

Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 43rd Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 22 November 2010 at 3:15 pm at Room 5015

- Present : Prof Karl Tsim (Chairman), Prof Roger Cheng, Prof Tai-Kai Ng, Prof King Chow, Prof Chi-Ming Chan, Prof Charles Chan, Prof Kristiaan Helsen, Dr Grace Au (Member and Secretary)
- By invitation : Mr Johnny Ho
- Absent with apologies: Prof Kar-Yan Tam
- In Attendance : Mrs Pandora Yuen (SAO), Ms Codana Chan (SAO)

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Welcome

1. The Chairman welcomed Prof Roger Cheng who attended the meeting for the first time. The Chairman also thanked Mr Johnny Ho, the SU President, for attending the meeting while SU was in the process of nominating student representatives to serve on this Committee.

Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

2. Minutes of the 42nd meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs were confirmed.

Student Societies Election Campaign – Survey on Chanting

3. The Committee considered a proposal from SU to conduct a survey on chanting as detailed in paper CSA/43/1.
4. Mr Johnny Ho reported that SU had earlier conducted a survey on views of SU members on chanting. Some 300 students responded. Nearly 80% of the respondents agreed that chanting was a student culture that should be respected. Around 45% agreed that chanting had impact on their life and the noise was annoying. There was less conflict amongst students in the past for there was not a fixed schedule for chanting and students could compromise in the use of timeslots. Generally speaking, most staff did not support chanting while students found chanting with noise control acceptable.
5. Mr Johnny Ho, however, agreed that information collected from this survey was not adequate for analysis. SU planned to conduct an online survey before the examination and was at the moment working with CELT on the technical arrangements.
6. Members went through the questionnaire and suggested that Q9 and Q10 should not mention names of the societies in the examples. Members also

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suggested that instead of open-ended questions, Q12 and 13 should provide fields for selection. Members agreed that the survey should be opened to all students (including part-time students) and all faculty and staff. Mr Johnny Ho would modify the questionnaire and circulate the revised version to members for comments. The Committee would review the survey results and consider proposals from SU on the coming campaign arrangements.

Mr Johnny Ho

Use of Sports Facilities – Eligibility and Priority

7. The Committee reviewed the usage policy for sports facilities as detailed in Paper CSA/43/2. Members noted that there was growing demand for sports facilities due to 334 additional cohort and increasing number of sports clubs and teams, as well as competing needs from course teaching and non-sports activities. Members also noted that it was unlikely that the provision of sports facilities could be increased shortly. In order to cope with the situation, it was agreed that penalties for no-show should be introduced to encourage responsible use. It was further agreed that group bookings should be more restrictive.
8. It was noted that the no-show rate for soccer pitch was around 30% while those for Indoor Sports Hall and Table Tennis Room were around 20% and 10% respectively. Mr Johnny Ho was not in favor of severe penalties. Others felt that as there was already a cancellation policy in place, in that users could cancel bookings anytime in advance, the no-show penalty should not be too lenient in order to create the right impact. After discussion, it was agreed that for individual users, there would be two week's suspension of booking right for every no-show, and for teams/clubs, practice sessions in the following two weeks would be cancelled upon two no-shows. For organized events, subsequent bookings would be cancelled in case of any no-show. Members suggested that in implementing the penalty system, the cancellation policy and procedures should be brought to users' attention. Details of user priorities should also be widely publicized.
9. Members then went through the proposed restrictions for advance bookings by groups as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Paper. Members were in support of the proposed changes and agreed to have them implemented in 2011/12, and with ample and prior notice to the affected groups.
10. Members also considered the proposal to levy charges to the Clearwater Bay School (CBS) in accordance with the charges for outside groups. It was agreed to impose the charges with effect from 2011/12, with a view to sending early signal to CBS that in view of 334, the University had to reserve the facilities for our own use and might not be able to assign timeslots for use by CBS as in the past.

Use of Sports Facilities – Proposed Charge System

11. The Committee considered the concept of setting up a charge system for

use of sports facilities as outlined in Paper CSA/43/3. It was noted that the use of sports facilities by students, staff and their dependents was free. The privilege of free use was also extended to persons who were officially associated with the university. There had been a charge system for guests of eligible users, conference/summer program participants and bookings by outside groups. Attempts to introduce a charge system had been made twice in the past but the proposal was not supported. In view of the growing demand and competing needs for sports facilities, it was deemed necessary to reconsider a charge system.

