is overseen by our chief justice. Biggest task is managing elections - proper outreach.

Nora: Steering committee - highest governing body. Go-to for questions. How do we go about spending? Budget is passed in April, done so in consultation with previous year's leadership. Then creation of bills. Lastly, a reconciliation of spending (reimbursements). Bills follow budgeting.

Carter: We have our operational budget - including discretionary, necessary for internal/external workings. Next part is show-cause budget - toward programming and events. Meant to be used by 40 elected representatives.

We decided to add waged positions to UPUA. Large time commitment. Last semester, started out with 2 positions, and saw an increase in efficiency. Expanded to 6 positions - chosen as these positions really determine efficiency of our organization. Want to increase minimum wage next semester.

Sydney: Over last 3 years, moved in direction of more advocacy vs. programming. Programming is extremely expensive, whereas advocacy had to increase over COVID-19. Very different approach to support students at that time. UPUA has now resumed programming. Expect UPUA to continue to move upwards with advocacy and programming. Not used full 3-year budget due to pandemic.

Partnerships with students and orgs - creating mutually beneficial relationships. We recognize we are not an allocating body like UPAC. Thus, more of a cosponsorship, not an allocation of money - meeting on a weekly basis, outreach, and leveraging each other's resources. Also, educational component for our members. Partnerships are key to educational component. While we do see ourselves alleviating financial burden, but we are super intentional on working with relationship so that it's more than a financial one.

Biggest struggle is time commitment in UPUA, so wage-based positions alleviate that. Last year, donor donated \$50,000 to set up an endowment, which provides scholarships for our students. Will provide starting this spring semester.

Lawrence: Are you asking for flat-funding?

Sydney: Yes.

Tony: Some wages are starting at \$10.50. Next year, you are raising to \$12? Will that come from student fee money?

Sydney: We have not spent our full 3-year budget, attributed to pandemic. Next 3 years, increase in wages will be able to be subsidized by our previous budgets. Expect to have plenty of money left in our budget.

Brian: Experts related to hiring positions?

Carter: 2 student experts - first is Sexual Violence and Prevention - she does a lot of programming in first week of semester and roundtables throughout semester. Other is Environmental Sustainability. She runs a group of people. Working on putting on a Sustainability Summit - hosting concert.

Sydney: UPUA is always thinking about whether to approach an issue with programming vs. advocacy. These 2 topics cannot be solved by programming, they require policy change. That's why having paid students is crucial to bring to Penn State.

Lawrence: What is minimum needed to raise money?

Sydney: By end of 3 years, we will be right at budget. This year, we are using Tight-30 funds, so piloted wages. Next year, want to move toward Tight-40. The minimum is the flat funding.

Lawrence: Can you estimate what you need on a scale? What do the next 2 years look like after the first?

Have you started looking at funding anywhere else?

Sydney: As UPUA, can't apply to UPAC. All our money comes from Tight-40. Tight-30 is supported by donations - helped us pilot the wage-based positions. Also, an endowment set up for scholarships for our members. Not approached a central money support. I think it would be a conflict of interest for the University to fund us as we regularly challenge their funding.

Dallas: Within your budget, you have a presidential discretionary and speaker discretionary. What does it look like?

Sydney: Presidential discretionary paid for wages, also putting on events like the UPUA gala - where we invited administrators.

Nora: Speaker discretionary is all internal programming, last-ditch resource for bills that need money to be allocated.

Sydney: Value of internal programming - truly believe in investing in the leadership of our members. Teach a lot of how University funds, so they can become advocates anywhere they go.

Dallas: Could you speak to your judicial branch?

Nora: Our judicial branch is our go-to body for disputes and carrying out our constitution. Budget is capped at \$2,000.

Sydney: Anytime we change our bylaws, they look through an equitable lens. A lot of our board is also interested in law school, mock trial. They are not allowed to create bills or be involved in programming.

They operate as our election commissioners. Setting guidelines and timelines of our elections. They take unbiased step back. Doing outreach, and use budget to facilitate a lot of that.

Carter: Passed our election codes recently. Give out points, if you accrue 10 points - you won't be allowed to run. For example, violation of codes, defamation of another candidate.

Nora: Any decision passed by judicial branch has to check with the legislative branch.

B. 8:45-9:15 - Paul Robeson Cultural Center

Brian: Assistant VP for DEI.

Stephanie: Interim Senior Director.

Brian: Worked through transition through the last 7 months. Celebrating 50 years this year.

Year of transition: vacancies, hiring freezes/thaws, interim staffing team, physical space has been refreshed, artwork has been refreshed (collection is pretty historic and has come from donors), all new furniture in Spring (funded by Student Affairs), 50th anniversary celebration, and a future identity and affinity space project.

Stephanie: Interim team. One of main tasks is World Cultural Center - celebrate all cultures. PRCC mainly served as a Black center.

Two interim Co-Directors and Interim Marketing and Communications Lead.

Brian: Staff hiring timeline. We have just formally launched a clustered hiring process. 5 positions we are filling. The committee is massive, but also centers student voice and experience.

Primary allocation goals: resources and programs to promote racial identity development, provide data-informed cultural competency programs. Our previous allocation areas include racial identity, political, and social responsibility speakers (shifting away from that), social justice and leadership (retreat, summit), and cultural enrichment.

Brian: We have created new buckets, along student ambassadors. Distanced ourselves from large keynote speakers that are not creating impact we had seen years ago. New allocation areas: community support, community collaborations.

Asking for flat funding. Not all of money allocated to Fall 2022 has been spent, but slated to be spent this Spring.

Thinking about community engagement, recognition - working with caucuses.

Stephanie: People say PRCC is a space where they can belong. PRCC is a place where students feel like they can be their authentic selves. Lack of funding for student engagement is a problem. Want to expand staff and focus to other cultural identities.

Brian: Focusing on \$403,504 for enhanced supplemental addendum (wages, community-centric support, student positions). Our Big10 peers have created this years ago, but we have not. We will continue seeking other resources to support this.

Lawrence: What do you guys do for graduate support?

Stephanie: Historically, have fallen short. Now, reincorporating graduate students. Graduate wellness days hosted in PRCC.

Brian: HUB not always seen as a graduate space. Thinking about how to bring these groups together.

Cierra: Metrics of success for hiring and initiatives?

Brian: How've we come to this space? Where are our institutions? Marginalized backgrounds? We've not been doing that well. Lot of qualitative and satisfaction data. But mostly looking at what our peers are doing, and student voice. Meeting with caucus leaders. We want dedicated staffing support, we can support students through hate and rhetoric. But should rely on professional leaders, not student leaders. DEI survey said we need these roles, but we haven't been able to have the funding.

Sydney: Can you talk about whether there has been more budget from a central funding aspect?

Stephanie: Now, relying on student fees.

Brian: Demands that we work with students, but as we go forward, units also facing crunch. Hiring freeze. This has been approved. Looking at development pieces, grants. Limited staff time, but want collaboration with units.

Dallas: For this year, asking for flat funding. Would the additional funding be the total?

Brian: It would be the \$200K plus \$400K. If we do find additional funding, it will go back to SFB.

C. 9:15-9:45 - Student Orientation and Transition Programs

Ben: Assistant Director, Welcome Programs. SOTP was created to support successful transition of students to our University through NSO, Welcome Programs, New Student Convocation, and Transition Programs. Welcome Programs is the only one that receives funding from SFB, so we will focus on that during our presentation.

NSO is the only required programming through our office, and everything else is optional.

Welcome Programs is designed to support ongoing transition through intentional events and programs. 6 goals that welcome programs work towards: navigating the UP campus, exhibiting appropriate behaviors, etc. One that I want to point out is articulating sense of belonging at Penn State. Sense of belonging doesn't stop after first semester, which is why we cater to returning students as well. While there are some programs that cater to engaging with faculty and staff, but articulating sense of belonging important.

We are requesting \$104,000 for funding cycle. This will be split up over 3 different programs: Fall, Spring, and Summer Welcome. For Fall Welcome, \$64,000 (\$10,000 toward Results will Vary).

~9,600 new students. Annual programming includes Late Night in the HUB, Rock the Ice, and Equity & Inclusion Fall Carnival.

Results Will Vary is our interactive musical theater show, written by Penn State students. We are requesting \$10,000 for an encore performance to reintroduce topics to students (e.g., alcohol and drug use and abuse, DEI, sexual assault prevention, bystander intervention, mental health). Fall 2022 attendance: 465.

Spring 2024, we are requesting \$10,000 - increase from \$7,000. Spring 2023, we saw 650 new students. Annual programming includes Rock the Ice, Equity & Inclusion Winter Carnival, and Drag Bingo.

Summer 2024, we are requesting \$30,000. We are main programming bodies for the summer. We like to rely on student centers and organizations to bolster what our programming looks like. Annual programming to include: summer welcome fest, glow games, and SOTP Night with the Spikes.

\$104,000 is flat funding. Summer seeing \$8,000 decrease, Spring seeing \$3,000 increase, and \$5,000 increase.

Lawrence: Results Will Vary - did SOTP survey student interest?

Ben: RWV goes through some sort of audit to make sure programming is relevant. Large shift after pandemic.

Katie: Senior Director. We spend weekly meetings with student leaders. Fee Board members were included. Cyberbullying, most impactful parts of this year's show. Conversations will happen each year. Biggest overhaul between 2019 and 2022. Already in conversations with Director of Penn State's Theater.

Yidi: Several days programming. What is the feedback from first-year student body and NSO leaders?

Ben: SFB doesn't help fund NSO, separate. But to answer question, we receive positive feedback. In terms of new student feedback, I focus more on Welcome Programs, but I know we have positive feedback as well.

Katie: I think our metrics for success in NSO are in extensive Qualtrics survey. Sent throughout summer. Capturing many things like our preparedness: do students understand how and why to get involved? Student satisfaction for Welcome Programs measured by participation. Rock the Ice - free skate in Pegula. Pleased to see first-year up to senior-year and graduate students.

Tony: First, a lot of new students are international students. Seeing a lot harder transition. How do you work with global programs to make sure international students also have a smooth transition?

Katie: NSO is only way students will schedule courses. In our Welcome Week programming, key partners from Penn State Global attractive for international students - to also not counter program events that do not overlap.

Tony: I know Welcome Week is undergrad-centric, but how does SOTP also focus on graduate students?

Ben: We avoid scheduling welcome events for grad students as well. Also specific outreach to graduate students. Fall and Spring Carnival, we've had grad students show up as guests, and grad organizations showing up to help table. For marketing, we only have undergrad student data to go off of, but we don't shy away from having grad students to also attend our events.

We still work with our peers with the Graduate school.

VII. Topics of Discussion

A. New Fee

B. Equity Fund

C. Environmental Sustainability Fund

Lawrence: We have a total of 9 new fee requests. I will send out Calendly links.

VIII. Committee Chair Reports

A. UPAC Chair Report

Alexa: UPAC allocated \$2.5M, and we are reviewing our largest budget of the year (Movin' On) on Feb. 14th.

IX. Chair Report

A. Student Leader Roundtable/Board of Trustee Meeting Review

Lawrence: We have meeting with Board of Trustees. The question I ended up asking are whether we will work with a 2 year budget. Right now, we are running on a year-to-year basis.

X. Comments for Good of the Order

XI. Closing Roll Call

Meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.