

## Committee on Student Affairs

Minutes of the 51st Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs held on 9 May 2012 at 10:30 am at Room 7341.

Present : Prof Karl Tsim (Chairman), Prof Kar-Yan Tam, Prof Tai-Kai Ng, Prof King Chow, Prof Stanley Lau, Prof Kristiaan Helsen, Prof Kevin Tam, Mr Ferris Chung, Miss Irene Chau, Mr Jethro Wong, Miss Louise Pang, Dr Grace Au (Member and Secretary)

By Invitation : Dr David Mole, Associate Provost (Teaching & Learning), Mr Green Lam, President, HKUSTSU  
Mr Marco Ip, Internal Secretary, HKUSTSU  
Miss Crystal Yuen, Administrative Secretary, HKUSTSU

Absent with apologies: Prof Roger Cheng

In Attendance : Mrs Pandora Yuen (SAO), Mr Donny Siu (SAO), Mr Kenny Chow (SAO), Ms Helen Wong (SAO), Ms Daisy Kwan (SAO)

### Action

#### Welcome

1. The Chairman welcomed Prof Stanley Lau and Miss Louise Pang who were attending the meeting for the first time.

#### Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

2. Minutes of the 50th Meeting of the Committee on Student Affairs were confirmed.

#### Consultation on Regulations for Student Misconduct

3. The Chairman invited Mrs Pandora Yuen and Dr David Mole to provide an overview of the proposed changes in the Regulations for Student Misconduct on which CSA's opinion was being sought. The proposed change from a 2-tier to a 3-tier system provided separate paths for the handling of general misconduct by the Dean of Students before escalating to the Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC). This allowed an intermediate level of disciplinary decisions and a clearer list of sanctions that was derived based on needs identified from past experience. It also allowed clearer definition to what actions contribute to misconduct with coverage on sexual harassment. The proposed document had been circulated to Schools and Departments. Comments and opinions had also been collected from different stakeholders over the past months in different occasions.
4. The Chairman invited Members and student representatives to share views on the proposal. Several enquiries and clarifications were sought from Dr Mole:
  - a. In response to Miss Crystal Yuen's enquiry, Dr Mole reported that there were two cases that went to the SDC last year and, normally, there were very few cases.
  - b. In response to Mr Green Lam's enquiry, Dr Mole explained that an appeal system had been in place and was used for several academic cases.
  - c. In response to Mr Jethro Wong's enquiry on the normal penalty, Dr Mole explained that it depended on the nature and severity of misconduct. In most cases, it could be community services. For several serious misconduct cases, it had led to suspension.
  - d. Miss Irene Chau indicated that many students might not know about these

regulations. Dr Mole commented that ways to further promote knowledge among students would be explored so that students would know there were internal procedures to handle student misconduct instead of just relying on outside channels such as police and legal actions.

5. Prof King Chow asked how the new system could address gaps in the existing one. Mrs Yuen shared that there was a case where a student destroyed a set of mobile stage unit by pushing it into the pond next to Hall IV. After admitting causing the damage and agreeing on follow up actions (paying back for the unit by installment), the student did not show up for other follow up meetings and had not honored the promise. This was unacceptable, it would be difficult to deal with the student in the existing system when the next level would be the SDC. However, with the new system, an intermediate level sanctions/ penalties could be levied on the student without going to SDC.
6. Mr Green Lam enquired if there could be more time to speak with other student groups and discuss the proposed change in more details. Dr Mole explained that opinion had already been collected from different parties and the proposal would be due for submission to Senate for approval in June 2012. Further opinion from students was always welcomed but would need to reach Dr Mole quickly if it was to make the deadline. Dr Grace Au prompted students to look through the appeal procedures and contact Dr Mole directly in case they have other views. The Chairman also suggested that student representatives do so before the term ends.
7. Prof Kevin Tam enquired if academic cases could be handled by faculty members or must they all go to the Department Head. Dr Mole clarified that faculty members could handle the case as it could be a learning opportunity for the student as long as they handle the case prudently.
8. There were no further suggestions to the Regulations and the Chairman moved to the next agenda item. Dr Mole was excused from the Committee.

