

SBA Meeting 9/22/08

Reps In attendance

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| a. President Ben Smilowitz (BS) | g. Jessica Schneider (JS) |
| b. Vice President John Kim (JK) | h. Adam Daniels (AD) |
| c. Secretary Sarah Saadian (SS) | i. Drew Barber (DB) |
| d. Treasurer Gabe Vidoni (GV) | j. Peter Hitt (PH) |
| e. Michael Tehan (MT) | k. Tara Trifon (TT) |
| f. Jorge Colon (JC) | l. David Tanner (DT) |

Meeting Begins: 9:37pm

BS: The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the upcoming changes to the grading system, and to update you on what we've been doing. Then we'll discuss the next steps, including polling of students and talking to professors to see where they stand.

PH: What are you going to use this for?

BS: To see where we can be most efficient. We don't have a lot of time, so its better to do some leg work now. But we won't act officially until later.

PH: I want to stress that when polling, we aren't pushing without knowing how the student body thinks.

BS: I agree, Sarah and Jorge, polled some professors, and they will update us.

AD: The EPC already got some info, right?

MS: We have reported a lot of student concerns, we've been very open, and tried to pinpoint what student concerns were. Only 16 students came to our open forum, and received 40 emails evenly split. Some don't want the grading to effect them, personally. So we need to be careful in assessing student concerns. We need to look back, and look at the larger issue, instead of knee-jerk concerns.

AD: Can we take those student issues and hone in on them?

BS: Drew also created a list of the issues, but we can add to it with Megan's help.

CJL: Any student appointed under a previous president still has an obligation to the SBA, not to the particular SBA President. If you need info from them, they can share it.

BS: Thanks, I appreciate the clarification.

GV: Update on polling. We created a TWEN page, to include a polling tool. Anyone can join it, we're planning to automatically register students, with an opt out choice. We can post the budget, minutes, calendars. With polling, we can structure the questions, and try to get an objective measure of opinion. I don't see any harm in collecting more feedback, from students who didn't go to the forums. One vote per student. Any concerns?

PH: Twen sends to the school email. What happens if only a few people respond? Is it better to use the referendum process through Storrs?

GV: We wanted to do it that way, but it seemed like it wasn't the best way to do it because we'd have to go through the red tape of Storrs. We looked into using an outside polling source, too. We can distribute info both through the Twen system and the regular means. If people STILL choose not to participate, then its only worth that much.

JS: This is just for our purposes? Or is it for administrators and faculty?

GV: Firstly, it is for us, but if there is a consensus, then maybe to administrators.

JS: Is there any way to know the demographics? Year? Day student or evening?

GV: There are some demographic info, but I'm not sure how muc.

BS: Knowing the class is important, because we may have to consider 3L Day's votes

KC: Why?

BS: Because it doesn't really effect them

KC: But 3Ls are still invested in the school, and alums play an important role. There are a lot of students who care about the SBA.

DB: As 1Ls we don't have experience with seminars and clinics. So using 3Ls opinions may be helpful. For 3Ls, we have experience in the job market, and see how grading effects this.

BS: I have no interest in excluding anyone, I was just considering it. I hope 3Ls want to stay involved, then great! Any other issues?

KC: I was just wondering about publicity? I know my mailbox has been full...

DB: we could publicize it through the regular channels too.

AD: So this vote is going on soon. So we need to find out what we're going to do with it.

MS: We had an EPC meeting yesterday, and we're meeting again. If there is a way to bring it back to the EPC before our next meeting, it may be better, because I've worked with them on this for 8 months. I think it may be more persuasive to do it during the drafting of the amendments.

BS: What happened in the last EPC meeting? Did the proposal pass as written?

MS: There was a faculty meeting today, just listening to what they had to say. Next week the faculty will discuss it as is. And we may be drafting a Plan B or C. There's no easy answer. We've been talking, but decided that its best to hear the faculty first.

Pam: What were there concerns?

MS: I don't think I'd feel comfortable sharing that because it wasn't an open meeting. But it is similar to student concerns. Some are for it, some aren't. But implementation dates aren't as important to them.

Pam: What is the implementation date?

MS: There isn't one in the proposal, but it will probably be for the Fall 08.

BS: Let's talk about the potential issues for the polling.

DB: There are a lot of issues around there. We can't stop them, but we can focus on the smaller details. Some issues include: Seminars/clinic, implementation dates, as well as some individual concerns. Are you happen with the current system? Would you prefer the B Mean? These seem like the primary issues?

JS: Can we narrow the issues down further?

MS: In regards to the clinics, we could ask about keeping the current rule but capping the number of credits. But this may pose administration problems. The concerns are grade inflation and course shopping.

AD: We discussed this in class. And my professor talked about how the big issue is the discrepancy over smaller classes, SRPs, Clinics, etc. Should the same rule apply to big and same classes?

MS: We should ask about different types of grading, too. Performative, v. testing.

BS: We aren't making any decisions tonight, so we can use the email for this too. On this note, any other issues on this matter to discuss?

DB: My only concern is sending a poll with SOOO many questions, may deter people. Due to the time crunch, I don't know whether we want to be too specific.

TT: I don't think we'll sway any professors on this. The point on the vote is to show how we feel about it, not to say what we want. It will be more effective if we show how students think, not what they think the solution should be.

JR: I was trying to work from the perspective of how to create a poll. Some issues are easier to gauge when you collapse these issues.

BS: Or we could have an "I Don't Know" option.

CJL: The faculty is going to pass the B Mean for larger classes, but we need to dedicate time to discussing whether it should be for small classes too. What factors should they consider? The type of exam? The amount of work in these classes?

BS: Lets move this conversation online, so we can find consensus.

TT: What are we doing here today? I think we need to come up with questions, and we need to get the poll out tomorrow, so Megan can take it to the EPC.

BS: My purpose was to allow students to come and discuss.

CJL: I don't think people knew this was an open meeting. The email didn't say it besides some fine type.

BS: Apologies. Duly noted. We'll take care of it next time.

JSchneider: Let's hammer out some questions so we can move forward.

TT: We should ask whether they've read the proposal?

Amy: We could say, after reading the proposal, how do you feel?

BS: Or we could put the text in there....

DB: But some people can have an understanding, without reading the full text

JR: Maybe we could have an intro at the topic summarizes the issues. SO we don't have to be worried.

TT: I like it.

BS: If we send an email of the text out, is this enough?

TT: I like the summarization is good.

MS: We could also attached the proposal.

BS: Great. Do we all agree?

1. Should the grading system remain as it is now?
2. Which classes, if any, should be subject to a 3.2-3.3 Mean?
 - a. All classes
 - b. Courses over 18
 - c. All Courses under 18

- d. Seminars
 - e. Clinics
 - f. Only 1st year classes
3. For the classes you believe should not be subject from the mean, how should they be regulated?
- a. Completely exempt
 - b. Capped number of credits?
 - c. Another Rule
 - d. Limit number of credits that go to the GPA
 - e. I think ALL classes should be subject to the Mean
4. When should the implementation date for the B Mean?
- a. After the last current student graduates
 - b. Fall 09
 - c. Spring 08
 - d. 1 year after I graduate
 - e. Never

GV motioned to adjourn. PH seconded.

Meeting ends 10:46pm