



Student Fee Board

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 3/31/23

Topic: Public Meeting

Present:

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

Absent:

- **Voting members:** Conor Kelly, Najee Rodriguez
- **Nonvoting members:**

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 (March 24th, 2023)

Motioned, seconded.

IV. Public Comment

V. Old Business

A. Deliberations

1. CPA

Cierra: Last week, we had concerns about the academic year 2021, and they converted all their presentations to virtual and they were free to students. They returned their money. As of now, they are on track to finish their 2022-2023 allocation. The additional money requested is to run student-ran initiatives. This is an increase to \$235,000. Per student is around \$.30.

2. GPSA

Ava: The updated request doesn't have the \$8,000 for the class gift. Otherwise, my recommendation is to fully fund their request. From this year, most was spent.

3. Childcare subsidy

B. 8:30-8:45 - Student Leadership + Involvement/SPA

Lawrence: Conor and I spent some time going through everything and created a spreadsheet with budget recommendations. We asked SL&I to come in as we had questions about quite a bit. Would you mind giving a run down of what we discussed from that meeting?

Tyler (SL&I): We went through last publishing of the minutes, and got to many points of clarity. We covered why costs are changing, compensation piece, and what the nature of programming is - why we can't look 52 weeks out for programming. A large-scale event takes at least 17 weeks to plan.

Lawrence: One of questions/concerns was effective utilization of money, and how the process is done. Have you all had the opportunity to interact with the BJC to make sure the negotiation processes are to the level of BJC?

Tyler: We have a pretty close relationship with the BJC. The contracts team in purchasing of the University is what BJC uses. With contracting, it's a long process of back and forth. The negotiation piece happens in offer stage. For example, let's say an artist's range is \$250K. We'll say \$165K, and offer will come back. Rinse and repeat. I'm interested in seeing where exorbitant spending conversation have happened.

Lawrence: One of concerns for Quinn XCII was low attendance.

Tyler: Numbers were 500-600. There are three venues on campus: Eisenhower (2,400 people), BJC, Alumni Hall. BJC is more expensive production-wise. The firecode for alumni hall space is 800. That's not a limitation of SPA, that's a limitation to space provided. There were references to more outdoor shows. Outdoor shows are not an option, given weather. While we would love to branch out to more spaces on campus, that's not a feasibility.

Cierra: Thank you for your explanation. Do you have a goal of a cost per ticket?

Tyler: That is not a model that programming boards utilize. Especially as we're trying to provide free shows to students. It's not an effective model. If we have a lecture with an intimate setting, that's a success. A cost per head model is not effective.

Cierra: There's more of a qualitative determination of success?

Tyler: Yes.

Brian: Could you remind me of the general request?

Tyler: Concert fees would be going from \$454,000 to \$700,000. It would show that's not a significant increase, given artists and inflation.

Brian: My primary concern is what students are interested in. When we decide on funding, we're determining what students want.

Tyler: When it comes to diversity of events, the job of a programming board is not to appeal to majority of student interests. We've worked with caucuses, and we now have a DEI organization. So that we're not focusing on specific majority of the population. We are constantly reaching out and breaking new barriers to determining what each population of University needs.

Lawrence: A quick conversation - looking at allocation. I disagree with assertion that it's a proportional increase in funding. Concert requests stayed at \$454,000 since 2019/2020. What concerts are you all looking for that would justify \$700,000.

Tyler: I would encourage you to go to Artist Search that shows full range of each artist. That's what artists charge. We are unable to start planning for the fall, until we've received an allocation. One of the main increases in budget - go to appendix of budget per show - most students have engaged with us said need for openers. The average price for an opener to come is \$33K.

In regards to concert allocation, we were seeing that concerts we were putting on - 6 shows a year - that was hindering popularity of names bringing in. Trying to implement other cost-cutting measures. Going to 4 shows, considering 3. While we haven't asked for an increase of money, that has resulted in a decrease in shows, even if quality of shows is the same. Seeing same amount of money, but requesting difference. We want to get back to a model where we getting back to getting as many shows as possible.

Lawrence: Have you considered reaching out to the Penn State population?

Tyler: That's part of the Noon Time committee - their purpose is to bring local artists in. But that's not a headliner, that's not a concert that 800 students will come in and see.

Lawrence: It doesn't make sense that SPA requests under SL&I. One of the things that we'll suggest is that you be your own organization.

Barry: Historically, that's how the fee board wanted it.

Lawrence: In regards to staff, you're bringing on an assistant director. A lot of increases in request would be underneath new director's purview. Is this new person going to have the bandwidth, given 4 or 5 different things this new person would help bring back into fruition? Overly ambitious?

