

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST
OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Presiding Officer Robert Wilson called the 645th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate to order on November 3, 2005 at 3:30 p.m. in Herter Hall, Room 227.

I. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

PANEL

1. Moderator: Roland Chilton, Chair, Student Affairs and University Life Council
2. Presentation by Sally Linowski, Associate Director, University Health Services
“High Risk Drinking Among UMass Amherst Students” (20 Minutes)
(Please visit: www.mystudentbody.com)
3. Presentation by Jo-Anne Vanin, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and Barbara O’Connor, Chief of Police
“Campus Violence” (10 Minutes)
4. Respondents (10 Minutes): Dawn Thompson, Director of Residential Life
Pavel Payano, President, Student Government Association
John Kleschinsky, Graduate Student, Center for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (CADAP)

* Due to technical problems, the first part of the meeting was not audio-taped and, therefore, is missing from the minutes.

A pdf version of Sally Linowski’s PowerPoint presentation can be found at:
<http://www.umass.edu/senate/fs/minutes/2005-2006/UHS-Alcohol-Nov-3-2005.pdf>

John Kleschinsky talked about a workshop available for undergraduates who violate the UMass Alcohol Policy. There are a number of students that realize the extent of alcohol abuse consequences after they attended the workshop. MyStudentBody would be a great educational tool to give freshmen a basic education on what alcohol really does. It is important to note that many students don’t understand the policy on this campus. It is important that we do a better job giving students the opportunity to receive and understand that information. The other program that he works with is the Smart Choices Program with the student athletes. They use social norms to change the misperceptions that students have. The majority of students aren’t drinking at a high level. They are using the student athlete population, which is a high-risk population, to get that message across, to change those misperceptions and to use them in the campus community as spokespersons.

Student Christina stated she thought the issue that should be dealt with most, in terms of alcohol abuse, was the safety of the students. She was much more concerned about her own safety as a female student than about drinking. She was worried about the recent sexual assault that occurred in Southwest, as well as the stabbings over at fraternity row. She was concerned about the lack of lighting in the yellow lot in Orchard Hill. She didn’t feel safe on campus because of these issues. Safety is the more urgent issue, not binge drinking. If we want to focus on binge drinking, we should do something new, because what we have been doing does not work. She emphasized that peer-to-peer contact is more useful than an organization and police enforcing laws on students. Regardless of what is done, people will continue to bring alcohol on campus. The more laws you create, the more closet drinkers you will have. She thought that making new laws and acting as a bully would only make things worse.

Sally Linowski responded that she agreed that peer-to-peer contact was essential because peers could discuss things and hold each other accountable for things that aren’t going to be shared with those in authority. Health Services has a peer education program and she encouraged any student in attendance that wanted to get involved with that program to do so. We also have a program called Fresh and Sober for students who question their drinking. Mental Health Services is available for individuals with problems. She cited the research that shows that restricting alcohol access to underage students and holding them accountable for egregious offenses reduces violence. Addressing policy and enforcement is how you make a safer campus. She said that holding people accountable is important, not arbitrary laws or targeting individuals. Education alone isn’t going to do it. It takes a multifaceted approach, of which policy and enforcement are only one piece.

Vice Chancellor Jo-Anne Vanin addressed the point that the student made about lighting. She wanted people to watch for the announcement of the annual Walk for Light, a partnership event between the SGA and the UMPD where students and members of the UMPD physical plant actually walk the campus, in teams, to scope out areas that are most frequented by people during the evening. They check how the lighting is, where the lights are out, whether bushes needed to be carved back. It is an attempt to look at the campus as people see it at night and to address issues of lighting. She encouraged people to be a part of that. She also supported any program that is peer-to-peer. Students are the best advocates to their peer group. She said that students have the ability to start their own peer group, if they’d like.

An unidentified student said that she didn't feel comfortable speaking with administration because she believed that they don't take the students' opinions very seriously. She asked why the meeting was at 3:30 p.m. when many students were in classes and they would have to miss class to come. She saw just one flyer for the event, even though it is an important student issue.

Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate stated that all of the Faculty Senate meetings are at 3:30 p.m. on Thursdays. That is the regular meeting time. Notice of all the meetings goes out to all of the faculty members and all the departments. There was a good student voice in attendance here and the Faculty Senate welcomes that.

