Student Government Association
General Board Meeting
October 27th, 2014

Present:
Executive Board: M. Hicks (President) K. Chrzanowska (BAM), J. Ahern (Treasurer), E. Drouin (Secretary)

Advisors: C. Ambrosio, M. Delaney


Guests: S. Hartnett, P. Hoeps, Officer Schneider, Office Kuchta

Meeting called to order at 3:03 PM

1. President's Report
   a. Acceptance of Minutes from 10/20/2014
      i. **Motion #42 (J. Reid, E. Pelletier)** Motion to accept the minutes from 10/20/14 (22-0-1). **Motion Carries.**
         1. N. Vigorita pointed out a typo within the minutes. E. Drouin has already corrected it and resent it to the minutes email account.
   b. Cops Open Rec Night
      i. Officer Schneider and Officer Kuchta were here to speak about Cops Open Rec Night and ask for funding. It is put on as a charitable event and to prevent alcohol consumption on and off campus. Last year over 900 students signed in to come for games, food, and prizes. There's a lot of grand prizes, which are typically funded by SGA. The only reason they've gotten so big is through SGA and Housing's help. Everyone gets tickets for prizes, and you can earn extra tickets by donating cans to the Willimantic Food Bank.
      
      ii. Questions
          1. G. Wrobel inquired about the date of the event.
             a. Officer Schneider answered that it is Friday December 5th from 9-2.
          2. E. Pelletier asked what the donation money will be used for.
             a. It will be used for prizes.
                i. A. Nadeau asked what kinds of prizes.
                ii. Officer Schneider gave examples of some of the prizes: iPads, iPads, televisions, laptops, hourly prizes and grand prizes. Everyone can win an hourly prize once and then everyone
can win a grand prize. You have to be there to win and you have to present your student ID.

3. N. Vigorita asked if you can bring guests
   a. Officer Schneider answered yes, but only Eastern students can win prizes.
   b. N. Vigorita is a transfer and remarked that she’s heard very good things about this event and is very excited.

4. E. Pelletier asked how much money they’d be looking for for prizes.
   a. Officer Schneider said that he’ll take whatever SGA is willing to give. Last year we gave $7,000 which was more than generous. They usually shop around and get good deals in regards to pricing.

5. Discussion:
   a. J. Ahern gave his accounts update and would like the issue to be tabled until next week. He’d like to sit down with the E-Board and budget for next semester so that they can plan what they’re going to have to spend on elections, banquets, etc. He’d like to get a grasp on next semester before we drains any money out of the accounts.
      i. M. Hicks added for senators to keep in mind that we get a yearly budget and it would be a negative that would be filled next semester. He added that we can also motion from the reserves, which is currently around $350,000. Reserves have built up over the years. Usually, General Boards have a lot of money and can’t spend it all. That’s why last year they got 7,000 for prizes.
   b. J. Reid agrees with tabling discussion for next week.
   c. M. Ehrnfelt thinks we should use the money from capital reserves.
      i. M. Hicks says motioning out of the reserves isn’t something that we like to get in the habit of, but we can definitely do so for this event.
   d. R. Rivera asked how much General Board would be next semester.
      i. J. Ahern said next semester the combined allocation for Spring 2015 is around 20,000 a semester.
   e. M. Patino asked if we have to staff the event.
      i. M. Hicks said no, they fully staff it.
   f. J. Reid is concerned that enrollment is down and we shall need to save the reserves in case of future low enrollments.
   g. N. Vigorita asked if we can take some from general board and some from reserves.
      i. M. Hicks answered yes, but that’d be kind of technical, although that might not be necessary as it kind of all comes from the same place.
M. Delaney thinks we should just figure out how much we want to spend and then figure out where it’s coming from.

A. Nadeau asked how much was it last year.

M. Hicks answered that last year we gave $7,000, the year before we gave $6,000.

H. Brooks thinks it is something students look forward to and we should serve the students best.

C. Gosselin added that its Eastern’s most looked forward to event, but thinks we should give them around $5,000. This is a big deal to the students. There’s a level of prizes that students have come accustomed to, so we should accommodate.

M. Wysopal thinks it’s really good that they’re not asking us for food or entertainment. They’re asking for us to give things that go directly to the students.

Voting will be on the agenda next week.

c. Transform

M. Hicks commended the General Board as the discussion on Transform 2020 was given an update sent out to all CSU employees that mentioned Eastern’s input on Transform 2020 specifically.

d. One on Ones

M. Hicks had gotten good feedback and looks forward to the future One on Ones.

e. Sex Ed on Eastern's Campus

M. Ehrnfelt is a Planned Parenthood Intern. Their goal for this year is to focus on sexual education on campus and are trying to get feedback on Eastern’s sexual education. M. Ehrnfelt passed out a survey for senators to fill out when they have the time.

