

Student InterCouncil
Monday, November 16th, 2020
WebEx Meeting
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order Rachel Pham, SIC President

Meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM. Rachel polled the members for any objections or corrections to the minutes from the October 19, 2020. Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved.

II. Committee updates

A. OperationsRachel Buckley

- a. Create a GroupMe so everyone can be on the same page.

B. ScholarshipsAnkita Podichetty

- a. All COVID-19 scholarships + additional 6 were given out.
- b. Last meeting was a quick introduction, we will know more after the IFC meeting.

C. Public Relations.....Melissa Yang

- a. Melissa shared that Sharmily wants to revive the SIC Twitter account.
- b. Sharmily advised that SPH is having a drive for sanitizers and other supplies, please spread the word. Sharmily to forward the flyer for the Public Relations Committee to share via SIC social media accounts.

D. Project Funding Niharika Leela

- a. Possibly getting Public Relations Committee involved in project funding as there have not been applications due to COVID.

E. Student Activities Nour Alia and Omid Hadj

- a. Dates are set for Sports Day and Crawfish Boil. Sports Day will take place Saturday, February 20, 2021, and Crawfish Boil Friday, April 9, 2021.
- b. Approaching Sports Day cautiously since we don't know how the current COVID-19 situation will be at that time.
 - i. Replacing sports with more social distancing - friendly ones.
 - 1. E.g. kickball, baseball
 - ii. Creating a google form for members to input suggestions
- c. Aiming to complete Sports Day planning by our January meeting.

F. DiversityRachel Pham

- a. Taskforce replaced by an official university committee
- b. Suggestion to have a forum that students can anonymously post to, allowing them to share experiences and make suggestions.
 - i. Participation could be the main pitfall: Discussion
 - 1. Could be a good idea.
 - 2. UT Insider sent out a link for Lighthouse Insider to report ethical violations and negative feedback.
 - 3. Will require moderation to prevent arguments or hurt feelings
 - a. Can possibly individually DM people.
 - 4. Eric advise that there is a student perception survey that is done biennially with 10-15% response. Currently in the process of planning the survey for Spring. Does SIC want to add questions

related to Diversity?

- a. We will have the opportunity to review questions.
 - b. How do students feel about the community?
 - i. Timing is important given what University leadership and SIC is looking into right now.
 - c. Survey gives us information that can be acted upon by current and future SIC teams.
5. How to keep momentum going?
- a. Have consistent discussion with sharing experiences. Maybe a “Humans of UTHHealth” situation. Would be a collaboration between PR and Diversity.
 - b. Can try to do this through SIC itself? Maybe we invite people?
 - c. Ana knows some photographers and Zaid can take portraits.
 - i. Would want to include students AND faculty.
 - ii. MMS has a Humans of McGovern page. More for wellness and staying focused:
 - iii. SBMI does a Week with Students series that could be good.
 - iv. Ideas:
 1. Can create our own social media post
 2. Collaborate with existing pages
 3. Can have anonymous nominations for students we want to feature.
 - v. PR and Diversity can come together to discuss this.

G. UTSAC Melissa Yang and Sonia Patel

- a. Overall UT System organization that makes recommendations.
- b. 2 new committees:
 - i. Racial Justice Committee (Melissa):
 1. Gathered research from each school on racial justice and diversity to see what educational and coursework requirements each school has.
 2. Each school has very different requirements.
 3. Planning to make a couple recommendations about racial justice:
 - a. Addressing structured racism by implementing implicit bias training.
 - i. Angela Hayes: Look at research as some research suggests that some programs can increase implicit bias
 - ii. Is there a project out there that people can participate to evaluate their own implicit biases?
 1. Can take this to UTHHealth Senate.
 - b. Having better reporting structures in place for students to report their grievances
 - ii. Career Success Committee (Melissa):
 1. Made recommendations of topics to tackle last year. The ones to

tackle this year were mental health and career success.

