

# STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

## Student Senate Meeting

October 8, 2015

**Madison Kahl**, Vice President

**Diana Howell**, Senate Chair

- Call to order: 6:03pm
- Development Day Next Tuesday, October 13, in the Baker Center room 205 and 207
- Read Student Senate Mission Statement
- Guest Speaker, Dr. Jennifer Ann Morrow: Tasked by the provost with the revision of the Student Assessment of Instruction System (SAIS) questionnaire and delivery system. Last year there was a task force. The task force worked with experts on campus to look at the history of SAIS. The purpose was to decrease the number of SAIS questions and define terms/constructs being measured, include good teaching indicators, and avoid construct repetition via SAIS questions. Wants to gather info on what works and what does not. The provost wanted to streamline. The transition from paper to web made the participation go down. Now, participation is back up to 40%. Program used to look at faculty and grant tenure and other promotions. Want to assess with is going on in the classroom, the atmosphere in the classroom, the relationships between the teachers and the students. Presenting all of this information to faculty and student groups. Provost wants a core of things that each faculty member can be assessed on. The current system does not assess all class. Classes like service learning classes, study abroad classes, and First-Year Studies classes are left out. Still working on gather information. Looking at studio courses and how they can be assessed. Collecting data in the spring from focus groups and surveys. Meeting with different people for help. Looking at trends and how things change. Want more open ended information in the surveys. Spring pilot test of the new program, and then there will be analysis of the data during summer of 2016.

-How will there be an evaluation of FYS classes if a peer mentor is involved?

-The Peer Mentor can be evaluated as well because the instructor can go and add a teaching assistant or a peer mentor.

-In Spring 2016 you are planning on having both the new program and the SAIS program how do you expect to get the participation you want?

-We are not forcing this but looking for volunteers. Looking for students to get the information out to students so they can respond.

-New faculty to get training before the evaluation?

-Two day mandatory training

-What happens after the assessment?

-It depends on the college and the department and what value they place on the SAIS. The information is sent to different administration. Who uses the information from the SAIS program is not consistent.

Contact information: Jennifer Ann Morrow, Ph.D. email: jamorrow@utk.edu

\*\*More detailed information can be found on the PowerPoint from this Senate session.

- Open Town Hall
- Approval of minutes
- Officer reports:
  - Will Freeman, President of the Student Body: President's roundtable update. We are sending out a survey after Fall Break as a way to figure out what students are upset with on campus. If one is mentioned often, we know we need to address that issue. We send out an internal newsletter to be more transparent. Email was sent out about t-shirts and sweatshirts so please buy them. The Board of Trustees meeting regarding the Student Code of Conduct is this week.
    - Vice Chancellor Carilli questions.
      - What is the truth with the Code of Conduct? Can you give us the truth? Specifically the streamlining process.
        - The process has been going on for a year in terms of the drafting process. There was a review with experts from other campuses to come to campus for a review. Program review provided the University with 39 recommendations for improvements in the Office of Student Conduct. I read

through and accepted 37 of the recommendations. Two of the recommendations did not really make sense. With the help of Chancellor Cheek we started the writing process for a new Student Code of Conduct. Began at the beginning of the 2014-2015 Academic Year. Ended last spring when we thought we had created a good Student Code of Conduct. Got feedback from the Senate last March/April and intended on taking the new Code of Conduct to the June meeting of the Board of Trustees. One of the local elected officials asked us to postpone the presentation because they felt the code was not as clear as it needed to be. This official felt that some of the changes were not in the best interest of students. We agreed to do that and began another process of vetting the Code and accepting feedback. We presented it to other groups and distributed it to the entire student body. Since then we have presented it to the Parent Council, other students, and Greek organizations.

- We did consolidate all of the boards into one. So we had a Greek Judicial Board, a Student Tribunal, and an Academic Review Board. We collapsed them all into one. All of the Boards were distinct and confusing. Depending on the violation you had, a different Board would hear your case. We wanted every case to be heard in the same manner rather than one board being used for a smaller portion of the population.
- Standard of proof not changed. Preponderance of the evidence is used. What that means is that it is more likely than not that the violation occurred. If the answer is yes, then that student is found responsible. A large number of colleges use the preponderance of the evidence.

- Faculty and students on the boards rather than just students. Provide constituency with students who were found responsible in 2013 and now in 2015. Students are an important of this process. We are looking for year-to-year consistency. Seven people on the board now. 50% of the board must be students, and preferred that students be the majority.
- Respondent's rights have come up and there was a recommendation to make it a list rather than keep it in the narrative.
- Please make sure to read the most updated version of the document. It can be found on the Student Life website.
- Students want a right to an attorney.
  - Students still have that right. The right is provided in the document.
- We want the protected against being coerced into accepting responsibility before going before a judicial board.
  - Added a step in the process to ensure that happens. It is called the Educational Conference.
- Give us a real Amnesty/Good Samaritan Clause.
  - That is included, but there is not an absolute right to amnesty. That is because there are times when students like to claim amnesty every weekend for weekends on end. This is a developmental process, and you need to learn something from that experience. If you are consistently making the same mistakes we do not think that learning has occurred. So we do not think you should be allowed to use it whenever. We want you to learn from these mistakes. We have to do something to educate students.