12. In discussing the objectives of the charge system, members were of the view that wastage could be reduced with implementation of the penalty system. There were comments that different levels of charges could be considered for different timeslots to ease the demand during peak hours. There were also concerns about the administrative work and costs involved in collecting the charges. Some members raised the question of how the income generated would be used. It was suggested that income should be used to improve the sports facilities. Mr Johnny Ho was in favor of a multi-tier system whereby students were charged a lower rate or even free use for students.

13. After discussion, members were of the view that the shortage problem could not be resolved solely by a charge system. Members decided to further discuss the charge proposal in future meetings based on the following information to be provided by SAO:

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- The effect of the penalty system
- A concrete proposal on the charges, including the rates for different user groups, facilities and timeslots
- Estimates of the income to be generated

The Committee would also consider writing to Senior Management on suggestions to improve the provision of sports facilities.

Eligibility of Student Groups for Campus Resources

14. Members discussed the issue of sustainability in supporting student groups whose demand for campus resources had been increasing. Members reviewed the current practice and the eligibility of different student groups, namely, SU and its affiliated societies, student groups sponsored by university departments/offices, and informal groups. There was concern that duplication of activities by different groups would create unnecessary competitions for venues and facilities, and cause ineffective use of limited resources. Mr Johnny Ho shared his concern that some groups, though not affiliated to SU, might use the name of SU or give an impression that they were part of SU.

15. In view of the resource constraints, members agreed that all student groups would need a proper status in order to enjoy the privileges of accessing to campus resources (ref para 6 of Paper CSA/43/4). While SU and its

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affiliated societies already had a recognized status, Sponsored Student Groups would be supported by university departments and Informal Groups would have lower priority.

16. It was suggested and Mr Johnny Ho agreed to invite Sponsored Groups and Informal Groups to SU Society Meetings to promote better understanding among all student groups. Mr Johnny Ho

Assisting Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

17. Members noted that the University was committed to assisting SEN students. The Student Affairs Office had assigned a Student Counselor to serve as an Advisor to SEN students. Every year, there were a few SEN students who sought assistance from the university. Resources were usually pooled from the departments concerned, SAO and DeanUG to cover medical expenses, costs relating to equipment and other provisions, helper fees, and so on.
18. In reviewing the current practice, members noted that service provision was very often delayed due to the time taken to source and allocate funding. After discussion, the Committee was in support of a central budget of \$200,000 to be set up by the University, with DSA as the budget controller, to provide timely assistance to SEN students. The funding would be replenished upon request from DSA. Members also agreed that a helping approach should be taken in using this budget, so that assistance would be provided on a non-restrictive, lenient and flexible manner.

Report on Compulsory Medical Insurance of Non-local Students

19. Members noted a report on Compulsory Medical Insurance for Non-local Students (Paper CSA/43/6). It was noted that all degree-seeking non-local students were required to subscribe to the Compulsory Medical Insurance Scheme arranged by the University and they would pay the premium together with the tuition fee. SAO would follow up with outstanding payments. Students failing to pay the premium till they graduated would not be given diplomas. There were 29 claims for Hospital & Surgical Benefits in 2009/10 and total paid amount of claim was \$97,515. As for the Extended Accidental Medical Benefits, the total claim was \$21,572.
20. Members were also briefed about travel insurance arranged for exchange students. Exchange-in/visiting students were required to subscribe to an insurance plan arranged by the University unless exempted by their respective Schools on the grounds that they already had comparable insurance plans of their own. For exchange-out students, they would be asked to subscribe to the University's Travel Insurance Plan. In 2009/10, the total claim was \$9,461.
21. In view of the small amount of claims, members suggested SAO to negotiate a better premium for the coming year with the insurance company. SAO

Report on Student Enrichment Activities Fund

22. Members received a report on the second round application in Spring 2009/10 of the Student Enrichment Activities Fund (Paper CSA/43/7). Out of 14 selected projects, 6 had been completed and 2 had declined the subsidies. Selected project stories would be publicized in C.H.E.E.R.S.

Report on REDbird Award Program

23. Members received a progress report on the REDbird Awards for 2009/10 (Paper CSA/43/8). It was noted that 6 REDbird coaches who had graduated in 2009/10 had applied for the REDbird Award. After assessment of applicants' e-portfolios by the Program Committee, 3 REDbird Gold Awards and 3 Silver were granted. It was suggested that the career development of the awardees should be kept track of for further review of the Program.

SAO

(There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm.)