SL&I: That would be 3 different people. We had just brought in an assistant director in Student Leadership. She has a staff of 2 people in an ideal world. We added Lisa before the hearing, and since then, we've filled in third person. We've also had a vacant program coordinator in Student Support area. That allows us to do complementary work.

Lawrence: My other question - the summer leadership conference - that's not just UP students. Have you talked to the Commonwealth Fee Board?

SL&I: Our allocation is to support the 12-15 students from UP that attends that conference. Each campus is contributing to fund their students, and there are central funds as well.

Lawrence: We weren't too much in favor in adding extra allocation towards SPA leadership compensation funding, given everyone on this campus - there are very few leadership positions are paid. One of our suggestions is that, with this extra money, why don't you pay the leadership positions from your budget when you have extra room for it?

SL&I: It was a fortunate accident that we had a surplus this year. The potential for leadership stipends - we want to place level of value on work students do. Alternative is waiting to see what

is left at the end of the year. Oftentimes, this is a full-time job for students. Payment plan that student leaders can count on.

Lawrence: If you move forward, also need to see other organizations with full-time jobs at leadership levels.

Tyler: There are 4 or 5 officers in UPUA.

Sydney: We have positions at operational levels - 4 people who do get paid.

Lawrence: The way board is chosen - an advisor choosing executive board - is not student driven decision.

SL&I: It is an interview process. Open to all students. Not comfortable with having election of position we would pay. This is the way it's also done across Big10 - for those not part of student government positions.

C. 9:00 - OGEEP + PRCC

Lawrence: The reason we called you all today is to see how PRCC and OGEEP are spending money. How's OGEEP making sure they're separated?

Cierra: Also concerns as to how you support international students.

Barry: And staffing increase potential.

Sydney: One of things we talked about is support for grad is out-of-class experience vs. support for undergrad is in-class experience. I'm of the belief is that offices don't have to support 50/50 in class out of class.

OGEEP: Scope is making sure undergraduates understand graduate education, rather than recruitment. Many undergraduates don't know about graduate school. Making them aware of opportunities that graduate school provides. It's an outside experience as it avails students opportunities. Nothing required for graduation.

Regarding international students, the scope of the office is to recruit. We don't turn anyone away. We have a number of international students. 14% of attendees of our events were undergrads. Placing events in places where grads and undergrads can mingle - including international students.

Tony: During presentation, I recall some programs do require a US citizenship. Are there more programs that do not have this requirement?

OGEEP: With regards to how we do our programs, we've been providing graduate students with partnering with global programs. Opportunities post graduation. Scope and breadth of office, we also have international students that participate.

Lawrence: We also recognize you are running two offices.

OGEEP: That is ending in May. Student Affairs does not pay as well.

Lawrence: Moving onto PRCC, I know there was an addendum to the staffing - thought maybe it was overestimated.

Sydney: We were talking about community staff coordinators. In order to have 4, that's a big request. We see need, but is one student fee board going to commit to all 4?

PRCC: Most of peer institutions have created these a long time ago. IPSA (Indigenous) has been struggling tremendously with advisors. Big onus on multiracial coordinators - many caucuses

have not had that professional support. Not impossible to tie things together. There's a need we've forecasted for awhile in this space. Dr. Bendapaudi has not finished where she wants to go with DEI stuff. In report, Student Affairs has been recognized as a big part in that DEI puzzle.

I will say that, even the way we've built out interim staff, you can see challenge is engagement with students and making sure student needs are being attended to. Looking at student leaders coming to us, it's difficult to do with singular staff. The PRCC was historically founded as a black historical center. Many students say many students don't see this as a space for them.

Sydney: Hypothetically, if we choose two people, would that be a disservice to communities if those coordinators don't identify with those communities?

PRCC: Working with IPSA has been an entire learning experience. Having someone with that personal, lived experience allows that community to flourish. Student leaders roundtable - all white. Our representation for students - we've got work to do. It's important to have representation. Which is why it's dispersed into four positions.

Sydney: Would it be better to have four or none? Want to make incremental steps toward goal but without changing mission of it.

PRCC: We have less and less people, so trying to reformulate roles. We could figure something out, if there's a way to bridge some of this. We could make something work.

No other place to find money for these positions. Thinking about impact of infrastructure of these supports. I think SFB's advocacy of funds to Penn State University is powerful.

Also, bringing back graduate support to HUB, especially in community spaces.

Brian: 195% increase is daunting for multiple reasons. When you look at increase, need to look at revenue. Doesn't sit well with me, not because I don't support the initiatives themselves, but because of financial cost to all students. Want rational increase to suit needs, especially when we're already in a deficit. This would be a \$10 increase per student.

Lawrence: Could you get back to us, regarding cost-sharing with University. If you could keep an ear out, then that's something we could make. If you can get that to Najee and myself that'd be great. Let me know when you get more information.

