

## Minutes of the Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 18

### I. Attendance

Kelly Davidson Devall (Co-Chair)  
Gabriele Stellmacher (Co-Chair)  
Scott Pipenburg  
Eugene Asola  
Sean Lennon  
Keith Warburg  
Selenseia Holmes  
Seth Sterlin  
Robin Vickery  
Vincent Miller

### II. Financial Aid Sub-Committee

1. Two vacancies on the Financial Aid Appeals Sub-Committee need to be filled
  - a. Eugene Asola volunteered to serve.
  - b. As some members of our committee are from COSA, he asked, if faculty status was required to serve on the Appeals committee. Kelly Davidson Devall agreed to follow up on this question with Doug Tanner.

### III. Student Perceptions and Improving Student Retention

1. The committee discussed improving ways to find out about student perceptions and perspectives. We decided to invite Dr. Michael Black, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and Chief C. Alan Rowe, Interim Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police, to our next meeting. We wanted to know, if we can reinstate the Student Survey on Student Life. How did it go out? Was it part of the graduate packet? What is the most efficient way for the survey to reach the students?
2. Vince Miller mentioned that we need employment outcomes data for students: "First Destination" data, career opportunities survey from alumni. Sean Lennon added that it would be interesting to gather data at the beginning, middle, and end of the students' time at VSU.
3. What is the students' perception concerning campus safety? There doesn't seem to be a persistent message that students feel unsafe. Lighting has improved. There were theft issues in the library in the past. We still have to get the word out to the students that they need to watch their belongings in the library at all times. Keith Warburg observed that there is a campus wide increase in police presence in response to student fears. Efforts need to be made to make the students more aware of the escort service. The officers are glad to accompany faculty and students to their cars or buildings. Sean Lennon cautioned, though, that armed officers as escorts might send the message to students, that the VSU campus is unsafe.

4. Improving transportation between campus facilities would make the students feel safer. Eugene Asola suggested the usage of golf carts. We need to find out if Parking and Transportation continues the 11 PM – 3 AM bus route. If not, golf carts could be used during that time, maybe operated by members of the fraternities. The SGA is still doing some research. Student parking is not close to the residence halls. Maybe the night bus route should be changed. How do students get back to the Main Campus from their night classes at the North Campus? We can perhaps find some answers by looking at practices at GA Tech. We can learn more about campus safety in the Clery report that is available online. Scott Pipenburg and Vince Miller mentioned that VSU will soon launch a new mobile app that will do silent safety calls, using GPS with a timer. Hopefully there will be a marketing blitz next month. Kelly Davidson Devall offered to contact the Chief of Police Alan Rowe to invite him to the next meeting.
  
5. John Barbas raised a question over email about housing for international student over the Thanksgiving and Christmas. Seth Sterlin confirmed that they can stay at Centennial Hall and Converse Hall during that time.
  
6. How students feel about their time at VSU depends as well on the availability of entertainment and events in Valdosta. Kelly Gamble pointed out that “Blazing Downtown” was a good event. It was basically a big pep rally on the steps of the Court House, organized by the Alumni Association. We should invite the Director of Alumni Relations to our spring meeting to discuss the possibility of having this event again next year.
  
7. Student life and student engagement are very important for retention. VSU is transitioning more and more from face-to-face courses to online courses. How do we keep the students engaged in student life? We need to examine our advising practices and support services. There seems to be some student frustration with advising. When is departmental and when is centralized advising appropriate? We need to establish a consistency in advising. Some institutions switched to First Year Advising by paid professionals. The 70/80 taskforce is looking into advising and the first-year experience program. We are waiting for their results and will continue this discussion in the spring semester.
  
8. Sean Lennon mentioned that we need to get the information out about how helpful the registrar is.