- We have the right to have an attorney present, but if we are going to follow Due Process why can't the attorney speak on behalf of the student.
  - This is not a court of law. It is an educational process. We want the students to learn from the process, not have the attorney get them out of the learning process. An attorney can advise you, but you need to speak on your own behalf. We are trying to create an environment where dialogue and learning will occur.
- What are your thoughts about the fact that 5,000 students have signed a petition against these changes?
  - They are uninformed. A significant portion of them probably have not read the document.
- There should be a right to amnesty, but students should still have to learn. How do we know when we are going to get that right?
  - Habitual abusers are the issue. We need to have the opportunity to use the policy against habitual abusers. If you claim amnesty you still have to meet with the board, you just will not be charged with that violation.
- Going back to the Greek aspect, it feels that the new adjusted Code of Conduct does not define when individual conduct should be imputed to an organization.
  - Latest code has a new paragraph that addresses that issue. Section 2.4 is where it is addressed. That is a limitation of our current code. Board of Trustees will consider this and if they approve it there is another process. If they code does not get approved, then we are stuck with the Code we currently have.
- As an Off Campus Senator can you give some clarity on Section 2.1 about defining when a student's conduct is subject to the University's jurisdiction?

- The new Code says that the University reserves the right to adjudicate matters of student misconduct if they occur on campus or off campus in a metropolitan area which we are considering the county of Knox and the surrounding counties that touch Knox. In addition to that, we have the opportunity to adjudicate matters of student misconduct if they occur off campus say in Nashville or Memphis or wherever if it “occurs in connection with a student organization event or involves another member of the University community or threatens or indicates that another student poses a threat to the health, wellbeing” of another person. It also can include assault, battery, etc. Tried to clarify for the students.
- It sounds like this is specifically targeting fraternities.
  - I do not think so.
- How many instances of non-Greek related issues occurred last year?
  - I do not have the statistics. We have 480 student organizations. We have organizational issues frequently that do not involve Greek organizations.
- Students who have an interest in this are going to take the time to read the new Code of Conduct, but the general student body will not read it. Is there a way to get a summary to the general student body?
  - Not a lot of students have given feedback. Students have given some good feedback. Taken the feedback and tried to incorporate based off what is seen as helping students. We do have a one page summary document. We created a page with 10-12 bullets on it and we think these are the changes to the Code that we think are beneficial. Send it Madison.

- If this document was sent out and students had problems with the issues how difficult would it be to make those changes?
  - The meeting is Thursday so it would be difficult. It does not give Board members an opportunity to read the new document.
- What can SGA do to ensure it gets approved?
  - Decide if you all think this is a good code. Reach out to your local legislators.
    - If you reach out to a legislator please let Greg Butcher know.
- If it gets approved by the Board of Trustees then it goes to the Attorney General's office, they have to read it and make sure it complies with all of the legal codes, then it goes to the Secretary of State's office, then the joint operations committee of the Senate and the House review it and provide a recommendation to the entire legislature where it gets voted on, on the floor.
- Can the State Legislature make amendments to the Code?
  - Usually it gets approved or not.
- More pages added to define terms used throughout the Code.
- Madison Kahl, President of the Senate: The SGA Executive Committee released a statement about the Code of Conduct. The Board of Trustees meeting is this week. Please reach out to the student who attends the Board of Trustees meeting, Jalen Blue. Thanks to those who came out to the SGA retreat. Our first Development Day is this week, and it is a chance to meet new senators and collaborate with them. We are really trying to get legislation pushed forward. We try to update the Facebook page. Please email me if you are not on the Senate Facebook page. We have new Senate members. Two of them are members at large. Isi Beach will be representing Off Campus. Chad Reep, Maria Smith, and Kathryn Culhane are our new At-Large members. Madeline Stanbridge will be serving as the new senator for the College of Arts and Sciences this fall. Oath of office.

- Mariah Beane, Student Services Director: Appointment of Senate liaisons.  
Academic Affairs: Beverly Banks. Diversity Affairs: Emily Dickey.  
Environment and Sustainability: Kamilya Gosmanova. Government Affairs:  
Tristan Smith. New Student Life: Emmanuel Adebola. UT Traditions: Susan  
Cowley. Appointments approved. Big Orange Friday is this Friday. Will send  
out a sign up sheet for that. All-Vol Hog Roast had a good turnout. Wednesday  
is the Vol Walk of Life. Government Affairs is having a debate at the Baker  
Center. November 10 Government Affairs is hosting a Cheek Speak.  
Environment and Sustainability is working with the Real Food Pantry and on the  
Real Food Challenge.
- Tristan Smith, First-Year Council Chair: The First-Year Council retreat this past  
Sunday. They divided up into committees. Elections will happen at the next few  
meetings.
- Old Business:
  - Bill 01-16:
    - Bill was sponsored by: Jennings Hardee, Senate Parliamentarian; Morgan  
Chance, Senate Secretary; Lori Eller, Senate Lobbyist; Matthew Morris,  
Senate Lobbyist; Tristan Smith, Senate Sergeant-at-Arms
    - The bill was read in its entirety (slide 36).
    - The Major Changes slide was read in its entirety (slide 37).
      - Discussion questions:
        - Motion to end discussion questions.
      - Pro-Con-Pro Debate:
        - Pro: Inaudible.
        - Con: Change can be viewed as bad.
        - Pro: It increases consistency.
        - Con: It takes effort to adapt new things.
        - Pro: The Bylaws are updated to the SGA mission.
    - Voting Record: 52, 1, 0
- New Business: Development Day is next week to be able to facilitate ideas for legislation.



- Announcements: Jeb Bush will be at a tailgate at 12:30 at the amphitheater of HSS. It is percentage night at Chipotle for Alternative Fall Break.
- Adjourn: 7:23