SU

#### Review of the Student Societies Election Campaign

9. Members heard a report on the election campaign and the chanting activities conducted by student societies in Feb 2012 (CSA/51/2). There were not many differences except that the noise level was slightly higher than last year. It was observed that the placement of fences had kept students inside the designated areas. Yet, it was difficult to enforce measures as students were confrontational towards any attempt to stop them. There was an incident in which 2 students had bodily contact amounting to physical assault. The students reported it to the police but later agreed not to further pursue. The case was then handled by SAO pending decision on whether or not to submit the case to SDC. It was reported that the alternative video promotion competition scheme was not carried out. SU said it was due to insufficient preparation time.
10. The Chairman invited Mr Jethro Wong to share SU's view. Mr Wong was of the opinion that blockage of passage way had improved and the high noise level being recorded might be due to measurement methods. There would also be a need to step up the regulation to prevent conflicts. The you-tube competition had not come through and SU would need to start earlier next year for more effective implementation.
11. The Chairman asked Mr Wong if there were any difficulties in monitoring the process. Mr Wong expressed that it was very difficult, but he disagreed with imposing very harsh regulations.

12. Prof King Chow shared his opinion that SU might consider adding buffer space between chanting areas to prevent bodily contact that might get violent. A more stringent set of rules for current ExCo with strict enforcement of penalties might also help.
13. Mr Jethro Wong shared that societies would like to compete with each other and demonstrate they were stronger than others. Hence they might not respond well to separating the chanting area. Mr Wong agreed that some ExCo were concerned that their cabinet might be penalized and might therefore decide to reduce the frequency of chanting.
14. Dr Grace Au shared that the blockage was caused by the passersby and not the past ExCo. Prof King Chow agreed and indicated that it was not anticipated and should be taken into consideration by student groups.
15. The Chairman asked Mr Donny Siu to share his views. Mr Siu expressed that SAO tried to have daily meetings with the students to review the effectiveness of the measures as student groups would find different ways bypassing new measures. It was also noted that students focused on the means of promotion and might have given less attention to the interest of their fellow students in learning more about the new ExCo.
16. Prof King Chow suggested that it might be possible to induce change if rules and penalty on current ExCo were spelled out in advance so that it could be raised in society's AGM to regulate their behavior.
17. Prof Kristiaan Helsen expressed that he found no improvement in this year's campaign which was very much the same as that in the past four years.
18. The Chairman reminded Mr Green Lam to start their planning early and honor the promise of the previous SU session to implement alternative promotion measures as the CSA had repeatedly advised. SU
19. Mrs Pandora Yuen enquired if the Committee would support SU in sending all staff email to collect staff's feedback towards the campaign. Some members were of the opinion that it had no use because no improvement was made from the data collected previously. Nonetheless, the Committee agreed to support SU to send all staff emails and cautioned SU and student groups to really respond to opinions that were different from theirs.

Report on Student Enrichment Activities (SEA) Fund

20. CSA received a report on the allocation of the Student Enrichment Activities Fund for the year (CSA/51/4). It was noted that a total of \$297,804 was awarded as subsidies to support 36 projects of different nature, including intercultural understanding, cultural exchange, performing arts, community service, sports and community building.
21. It was noted that aside of the SEA Fund, SAO had also piloted the Graduate Student Life Fund for the Provost Office which catered for postgraduate student activities.
22. Prof Kevin Tam suggested the compilation of a booklet with project summaries for students, faculty and visitors as a showcase of our student's creativity and their effort to make their dreams come true. The Chairperson also agreed with this idea for consideration of SAO. Dr Grace Au further suggested that an online photo essay would be more eye catching and attractive to the readers. SAO

Report on the Flexibility Scheme and No Show Penalty for Sports Facilities

23. CSA heard a report from Mr Kenny Chow on the pilot run of the measures for effective use of sports facilities (CSA/51/3). Data collected during the pilot year indicated that:
- a. The penalty system was acceptable to users because it only affect their booking privilege and not the privilege in using sport facilities. To promote effective use, users were reminded to cancel their bookings in advance either in person, by phone or by fax.
  - b. Though the flexibility scheme had improved usage by non-sports group, there was not much improvement to usage of less popular sports facilities. There was still very keen competition for use of the popular venues, notably the Sports Hall and the soccer pitch.
24. Members noted that there seemed to be improvement based on the statistics. The Chairman commended the team for good management of sports facilities and suggested that SU helped promote for more responsible use of the facilities.

Report on REDbird Award Program

25. CSA received a report on the progress of the REDbird Award Program (CSA/51/5). Five gold awards, 16 silver, 98 bronze awards were granted this year. The significant increase of bronze awards was due to a program refinement based on student feedback. New recruits in 2011-12 were required to attain the Bronze Award upon completion of the first year before they could advance to the optional second-year program.
26. The Chairman suggested strengthening promotion to students from School of Science (SSCI). Ms Helen Wong explained that the Team had also noticed the situation and had been working closely with SSCI to encourage enrollment.

(There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.)