VI. New Business

A. Deliberations

BJC

Zander: They wanted an increase to \$225,000 from \$175,000 - to increase discounts and bring on more shows. They didn't specify what shows. Phil has not updated me yet on the student advisory board. That's why I have recommended partial funding to \$200,000.

Lawrence: One of the reasons we didn't approve their full funding request last year was related to the student advisory board. Zander, did you take a look at their financials?

Zander: I think they spent most of their money, and I think they will have a slight rollover. I don't see the student advisory board being set up by deliberations.

Lawrence: Some of Phil's concerns is difficulty reaching out to students. He said he's reached out to them several times. I recognize that reaching out to students is difficult. Where do we draw the line as to where he can do better vs. he has done what he can?

Zander: He's reached out to a couple organizations, but only 2 or 3 responded to him.

Brian: Do you think there's still potential for them to respond?

Zander: Out of 25, 4 responded, and 2 or 3 agreed to meet. He's also reaching out to applicable organizations, but I don't see how much more he can do in getting students on the board.

Tony: Personally, I'm not against an increase. But we do need to keep the BJC more accountable. What I learned from past fee board experience, is that we trust offices in using our recommendations. But what kind of information did Phil send to those student organizations?

Lawrence: One of things we can recommend is improvement - and a concrete meeting time.

Brian: I think use of recommendations should determine to what extent we fund.

Lawrence: If we accept this as it's currently recommended, we could set an increase for next year. But we need him to do better and have this board as what students can go to.

Dallas: Is there a historical precedent for the advisory board we're requesting?

Lawrence: There's no current precedent, but there are examples from the Student Legal Services and the HUB.

Sydney: I like to evaluate whether students are included in dispersion of funds. I was one of organizations the BJC reached out to. I responded and didn't hear back. There was no next step.

UHS

Lawrence: This request is just STI testing.

Sydney: I'm recommending full funding, showing utilization on next slide. Overall, not requiring students to submit STI testing to insurance protects confidentiality. Increase to \$370,000 from \$315,000. About \$1 increase per student.

Brian: Could you elaborate - removing financial barrier and ensuring patient privacy?

Sydney: For students not insured, it would be covered by student fee. Even if you are insured, that would protect privacy from parents that pay for insurance.

Cierra: Are we separating UHS fees?

Lawrence: Separate.

Tony: This program has been piloted for 2 years. Utilization hasn't been that represented during COVID. As we move past that, when do we make this a standing allocation?

Lawrence: Reason we did pilot program here was because of COVID. Growth in utilization through November.

Brian: What was estimate for health fee?

Lawrence: \$30-35 per student. This would be \$8 per student.

Brian: Could you reelaborate on basic health needs fee?

Sydney: The request is \$3M. It's estimated fee is \$32 per student. In-lab work (excludes STI testing), EMS and transport fees, community health advancement, case management, medical clearance.

Brian: 2 of those things - outreach and sports administrative forms - I don't think should be factored in.

Lawrence: If we approve both of them, we could save some costs with marketing.

VII. UPAC Chair Report

Alexa: UPAC has allocated \$3.6M. Our budget for spring/fall allocations is \$3.9. We just elected a new chair, and hopefully, I can bring her into one of these meetings.

VIII. Chair Report

Lawrence: We will start at-large interview the week after next week. Three weeks from today is when we'll do elections. This board will remain in effect until the end of deliberations and recommendations. Choosing next chair before the end of the year.

Sunday, we'll finish deliberations. I have ESF proposals, I don't have other ones. I need these as soon as possible. In Teams chats, if you have issues finding people, I will start assigning to tomorrow. We have fairly wide recommendation powers. We can do partial funding, full funding, no funding, pilot programs. Still need to cover Campus Rec, UPAC, and 12 new fees.

Otherwise, we have a Student Leaders Roundtable meeting. Their hearings for UPAC were Tuesday, minutes will be published Monday. One is Uncensored America and Young Americans for Freedom (James Lindsay). Two controversial speakers. Expressed concern with student organizations taking brunt of blow.

Steering committee - policy toward discriminatory harassment. It ended up being an hour-long meeting yesterday with Frank Guadagnino, Aashka (from Commonwealth Fee Board), Andrea. Expressed concerns that it will be flagged by FIRE, definition section only having discriminatory language, no processes in place to have this be meaningful. I emailed to have a working meeting with Office of General Counsel. If anyone has time this weekend to do writing with me, let me know. We'll be adjusting language based on that. Will work with Office of Strategic Communications.

IX. Comments for Good of the Order

Yidi: When is the last meeting of the year?

Lawrence: April 28th.

X. Closing Roll Call

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.