iii. COVID-19 Committee: Sonia Patel

1. After discussions with students across other campuses, UTHealth seems to have done a good job. We have done a good job keeping our numbers low, doing good screening and adjusting with the situation.
2. Some recommendations based on UTHealth actions:
 - a. Maintaining consistent frequency of COVID related communications.
 - b. Having dashboards giving statistics of the student dashboard.
 - i. Need to make sure it's in line with HIPAA and FERPA.
 - ii. UT Austin already has one, harder to scale it up to UT System, so this can be done individually by each campus.
 - iii. Texas is #1 for all of the wrong reasons, so it is great that our campus has been able to keep cases so low (85/5500).
 - iv. UTHealth has an internal dashboard for campus cases (Eric can send screenshots to Sonia).
 1. Cannot be published due to risk of identifying students.
 - c. Should have more screenings. Most of the schools should have temperature screenings and verbal screenings.
 - i. Will require more personnel.
 - ii. Schools that were not screening were due to money and much bigger student population. UT Austin has an app that does verbal screenings.
 - iii. Maybe different systems for health and academic campuses.
 - d. Having student representation on reopening plans.
 - e. Do more need-based scholarships for COVID. No other schools were able to get that done. UT System would like to hear how scholarships were put in place, how to use unused funds in the budget and increase transparency of student fees.
 - i. Not a lot of schools were in that position.
 - ii. Increasing transparency of fees by letting students know what the fees they are paying would be used for.
 - iii. Would each school have to generate a report like this individually?

iv. Academic Success Committee (Sonia):

1. Goal is to ensure that every student can finish their program.
2. Last year the committee made a report that said that high risk

groups (transfer students, 1st gen students, students of lower SES) need more attention.

3. Creating and aggregating resources for students.
4. This includes undergraduate and graduate students.
 - a. Could be beneficial to separate those out.
5. There is a student success guiding coalition for academic campuses that have a list of resources for academic campuses, but not for Health campuses.

H. HOOP.....Mariaelena Boyle

- a. Committee reviewed the gift giving policy.

I. IFC Ankita Podichetty

- a. Mental health and COVID discussions
- b. Updates from individual campuses
- c. IFC Scholarship applications are out and some changes were made to the selection committee.

J. University Academic Council Jayanta Mondal

- a. Requests for increased mailbox sizes have been updated (100 GB?)
- b. Changes in myUTH lockouts.
- c. Macs have been approved for MMS.
- d. Badge access has not changed much
- e. Discussions about ongoing assessment processes to help departments review proposals.

K. Student Services Council Cem Dede

- a. Have only had one meeting so far.
- b. Upcoming holidays and new events were an issue,
- c. Office of International Affairs planned to conduct meetings regarding international students and their visa situations.
- d. Changes in law about limiting certain student visas to 4 years: opposing this law

L. Community OutreachBrittany Trinh and Sonia Patel

- a. Were able to work with Ronald McDonald.
 - i. Dropped off lunches in person.
- b. Planning other holiday outreach events. Want to continue the Turkey Drive and Toy Drive:
 - i. Contacted Star of Hope, have a homeless shelter and women's shelter. Want to donate \$500 worth of turkeys (30 to 50 turkeys) and make notes for Thanksgiving cards.
 1. Many of our faculty volunteer here.
 - ii. A motion was made and approved for \$500 for turkeys and Thanksgiving cards for Turkey Drive.
- c. Possible event with UTPB and working to stock up their essentials and food cabinets.
- d. Many families have issues with parking at TMC.
- e. Can we make care packages?
- f. Take pictures and writing blurbs for the newsletter.
- g. Motion to approve funding for Toy Drive: Approved.**
 - i. Buy toys and work with UT Police

M. TF Burks ScholarshipAlison Kiley and Mariaelena Boyle

- a. Applications went out on October 26. Student applications due on 11/16. Final submissions to be submitted by December 1st.

N. Environmental Rachel Buckley

- a. Going to have a meeting later this month
- b. Plans to place recycling bins on hold since there are fewer students.
 - i. Was successfully implemented in SPH, SBMI, MMS. May not be a current priority due to COVID.

III. Announcements

- a. Received 3 applications for Student Regents, Nedra will be providing a copy of the applicants to SIC Officers for review.
- b. Updates from Dr. Love: Diversity Inclusion Taskforce, Covid-19 Response Update, Update on UT System Mental Health, Well-Being and Substance Abuse Initiatives

III. Adjournment

- o Motion to adjourn approved at 7:32pm

Respectfully submitted by Ankita Podichetty, on 11/16/2020
Approved by Student InterCouncil on 02/22/2021