

## Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 48th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 26 August 2011 at 4 pm at Room 5015

- Present : Prof Karl Tsim (Chairman), Prof Kar-Yan Tam, Prof King Chow, Prof Tai-Kai Ng, Prof Chi-Ming Chan, Miss Irene Chau, Mr Jack Ho, Dr Grace Au (Member and Secretary)
- By Invitation : Mr Tsang Ka-Long Tim, SU President
- On Sabbatical Leave : Prof Charles Chan
- Absent with apologies: Prof Roger Cheng, Prof Kristiaan Helsen, Mr Johnny Ho, Mr Sun Hung
- In Attendance : Mrs Pandora Yuen (SAO), Ms Codana Chan (SAO), Mr Donny Siu (SAO)

### Action

#### Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

1. Minutes of the 47th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs were confirmed.

#### Matters Arising from the Minutes

##### *Use of Sports Facilities – No-show Penalty*

2. Members noted the no-show statistics of sports facilities for the past six months from mid Feb. For individual bookings, the number of no-show cases had been decreasing almost every month, while the number of cancellation cases had been steady. For block/advance bookings, first warning had been issued to 13 student groups for no-show, and second warning had been issued to 2 groups whose bookings in the following 2 weeks were cancelled as penalty.

#### Charge System for Use of Sports Facilities

3. It was reported that following the endorsement of this Committee on new approval guidelines and a charge system targeted for implementation in Sep 2011, SAO had informed the two major user groups – SU and student groups, and the Staff Association and staff groups. There was strong objection from both the student and staff groups on the charge system. They were of the view that imposing a charge could not reduce the demand. They pointed out that the teams in fact were using the facilities more effectively because of the regular nature of team practice. They felt that it was unfair to charge the groups but not the individuals. The Staff Association requested the Committee to postpone or withdraw the charge system.
4. The Committee also noted FO's advice that charges should not be imposed on UGC-funded activities for using UGC-funded facilities/services.

5. The Committee had a discussion on the spirit of the booking guidelines and the charge system which was to cope with the increasing demand, and to balance the needs and interests of various user groups. Miss Irene Chau commented that the charge system was reasonable. Mr Jack Ho suggested and Tsang Ka Long agreed that heavier penalty or a fine could be introduced to deter no-show users. Members noted that the supply problem was mainly with the most popular venues, i.e. the Sports Hall and the Soccer Pitch, and during the peak hours from 5 – 10 pm in Semester time. Members concurred with the view that with additional venues, notably an in-door gym, most of the demand problem could be solved.
6. After discussion, the Committee agreed:
  - a. Not to implement the charge system on student, staff and alumni groups in the year 2011/12
  - b. To implement the charge system on
    - (i) non-sports and non-UGC funded activities,
    - (ii) events with participants who are non-eligible users, and
    - (iii) outside groups
  - c. To consult the user groups on a charge system in future
  - d. To report to line management the need for more sports facilities and in particular an indoor sports hall
7. Members were briefed about the flexibility scheme which was to be introduced for pilot in the coming year. Under this Scheme, venues were opened up for advance booking by all student groups for sports activities during low period and spare timeslots. The purpose was to promote use during low period and to meet with the increasing demand from non-sports groups.

#### Student Life Complex

8. Members heard the concept of a Student Life Complex at the northern end of the semi-circular building to accommodate various functions of the Office of the Dean of Students and the Student Affairs Office. The Student Life Complex was meant to be a one-stop shop of student services including office space, front desk and counters and program space. By making use of adjacent facilities on the Piazza level, such as the Art Hall, Sports Hall Entrance and Bookstore, the Complex could be modeled into a student gathering place with strong multi-cultural and international atmosphere.
9. Members noted that the proposed Student Life Complex was different from student amenities. Student amenities were for general use of the student body and operation of the student societies. The existing student amenities space on the 4/F and LG4or would move to the new LG5 Extension in 2012.

10. Members supported the concept in general. A member also suggested to accommodate the off-campus housing service in the Student Life Complex because a convenient and visible location for this service was necessary in view of the increasing demand. As the whole concept was related to student service, and students were a major user of the Complex, Mr Tsang Ka Long was asked to initiate discussion among the students and forward their feedback to SAO.

SU

Schedule for Preparation of Election Campaign

11. Mr Tsang Ka Long presented a schedule in preparation for the election campaign in Feb 2012. The schedule aimed at early communication with student groups to seek their suggestions and cooperation in improving the problems of election campaign. Mr Tsang Ka Long said that it was not realistic to stop chanting totally, but they would try to find a way to reduce and manage the noise.
12. Prof King Chow shared that most students when responding as individuals would not want chanting, but as student groups would hold an official line to support chanting. He said some students were of the view that chanting in HKUST was not noisier than that in other campuses. He said the design of the Atrium being the central location might have aggravated the noise problem.
13. Dr Grace Au said that apart from exploring alternatives to chanting, SU should also consider to lower the noise of chanting to a more realistic and acceptable level.
14. The Chairman reiterated that it was based on the understanding that SU would explore alternate means other than chanting that CSA supported the SU election proposal last year. Without any new methods for promotion, solutions to reduce the noise, or concrete measures to keep the activities under control, it would be difficult for CSA to support any proposal again.

Findings of SU Survey in Apr 2011 on Election Campaign and Chanting

15. Members noted that the survey was extended for one month until May 2011.
16. It was noted from the updated version of the findings that there were different views between staff and students on chanting areas, arrangement of passage way, and the duration of chanting. Regarding the noise level, the highest percentage of both staff and student respondents thought it was too loud. It was also noted that students were positive about their experience in chanting.
17. Prof Kar-Yan Tam suggested SU to hold a referendum for all members of the campus community to indicate whether or not they support chanting. He said that SU had to be responsible to the individual students as well, and not just the student societies. Furthermore, there was the issue of social

responsibility and SU should also take care of the common good.

18. There was some discussion on what to put for voting if a referendum was to be held. It was suggested that an email summarizing the chanting issue should be sent to students and staff to see if they agree with chanting based on past year's experience. The results could then be taken as reference in this year's planning and arrangement. Prof Kar-Yan Tam said that this was necessary as chanting did affect the whole campus community. Mr Tsang Ka Long had concern over conducting a referendum and he also had reservation over using last year's experience as reference because the same situation would not be repeating itself.
19. Prof Tai-Kai Ng cautioned that the interest of the minority had to be taken care of. It was a fact that students were more than staff in number and student respondents were more than staff. The views of individual students had to be considered as well.
20. As the election campaign was an activity of the students, the Committee agreed that any referendum, polling, or survey relating to chanting had to be conducted by the students themselves otherwise the credibility would be subject to challenge. SU was asked to further consider collecting the general views of the whole campus community and to design a simple and straight forward question, while SAO would provide the technical support.

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(There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm)