

Meeting Minutes
Committee on Student Affairs, Religious Life, and University Relations
November 5, 2008

Present: Scott McGinnis, Ken Kirby, Philip Poole, Jennifer Hall, Elizabeth Dobbins, David Loudon, Mark Castle, Elizabeth Wells

Chair McGinnis called the meeting to order and announced the agenda: (1) petition from the Samford University Academic Team for status as a recognized organization; (2) overview of her areas of responsibility by Jennifer Hall, Director of Student Activities/Leadership Development; and (3) discussion of the committee's charge and plans for future work.

1. Samford University Academic Team

Freshman Aaron Carr presented the petition from this group. The purpose will be to foster a community of academic excellence by having an academic team to participate in intercollegiate tournaments. The team also plans to sponsor intramural tournaments that would help with recruiting and awareness. Kirby raised the question as to how members would be chosen for the team. After some discussion the committee voted to approve the application.

2. Student Activities Overview

Hall presented a survey of her office's work areas and challenges. Student organizations are required to gain recognition in order to be able to operate and petition the SGA for funds. Given the number of student organizations and the fluid nature of their membership, accurate record-keeping is a serious challenge for the Student Activities office. Organizations are supposed to submit a form each year to verify that they are still operating. Hall's plans include a focus on advisor training, and the possible acquisition of a computer program that would assist in tracking and management of the various student groups, assuming funds can be found for the latter.

3. Committee description and purpose

There was general approval of the revised committee description presented by McGinnis (excepting some stylistic suggestions to improve clarity). Review of this led to a discussion of the committee's work. Dobbins queried whether the committee needed to meet regularly to vet student organizations, given that they have already been approved by Hall's office. Dobbins suggested that the committee should focus on guidelines and strategic review of its areas of responsibility rather than day-to-day operations. Hall indicated that the traditional path for student organization approval has been a progression through her office, the faculty committee, and then the trustees. McGinnis suggested there was value in continuing to maintain faculty involvement in the process. He suggested that the committee try vetting routine requests via email and also choose a project to focus on proactively for the next term, such as student retention/enrollment management. There was general agreement to attempt this model for the next term and then reassess. McGinnis will investigate how the committee might engage the university's current attention to enrollment management.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.