

Senate Student Welfare Committee
Agenda
September 21st, 2023

Charge: This committee shall review the conditions that contribute to the academic success, personal development, physical and mental well-being of students, and available forms of financial aid. It may seek the opinion of the Senate on such matters and make recommendations.

Attendance:

- Bryanna Anderson
- Thomas Bontly
- Andrew Bush
- Jennifer Dineen
- Nathan Fuerst
- Arthur Galinat
- Erica Granoff
- Leo Lachut
- Mona Lucas
- Katherine McCarthy
- Tina McCarthy
- Suzanne Peters
- Megan Petsa
- Mohsina Rahman
- Sarah Scheidel
- Peter Tribuzio
- Fiona Vernal

1. Introductions
2. Approve Minutes

4. Old Business
 1. Submitted end of year report
 2. Htfd student Storrs residents
 3. Covid update – uptick of cases
 4. Class modalities Exams outside of class – **Leo Lachut** reported he connected w/ provost on that and she did put it in her report/update
 5. Regional Concerns
 6. Student First Fund - **Leo Lachut** reported he did not know the status of this fund, but that Kim Dube is on the committee and should know more
 7. Book Bundle – **Leo Lachut** raised concerns about logistical hurdles in this program thus far this fall, specifically citing supply issues.
 8. DE & I concerns

After reporting on Old Business, **Leo Lachut** added that there had previously been a lot of interest in picking up the issue of instituting a fall break, citing concerns about the complexity of making this change from previous committee conversations. Discussion ensued on those challenges.

5. Work Group/Committees

6. New Business

Stamford campus access to healthcare – **Leo Lachut** reported that there is a bill in the State Senate requiring a public school with residential housing to provide a certain level of support in this area. **Tina McCarthy** confirmed and stated that her office is working on a nurse navigator initiative so that current resources by phone can be expanded to allow one day a week in-person at each campus. She also stated that a mobile van will provide presence on the campuses during this fall semester. **Nathan Fuerst** stated that there are state funds to support the public act for the next four years and it will become a question of where future funding will be sourced from after this initial support has ended

Policy exception grants – **Suzanne Peters** and **Nathan Fuerst** reported on this, stating that there is a lot of demand for financial aid and students are receiving significant aid up-front, but that work is still being done in this area to be reported at a later date.

Assessment platform, Achieve. – Discussion ensued on the format of this online platform and how it impacts different students and their learning needs (i.e. some students respond well to seeing whether they got an answer correct or not in real time, while others struggle with this). There was also discussion on platforms which show a large clock on screen showing time remaining, which impacts students differently for the same reasons. **Leo Lachut** asked whether CETL chooses online assessment platforms or if this is within the realm of faculty; **Bryanna Anderson** confirmed that this falls within the faculty member's purview and that faculty are encouraged to work with Karen Skudlarek on accessibility concerns. Discussion also ensued on paper-based exams vs online assessment and equity, as students would have a different experience and potentially different sets of questions.

Realignment of student affairs – **Leo Lachut** opened discussion on this change and **Nathan Fuerst** reported on the reasons driving this change and ultimate new organizational structure, citing the importance of creating a seamless experience for students from enrollment to graduation and beyond.

New Concerns – **Leo Lachut** raised a question to the group about how the committee would like to schedule topics for future committee meetings as **Nathan Fuerst** has offered to bring any one of his team members to present to the group, as needed. Discussion ensued on potential topics of concern.

- **Suzanne Peters** raised concerns about returning to the question of modalities of exams outside of class. **Jennifer Dineen** stated that she would also like to address this issue.
- **Mohsina Rahman** discussed the need to help the graduate student community access resources, particularly citing off-campus housing needs.

- **Peter Tribuzio** raised concerns about the number of holds being placed on students accounts for various reasons and the impact these have on student well-being and academic success. **Mona Lucas** stated she would be happy to present additional information on this topic at a future committee meeting. **Peter Tribuzio** also cited concerns about regional campus students' access to books, particularly those in Waterbury as they do not have a bookstore.
- **Erica Granoff** stated that she agrees student access to healthcare is an important topic, citing Stamford specifically. She also spoke about concerns on housing and food insecurity.
- **Bryanna Anderson** raised concerns about the high number of students making course changes up until the 10th day of the add/drop period, stating that students who join classes late often are playing catch-up for the entire semester and require additional accommodations (such as late examinations) to succeed. She also raised concerns about students' access to course syllabi, particularly when considering making course changes during the add/drop period, so that they know what they are going into. **Arthur Galinat** seconded these concerns citing COVID-19 impacts as an exacerbating factor. He shared additional circumstances surrounding semester start/end dates that impact international students, citing a successful parent orientation which helped educate students' families on the importance of these dates.
- **Tina McCarthy** stated that she has seen an increase in student safety concerns as pedestrians on campus, citing electronic scooters and the speed at which they can go on pedestrian pathways. **Tom Bontly** stated that he has also seen motorcycles parked in bicycle racks and being used on non-motorized pathways.
- **Tom Bontly** also asked a question to the group about student name pronunciation and how that might be communicated to instructors. Michelle Everard cited a Provost's Office newsletter where resources on this feature in HuskyCT were advertised. Resources were linked in the meeting chat and can be found [here](#).
- **Arthur Galinat** asked for an updated on probationary students who identify as BIPOC and **Leo Lachut** said this will be addressed in the JEDI Committee.

New Guest presenters

7. Next Meeting
Thursday October 19th 2:30 pm

The meeting adjourned at 3:39 P.M.