2. Vice President's Report

a. Induction

Motion #43 (J. Reid, M. McFall Gorman) Motion to induct Maggie Wysopal as a senator for the remainder of the 2014-2015 Academic School Year (23-0-0). Motion Carries.

b. Committee Updates

i. Issues

1. Financial Aid

E. Pelletier and J. Reid met with the head of Financial Aid, Dr. Harris. He explained why it seems that juniors and seniors are getting less money. In reality, everyone else is getting less money, it’s just that juniors and seniors were getting more and are now receiving the same amount as everyone else.

J. Reid added that the Office of Financial Aid is only meeting half your need.

1. Each student has a different need, so aid is distributed on a case by case basis.

E. Pelletier explained that in the school year 2009-2010, Financial Aid gave 979 awards totaling about 2 million in scholarships and grants. This year they gave 547 awards totaling around 1 million dollars.
Tuition has been increasing by only 2 percent and less money is coming in from the state.

i. J. Reid said that a lot of money that they get is from the Eastern Foundation, which is donations from Eastern graduates to scholarships.

c. E. Pelletier added that he only advice from Dr. Harris is to try and work with the administration to lobby for more money from the Board of Regents and the state.

d. J. Reid mentioned that they don’t have competitive scholarships anymore. The most money you get is your freshmen year, and you can expect that it will trickle down as years continue. Financial aid is not guaranteed.

e. S. Hartnett asked that if you get no money now you should expect no financial aid ever.

i. E. Pelletier answered that that was kind of the case, unless your financial situation changes.

f. M. McFall Gorman asked if they are still doing merit scholarships or if it is all toward financial need.

i. E. Pelletier said that there are no merit scholarships, it’s all based on financial need. They got rid of merit scholarships because they have less money.

g. M. Hicks explained that there’s even an SGA Scholarship that is endowed. There’s an account with a certain amount of money accruing interest, which is used to fund a scholarship. Last year the administration came to ask for more money for the endowment, which the executive board denied.

h. M. Ehrnfelt is displeased that there are no incentives for excellence.

i. R. Rivera feels as though with this development, there is no need for scholarships.

j. J. Reid discussed that now they are just meeting need as opposed to exceeding it, which they did in the past.

k. C. Gosselin spoke from his position as an RA, and a lot of RAs don’t have financial aid because it is perceived that they don’t have need.

l. M. Hicks says E. Pelletier should take this back to her committee and discuss ways to distribute this information and attempt to advocate for student need.

2. Other Issues

a. M. Patino’s issue was the computers in Constitution not working. She got into contact with IT and harassed them for two weeks and now all computers work, so her issue has been successfully resolved.

b. A. Nadeau met with Public Safety about the smoking policy. They’re working on ways to get the policy known (perhaps by advertising on the TVs in the
residence halls), moving ashtrays, and maybe making a designated smoking areas.

ii. Public Relations
   1. N. Vigorita discussed their Fall for Eastern Event and passed out fliers for distribution. Everyone has signed up for times to work the event and should wear their polo’s.

iii. Internal
   1. R. Rivera clarified that all changes made to the Constitution are made on a master copy which shall be sent to the senate at a later date.
      a. M. Hicks stressed that these changes are all proposed and will be voted on by the senate.
   2. Thanks to the new TV that is coming to the suite, R. Rivera is going to work with PR to see if we can have a movie night for students to come in, do homework, and use the suite.
      a. M. Hicks says to stress that we’re not ‘screening’ movies so that we don’t have to pay for rights.
   3. R. Rivera is thinking about moving the Voice Box and maybe updating the outside of the box so that students can put their problems into it.
   4. R. Rivera is making a new tree with all of the senators pictures on it so that it has the new senate.
      a. J. Reid thinks that R. Rivera should put office hours on the tree to advertise them.

iv. Budget and Management
   1. Guideline Revisions
      a. Motion #44 (H. Brooks, M. Ehrnfelt) Motion to approve the revisions to the BAM Guidelines (15-0-1). Motion Carries.
   2. FRPS
      a. K. Chrzanowska reminded the senate that FRPs and new guidelines all go up at 5PM tonight.
         i. She added that the new guidelines are in effect next semester

3. Treasurer's Report:
   a. Accounts Update
      i. General Board is currently at $510.40. Executive Board is currently -$758.82

4. Secretary’s Report:
   a. Nothing to report.

5. Advisor’s Report:
   a. Nothing to report.

6. Old Business:
   a. None at this time

7. New Business:
   a. Executive Board as individuals have observed that Themed Housing is imposing a serious issue on students. Housing sponsors certain themes on campus to live in dorms together. You have to program, which creates a community in residence life. There’s fifteen of them at least. It is posing a challenge to students as it is undermining the priority point system. When you make a theme, you get to pick wherever you want to live. Students can’t live in Nutmeg or Laurel because although they would have had enough priority points in the past, they cannot have access because themed housing
students are already in the nicer dorms. M. Hicks wanted to gauge the senate’s opinion before the Executive Board moved forward with this.

