Parents Advisory Council Meeting
March 18, 2018
12:05 noon – 2:35 p.m.

Minutes

Members Available: Alison Phelan, George Sanchez, Kathleen Small, Jennifer Getchell, Jennifer Fournier, JoAnn Roselli, Joel Lord, Leslie Mitchell, Mary Ellen Millett, Melissa Goldman, Mercel Meredith Ault, Michelle White, Mike Burk, Mimi Mumm, Neena Verma, Ninette Marzouki, Patricia (Penny) Nichols-Cordero, Seena Franklin, Shannon Cullagh

Zoom Video Conference: Ginger Merritt

Absent Members: Anthony Fox, Peter Lee, Terry Dubedo, Chuck Kaufman

Staff Present: Rose Boulay, Jeanne Horrigan

Call to Order and Business Items
The meeting started at 12:05 p.m. with Melissa and Neena presiding. Melissa welcomed the new members and the group; and Jeanne asked members to introduce themselves.

Overview and Accomplishments
Neena reported on the Council’s accomplishments since it was created three years ago. It first started with 18 members. Since forming the group, approximately 50 members have joined. In addition, members volunteered countless hours at University functions and created a Facebook group which currently has 2,023 members, and a blog post with a new article uploaded once a month. They’ve also collaborated with the Dean of Students office to make the college experience a little bit easier for foster youths enrolling at the University. Within two years of starting this initiative, they’ve raised $4,915 in gift cards. They’ve contributed to Family Weekend by volunteering at different activities and by sponsoring a reception in collaboration with Auxiliary Services, a meditation session in collaboration with Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, and a panel discussion called “Dare to be Aware” with Student Affairs addressing College drinking. Through many on-campus meetings and conference calls, they’ve learned a lot about different departments and resources available to students. They look forward to continue their partnership with different departments across the university particularly the Office of Parent Services.

Brief Committee Reports/Plans for 2018-19
Community Service and Outreach: Mimi reported on the committee’s conference calls and plans for the school year. They will continue to tackle food insecurity on UMass campus; raise funds for and expand the Foster Care Initiative through an online donation system as opposed to gift cards mailing; and work with the Department of Children and Families to learn more about foster care students. In addition, they plan to work with the Dean of Students office to develop a mentorship program for Foster Care students.

Social Media: Neena Verma reported on behalf of Chuck for the Social Media committee. Blog articles are uploaded on schedule. She asked members to consider submitting an article to Chuck for the 2018-2019 academic year; 12 articles are needed for the academic year. The Facebook group continues to grow and has been very helpful to members. As the group administrator, Neena urged members (who can) to volunteer to monitor the group and pay attention to what’s being posted. The committee’s description drafted by Chuck was put to a vote and it was approved.

Wellness Committee: Ginger reported on this committee. They are working on providing more wellness activities for families. Activities will continue to cater to both students and families. Possible activities being discussed include Goat Yoga and a 5k Run.

Special Events Committee: Alison gave an update to members. They’ve been meeting via conference calls. One of the Committee’s suggestions is to host a “Pep Rally/Tent” event for families at Family Weekend. The committee will meet with the Office of Parents Services to discuss what is/isn’t possible.

Proposed Changes to Bylaws
Rose went over the bylaws changes. Because of time constraint, changes will be re-addressed and voted on at the next conference call along with the Facebook monitoring document.

Guest Speakers: University Diversity Dialogue with Student Affairs and Campus Life by Shelly Perdomo, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Advocacy, Inclusion, and Support Programs and Dave Neely, Diversity Education and Training Specialist, Advocacy, Inclusion, and Support Programs

The dialogue was a continuation of last fall’s conversation with the Associate Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion. Members wanted to learn more about diversity related issues on campus. The speakers’ goals were to
- Raise awareness about diversity resources on campus
- Help members understand the interconnectedness of national and local issues and how they impact the university and student success
- Help members imagine how this information relates to them in their role as Council members

Announcements
Rose shared Summer NSO dates with Council members and asked them to consider volunteering at sessions on Day I for registration and dinner. She will send out a SignUp Genius form in the spring. She also mentioned the Family Weekend date and encouraged members to book a room.
- 8:00-9:30 am, Registration Table
- 5:45-7:00 pm, Family Dinners

First Year Session Dates:
- June 4-5       June 25-26
- June 7-8       June 28-June 29
- June 11-12     July 2-3
- June 14-15     July 9-10
- June 21-22     July 12-13

Family weekend dates: October 19-21, 2018
Hotel Room Blocs available at www.umass.edu/parents/familyweekend/faqs

Acknowledgement of Ongoing Members
Jeanne acknowledged the members who have reached their term and therefore will leave the Council this coming May. She thanked them for their service and dedication. Each member received a certificate.

Remaining Spring 2018 Conference Calls
Advisory Council – April 9 and May 7 at 5:30PM
Co-Chairs – April 3 and May 1 at 5:30PM

Fall Meeting Dates
- September 2, 10-12pm, Location TBA
- October 21, 10-12:30pm, Location TBA

Meeting adjourned at 2:35pm.

Alison Phelan, recording secretary