

Senate Executive Committee Meeting (8/24/2023)

Attendees: Elizabeth McNie (Chair), Sarah Senk (Vice Chair), Ariel Setniker (Secretary), Wil Tsai, Mike Holden, and Maggie Ward.

Absent: Christine Isakson

- President Dumont's Convocation Address
 - Senators remarked on budget transparency, getting ahead of the narrative, direct nature, policy on (early-on) justification
 - Addressed administrative overhead as necessary, though seems open to outsourcing where possible

- Priorities
 - McNie proposed to add: Address cynicism head on
 - Examples: feelings of administration automatically corrupt, while faculty is always the good guy, faculty feelings across departments
 - Senk: Ask President Dumont to give budget presentation (due to cynicism)
 - Discussion of whether President would be amenable, or pass on to VP of Finance
 - Need to discuss why last president solidified distrust
 - McNie: Perhaps we put out a grassroots call for ideas to save budget
 - Tsai: Many of our constituents have pointed out that our staff-to-student ratio is much higher than other campuses. Commandant Office is a key difference that has been pointed out.
 - Ward points out based on personal experience at other academy that other academies have lower ratio of students to commandants
 - SUNY had 6 commandants on cruise, but that was due to Navy billets
 - When requesting President Dumont to give budget presentation, mention the fact that he 'hit home on the majority of priorities, but one point will need a 'moment of repair''
 - Senk described how she emphasized to provost at the time that budget presentation of February 27, 2020 caused more confusion than it cleared up and sparked conspiracy theories amongst faculty AND students. Senk reports several 'moderate' faculty members approached Senate Exec after the meeting claiming the only possible explanation was something shady going on. While Senate Exec does not believe shady work is occurring, we all feel the presentation was inadequate and faculty have not received explanations sufficient to quell concerns.
 - Senators note that making calls of chairs for various Senate business often results in information not being passed on – Setniker recommends drafting a quick policy on department representatives contributing to sharing of Senate information with departments
 - Develop preamble of accomplishments etc. To planned survey

- Logistics
 - Senk made a Senate Exec master sheet –lists of Senators, dates, tasks etc.
 - Try Asana for tasks over next week
 - Setniker needs website privileges to post Senate Minutes

- Updates on Professional Development/Watch standing
 - McNie: Deck & Engine will be doing security watch – Captain Bannister observed too many instances of no one being in box, so adjustments being made for MPM
 - MPM will stand 2 watches – 1 deck, 1 watch as a hold for majors to figure out their own plans
 - We left this off in Spring 23 – a letter was sent out instructing faculty that if they had an idea *now* talk to the commandants *now* and no one did, so Senate Exec thought everyone was holding off until fall
 - Students reported misinformation about watch being “abolished”
 - Tsai: From the Deans & Chairs lens, at the end of July, Dr. Kamdar wanted IBL freshmen off watch until plan was made, Dr Parker wanted watch reinstated for OCN due to lack of resources to manage “Oceanography Watch” - the alternative trialed last year, and Dr. Wade wanted to keep watch for GSMA/ISS
 - What came of this was a memo
 - From the faculty side, it appears Commandant Moore backed out
 - From Commandant Moore’s side, no one ever said who would oversee new plans for watch
 - Tsai advocates for further coordination between MPM faculty and commandants
 - There is time to work this out – carry forward with plans to establish task force
 - A meeting was held between Commandants, Student Leadership, and Senate Exec prior to start of Fall 23 semester to clear up confusion

- General Senate Meeting Planning
 - Recap retreat (landed well!) and call for service to participate in working group/task force
 - Questions about Curriculum Committee
 - ChatGPT example language will be mentioned in Faculty Development update from Director
 - Senate Faculty Development Committee needs a new member/chair

- Tasks Going Forward
 - Talk with President Dumont about budget presentation
 - Compile list of Senate accomplishments/priorities – McNie
 - Policy for department representatives distributing Senate information – Setniker
 - Assemble Professional Development Task Force

- Open Floor
 - Ward asks about living on ship.

- President said no other MARAD ship does that, but other schools offer faculty housing
 - Ward mentions how reaffirming it was to hear about President Dumont addressing Congress shortly

- Meeting Adjourned