i. H. Brooks thinks its cheating the system.

ii. G. Wrobel says with the exception of one or two themes, she hasn’t seen themes be a presence within her dorm.

iii. E. Drouin is in a theme and agrees that some themes are not proactive as others. Speaking with other themed housing students, some people don’t care about the mission of their theme, they are just looking into getting into the nicer dorms. She also hasn’t seen some themes do programming or do anything to contribute to the dorm.

iv. S. Froehlich thinks we should keep in mind that some themes aren’t that large and cannot put on large programs.

v. M. McFall Gorman thinks that all the themed housing shouldn’t be in the nice dorms. Themed Housing should be evenly spread out.

   1. M. Hicks contributed an example of this. Food for Thought, which focuses on culinary skills, is in Noble which has huge kitchens.

vi. R. Rivera says that his roommate even doesn’t fit the profile of the housing theme and is doing it just to be in the room.

vii. C. Gosselin gave the Housing perspective. They have front loaded the themes into the dorms. Nutmeg and Laurel should be Community Engagement and Honors, along with others where there are benefits for more than students who are in that building. There are some that should not be Laurel or Nutmeg.

viii. E. Benoit spoke about the trickle-down effect, whereas those who can’t get into Nutmeg or Laurel go to High Rise, and then those who usually could get into High Rise and stuck in less nice dorms, even though they had enough priority points.

ix. H. Brooks asked if the Executive Board spoke about any solutions to the problems.

   1. M. Hicks answered that he plans to invite LaMar Coleman to an Executive Board meeting after speaking with the senate.

x. J. Reid thinks that themes should be chosen based on priority points as well, so that dorms are equally allocated by theme.

xi. E. Pelletier thinks the application process should be more rigorous. Honors themed housing gave a huge proposal in regards to what programming they have to do and what they’re planning for the year. Some themes don’t even have to do programing.

xii. G. Wrobel thinks that some themes should have to do things to benefit the dorms.

xiii. C. Gosselin asked if themes have to have an advisor to do the theme, or is it just the group of students to be affiliated with it.

   1. M. Delaney answered that they all have Hall Director advisers and a sponsor.

      a. E. Drouin clarified that they have to be affiliated with a group on campus as their sponsor.

   2. C. Gosselin thinks that the themes should be held responsible for their guidelines and that they should be enforced.

xiv. M. McFall Gorman thinks that themes should be competitive and should have a more rigorous application system.
J. Reid mentioned that lifestyle themed housings are in one hall and shouldn't be factored because they are not required to do programming.

1. M. Hicks agreed, that there are different levels of themes.

**b. External Committee Updates**

i. **University Senate**

1. H. Brooks gave a University Senate update. Public Safety has said that there's been a lot of less complaints off campus in regards to partying, so policies enacted have been enforced and are working.

2. E. Benoit added that they're worried about Halloween weekend.

3. K. Chrzanowska added that because there's been less problems off campus, there's been a rise in problems regarding partying on campus.
   
   a. E. Pelletier thinks this is a problem because police on campus are under staffed.
   
   b. K. Chrzanowska added that President Nunez has hired private police security force to be on campus at late night and on weekends.
      
      i. E. Benoit says people have seen more police around at night and feel safer.
      
      ii. M. Styrczula says there's been a lot of police that she's seen walking around and it makes a better campus environment.

   c. M. Wysopal wants to know if there's money in any budget to start a campus escort service that is employed by students
      
      i. M. Hicks thinks student issues should look into this. E Pelletier agreed.
      
      ii. M. Ehrnfelt says to keep in mind that, according to Public Safety policy, you can't get an escort when the shuttles are running
      
      iii. H. Brooks is concerned that this might encourage students to get drunk
      
      iv. G. Wrobel pointed out that they don't have to be drunk, they just might not feel safe.

   d. C. Gosselin says that housing has seen a change. Officers are spending more time outside. This is a step to combat the jumpings that have taken place on campus

   e. M. Hicks says Student Issues should research into what kind of services we can provide on any level.

ii. **Other External Committees**

1. R. Rivera is on the BRAC committee along with two others and all three of them cannot meet at the meeting time. This is going to be worked out this week.

2. M. McFall Gorman signed up for two committees and A. Bullard hasn't gotten back to her about the meeting times.
   
   a. M. Hicks will look into this.

8. **Dates to Remember:**

   a. Wednesday October 29th 11:30-2:30; Fall for Eastern
   
   b. Friday, December 5th; Cops Open Rec Night
Meeting adjourned at 4:19 PM