Pavel Payano stated that he thought the main issue was that a lot of students were wondering why the SGA was not notified of the meeting. The SGA is the body that is supposed to represent the students. He suggested that perhaps a panel like this one can be organized along with the SGA and students would be more apt to go to that meeting.

Senator Roland Chilton replied that the SGA could also organize a similar panel and it could be very worthwhile.

Student Brian stated that he thought it is very unfortunate that there was a problem with alcohol and over-drinking, and that there was a problem with violence. When drinking leads to things like unprotected sex and academic problems, it is an issue. He believed that these issues are the conscious choice of adults. He admitted that he has been to parties and drank alcohol, but it has not stopped him from having a good academic career at UMass. It is a conscious choice. We are walking a dangerous line when talking about impeding on all rights of all students. The panel's evidence has shown that it is a small percentage of students that are the offenders. He said that his room was illegally searched by an officer this year. He was woken up by a knock on the door and his room had been searched before he even knew what happened. The officer did not ask, or have a reason, or a warrant to search his room. His dorm is his home and it scared him because he didn't know where to go to. He thought that it was the police that were supposed to protect him. It was a violation of his rights. It is crossing the line when a police officer can come in and search a student's room. He believes that the Faculty Senators would not want the police to search their own homes without reason, because a small amount of people may be doing illegal things that hurt them. He stated that, when students' bags and rooms are searched, it is a violation of a constitutional law.

Chief Barbara O'Connor responded that there are procedures students can take if they feel their rights were violated. One way is through a citizen's complaint process and there's also student legal services. There are also other avenues available. She welcomed the student to call her and make an appointment to talk about the incident. The police would review it and take it very seriously.

Student Max Goldin asked if the panel thought education was a much better avenue for addressing drug and alcohol use on campus than authoritative bag and room searches.

Vice Chancellor Vanin replied that she thought education and enforcement go hand in hand. One will not work without the other.

An unidentified student commented on how students come in to the university already having a culture of alcohol and drugs. He asked if all-freshman dorms are a good idea. He said that he was much smarter now as a senior than he was as a freshman. The University might want to rethink the policy of putting freshmen together in a dorm, where they will build off of each other. He thought that having older students around could help to calm them down.

An unidentified student and Resident Assistant stated that education was a much more effective avenue in curbing negative behavior in students rather than an authoritarian approach. The RA's feel that they do a good job at enforcement when it is necessary. She also felt that it was not their main focus. She was concerned about the talk around campus about adding to the student code of conduct. She would like to ask that the Faculty Senators consider talking to students about alcohol and violence and being a positive role model in that regard. She also thought that they should poll students about the matter. She endorses communication between all levels at the University.

Student Jeffrey Napolitano apologized to the Faculty Senate. He felt that this was often the only place students could go to get basic information on what is going on around campus. He believed that the students were there because the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor Gargano wanted to make a policy that bags and rooms are non-consensually searched. He wondered why the panel didn't discuss that issue, since he considered it the most controversial and important current issue.

Vice Chancellor Vanin responded that there is a Student Affairs Judicial Issues Committee. That group – made up of staff, students, and faculty - discuss issues related to the code of student conduct, review issues for implementation of new policies, or review old policies for their effectiveness. On the agenda for this semester is the question of inspecting bags as they are brought into residence halls, if there is a concern for what might be contained in the bag. No policy will be proposed, drafted, or implemented that in any way violates your constitutional rights. They could not do that. Whatever proposal the Committee comes up with will be reviewed by University counsel. Pavel Payano is on the Committee as well as a few other students. It is

a sub-committee that is doing the research. This is another possible tool that many public institutions across the state of Massachusetts are using to try to interrupt the flow of excessive amounts of alcohol into residence halls. It remains to be seen if an appropriate policy can be drafted for UMass without abridging anyone's rights. She will not have anything in the code that abridges a student's constitutional rights.

An unidentified student wanted to know why the committee meeting that Vice Chancellor Vanin was talking about didn't allow students to come and voice their opinions.

Vice Chancellor Vanin explained that it was a working committee and there were representatives through which they can voice their opinion. It is not exclusionary, it is a matter of effective working practices.

Senator Chilton said that any proposals that come from the administration, in attempts to respond to the problems that we have been talking about here, will be taken up by the Faculty Senate's Student Affairs and University Life Council. The Council will draft a report and submit it to the Faculty Senate to discuss, debate, and vote on it. He suggested that the student government follow the same procedure.

