

## **Student Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes: September 15, 2022**

**Present:** Suzanne Peters, Erica Granoff, Laine Kingo, Kimberly Duby, Sarah Scheidel, Peter Tribuzio, Cora Lynn Deibler, Leo Lachut, Tina McCarthy, Jennifer Tibbetts, Laura Burton, Bryanna Anderson, Arthur Galinat, Katherine McCarthy, Claudia Pina and Kate Fuller

### **Absent:**

Meeting called to order (Time) via WebEx.

### **1. Introductions:**

### **2. Review of Hartford Students, Storrs Resident Program:**

There are approximately 200 students that live at the Storrs campus but attend Hartford as their primary campus. Students shared their struggles with the program. For instance, students are missing their meal plans. Also, students are struggling balancing classes in Hartford and taking part in social activities on the Storrs campus.

Leo Lachut mentioned that the advisory team at Hartford has been working on stacking classes on certain days to minimize back and forth travel to Hartford.

Peter Tribuzio noted students are struggling academically and socially. Similarly, Tina McCarthy discussed students struggling with finding classes after dropping them to fit in their schedule.

Jennifer Tibbetts mentioned that the Student Welfare committee should take on this issue and work on it.

### **3. Review of Isolation Guidelines**

Sarah Scheidel questioned the process for roommate(s) living with a student who has tested positive. She voiced her concern about how this information is being communicated with international students.

Related to this, Arthur Galinat noted the students have not been given any information about who they should communicate with.

Tina McCarthy mentioned that SHAW communicated and shared the guidelines with students who choose to reside on campus. If a student that tests positive, they are advised to return home or stay in their space while following instructions from SHAW. If the roommate would like to move out, they can contact residential services.

Arthur suggested that SHAW could send a reminder to students through the semester.

Related to this, Jennifer Tibetts questions if students are reporting when they have COVID to SHAW to get an accurate number of cases on campus. In response, Tina McCarthy notes that most students that do not get tested at SHAW are still calling the office. However, the number of cases on campus may not be accurate if students are not reporting them to SHAW or being treated by SHAW.

### **3. Review of Virtual Classes and Office Hours**

Leo Lachut mentioned that students are struggling with virtual classes and office hours.

Laura Burton noted that Nexus only offers office hours virtually. She agrees that this makes students feel very disconnected from their faculty.

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Arthur Galinat added that while faculty can change the type of meeting, the description still says virtual appointment. There is a setting that need to be changed. Arthur Galinat suggested that information regarding how to update Nexus should be shared with faculty.

Bryanna Anderson mentioned that many students are confused about different class modalities (distance learning, in person, online, hybrid, etc) because they are not accurate to the description in the course catalog. She suggested that the committee should look into making this clearer for students.

Bryanna also noted that students prefer to have some classes online. Therefore, the university should consider adding more online courses.

Arthur Galinat added that for F1 and J1 visa holders there are requirements that only a limited number of distance learning, hybrid or online classes can be taken.

### **4. Review of Success 360 Program:**

This is a group of people from all different parts of the University that collectively help first-generations students with outstanding balances. Leo Lachut mentioned having Pam join a meeting in the future to discuss the work they have done in this group.

Cora Lynn noted that many of her students are dealing with this process by themselves. She believes learning more about this system would be beneficial.

Laura Burton noted her students have faced problems with small balances that are preventing them from receiving their diploma.

### **5. Review of Regional Specific Student Welfare Concerns**

### *Food Insecurity*

Erica mentioned that a food pantry has been established at the Stamford Campus.

Leo Lachut mentioned that he has inherited an unofficial food pantry at the Storrs campus.

Related to this, Kimberly Duby noted that regional students can visit the Dean of Student's office. They have partnered with dining services to create a program called "The Swipes." As part of this program, 25 swipes are added to a student's card and they do not expire. Students do have to fill out an assessment to be part of this program.

Claudia Pina shared that the Waterbury campus is in the process of getting shelving and a refrigerator in preparations for a food pantry on campus. The Waterbury campus has established a grab and go with snacks around campus.

### *Depleting Students First Fund:*

During the discussion of food insecurity, Michael Gilbert shared his concerns about the impact of the pandemic on the availability of student's first fund. This fund covers students' expenses when they face an unexpected tragedy. Over the last few years, we've depleted the student first fund. Michael has raised his concerns to the cabinet and suggests the committee work with Sue Peters and Maureen Armstrong to learn how to respond through financial aid.

### *First Day Complete Program*

Kate Fuller suggested the committee review the First Day Complete program with Barnes and Nobles. Laura Burton suggested the committee should meet with Michael Bradford to raise the issues and concerns about this program. Kimberly Duby suggested the committee work with advocating and communicating the program to students.

### *DEI*

Claudia noted other important topics to review such as education equity, challenges for first-generation students, low-income students, marginalized students and commuter students. In addition, she suggests the University to continue to work on DEI in terms of faculty and staff.

## **5. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 20 via WebEx.