

Senate Student Welfare Committee  
Minutes  
March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

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.

Present:

Leo Lachut (Chair)  
Bryanna Anderson  
Thomas Bontly  
Elizabeth Bowling (Guest)  
Andrew Bush  
Kimberly Duby  
Nathan Fuerst  
Kate Fuller  
Gavin Kuebler  
Mona Lucas  
Tina McCarthy  
Suzanne Peters  
Megan Petsa  
Sarah Scheidel  
Lorien Touponse

Absent:

Kara Aldonza  
Fabiana Cardetti  
Jennifer Dineen  
Arthur Galinat  
Erica Granoff  
Katherine McCarthy  
Jennifer Pascal  
Mohsina Rahman  
Peter Tribuzio  
Fiona Vernal

1. Approve Minutes

Old Business

2. Fall Break – return Report: Leo Lachut shared that he discussed this with the SEC and the plan moving forward would be for this committee to issue a report on these concerns and a summary as to why there will be no proposed changes for the upcoming Fall semester (given the many reasons discussed in this group, the history of the issue, and others). He opened the floor to questions. There were none.
3. How will student experience be impacted by severe budget cuts (Virtual Town halls): Leo Lachut opened the floor to discussion on this topic, asking for feedback from those who have attended the Budget Town Halls.
4. Regional Concerns

- a. Updates on Nurse Navigators at regionals: Leo Lachut shared that there's been a lot of movement in the development of this program and welcomed Tina McCarthy to the floor to share more. Tina McCarthy shared that all campuses now have a dedicated nurse to serve their community, and that a communication campaign will be launched shortly to help students to connect to the new nursing team access. She added that the leadership on each of the campuses has also identified additional ways that SHaW can connect with other services on each of the campuses to help students to connect with each of the nurses on each campus.
5. D,E & I concerns- Campus climate: Leo Lachut gave an update on campus climate being impacted by world news. He did not have specific situations to share but has received a significant amount of general concern. He opened the floor to discussion and Nathan Fuerst added that bias forms are now being directed to the Office of Community Standards. The response to these forms is currently enhanced to ensure both the complainant and respondent receive attention. Nathan Fuerst shared that there have been posters against Ukraine posted around campus that have been put up around campus and that his office is working with the UConn police to dig deeper into this series of posters. Many of them have been glued and there is hateful language used in many of them. He added that a poster policy is forthcoming from his office to help mitigate the appropriateness of posters that are posted around campus.
6. Off-campus housing for graduate students- Pricing for new rentals? Leo Lachut introduced the topic and invited Nathan Fuerst for an update. Nathan Fuerst shared that there is a lot of movement with the town and the university considering sidewalks. Regarding pricing, it was agreed that the town and the university should work together to determine appropriate pricing of all housing inventory. He added that this pricing information will be brought to this committee once it becomes available.

#### New Business

1. Campus response to NCAA tournaments and safety – Nathan Fuerst: Leo Lachut asked Nathan Fuerst to answer how the university is ensuring student safety while allowing students to celebrate this exciting time of the year. Nathan Fuerst shared that there is a committee led by Bill Shay, Office of University Management, and a second Advisory Group to determine programming and other support structures needed, which has been helpful. He added that there is the potential for four watch parties (Women's Semi-Final and Final, Men's Semi-Final and Final). All four would be held in Gampel and be open to UConn students only (last year about 20% of tickets were for the general public). We anticipate that the capacity will be 7,000 and last year we went above capacity, so this year better management of access to the building is needed. The event is ticketed, and tickets are free. Where there would be any conflict with classes (not anticipated), classes are expected to continue. Buildings adjacent to the Gampel area will be secured. No guests will be allowed in the residence halls over the course of the entire weekend. Leo Lachut opened the floor to questions.
2. University response to loss of students: Leo Lachut shared that he's received feedback from students both that they felt supported through this event, but from others that they did not. He asked the group for any additional comments or feedback. Kimberly Dube added that these situations sometimes require a certain amount of confidentiality to protect the families directly impacted. Tina McCarthy recommended that the university develop a consistent way of messaging out in response to these types of incidents. Bryanna Anderson added that 20-50 students from her office were impacted and commented positively on the faculty response to those students who made special requests in response.
3. Academic misconduct (Use of AI): Leo Lachut that he was consulted on this recently and that he would like to add this as a new topic of discussion for this group moving forward. He

- opened the floor to discussion and feedback. Gavin Kuebler shared that when academic misconduct is reviewed on the first day of class, and there is a focus on AI in these notices, but that he knows that students continue to use AI (such as Chat GPT) and are not being caught. Lorien Touponse shared that in her experience, as an English major, she has had a different experience.
4. **Bus Lines:** Leo Lachut shared that a recent schedule shift has made it so that bus lines stop at 10:30 p.m. but dining halls close at 11:00 p.m. which is causing concern from student workers and others who are on campus and in need of transportation. Kimberly DUBY shared that a [Daily Digest](#) was sent on March 4<sup>th</sup> and the change was tied to budget constraints. Lorien Touponse raised concerns and Nathan Fuerst added additional information on driver hours that UConn is contracted to fulfill. Bryanna Anderson added that Student Union hours also operate outside of the new bus schedule and that the accessible van service for students with disabilities follows the bus schedule and has also been impacted. Kate Fuller added that student health services are also open late, so there is a greater issue. Discussion ensued on the actual closing hours of dining halls and whether they may have been extended this month due to Ramadan which has had additional impacts.

Next Meeting 4/18/24