Student Cameron Woods said that he is a resident assistant and had noticed that the assistant residential directors, especially in Washington tower, seem thoroughly exhausted. It has been a very stressful year. They have had three times the usual amount of drug and alcohol enforcement problems in the buildings. Are there plans in the works to take some stress off of the residential directors and their assistants? Perhaps they could hire some non-students for these positions so they could fully dedicate their time to the concerns of the building.

Dawn Thompson wanted to commend Mr. Woods, the residence directors and assistant residence directors because they are on the front lines and it is exhausting work. She thought that it was important to regularly review the staff's workload. She would be happy to meet with Mr. Woods about some of his specific concerns.

An unidentified student said he also serves on the Judicial Affairs Committee as an SGA appointee. The administration is trying to find a sneaky way around the constitution by having these searches. He has seen some of the problems in residence halls from alcohol and has seen that it can make people do some bad things. The room and bag searches are ten times worse than any kind of alcohol incident. It is a violation of the fundamental rights of students.

An unidentified student thanked the panel for showing their enthusiasm in trying to address this issue. He wanted to point out that there is a lack of communication on campus. Students don't have any ownership over the laws and policies that they are subject to. He remarked that there is a serious lack of communication between the Faculty Senate and the Student Government.

An unidentified student expressed that he had a problem with the idea of having exams on Friday. He thought that it was setting up students to fail.

Student Jonathan Pumarol wanted to comment on MyStudentBody.com since it encourages learning, which is more important than infringing on students' rights. The policy change would cause an uproar and disobedience, no matter what is done. Instead of putting pressure on the students, he believed that the administration should put pressure on corporations. Whenever something goes wrong, it is always the little guy, not the big guy on top, that gets busted. He mentioned something promoted by Anheuser-Busch called Bud Pong. Students were blamed for buying into it and, when confronted, Anheuser-Busch said that the rules are that it is supposed to be played with water. That's not right.

II. REGULAR MEETING

A. NEW BUSINESS

1. Special Report of the Rules Committee concerning the Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Student Plagiarism, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 06-009 with Motion No. 05-06.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Student 05-06 Plagiarism, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 06-009.

This motion was seconded and adopted.

2. Special Report of the General Education Council concerning a Recommended General Education Designation, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 06-010 with Motion No. 06-06.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the General Education Designation, as presented in
06-06 Sen. Doc. No. 06-010.

This motion was seconded and adopted.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Secretary Ernest May reported that the UMA 250 Task Force is hard at work and is making great progress. He was elected as chair at the last meeting, and if anyone had any questions, he can be contacted.

2. The Chair of the Rules Committee

Senator Richard Bogartz said that he thought this meeting was great. He stated that they ought to take up the issue of searches as part of the Faculty Senate function. "We couldn't ask for anything more in terms of enlivening the Faculty Senate and getting some exchanges that seem to be very much needed."

3. The Representative of the Massachusetts Society of Professors

David Mix Barrington shared good news about the retroactive pay. The administration has announced that, on Dec. 2, the faculty and librarians will get the pay from FY 2003 that was recently voted on by the legislature. The Union is concerned with the UMA 250 plan. They are concerned with the diversity of the faculty that the University will be hiring. They had a workshop with members of search committees looking at better ways to increase the possibility of diversity in searches. They are concerned that the allocation process the UMA committee is involved in be as transparent and as fair as possible. The Union voted on and approved a contract in August. They are waiting for the Governor to take action on it.

C. QUESTION PERIOD (10-Minute Limit)

Senator Marta Calas wanted to discuss the idea that parents are more involved with this generation of students. She was not sure if it is good or bad. She only teaches seniors when she teaches undergrads and she thought that students today seem much younger than the students she had several years ago. She has had incidents where parents have called her because their student didn't do well on an exam. That had never happened before. She was concerned that their behavior is because parents are paying more money and therefore think that they have more to say about the education of their student. We are thinking that this is good, but perhaps it isn't so good. She would like the Faculty Senate to bring that issue up at some point.

The 645th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate stood adjourned at 5:15 p.m. on November 3, 2005.
The proceedings of this meeting are available on audiotape in the Faculty Senate Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest D. May
Secretary of the Faculty Senate