

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

Committee on University Student Life
(Final; Information)

SL.13.01 2012-13 Annual Report

The following report summarizes the activities of the Senate Committee on University Student Life (USL) during the 2012-2013 academic year. The Committee met six times: September 19, October 17, November 14, December 12, February 13, and April 10. One of USL's primary functions is to serve as a liaison between Senate and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Another is to raise, discuss, and act on issues of particular concern to student life.

Throughout the year, Vice Chancellor Renee Romano and Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Kenneth Ballom brought information to USL on new programs and student affairs issues. Illinois Student Senate (ISS) President Brock Gebhardt reported on activities of ISS. Assistant Provost Kristi Kuntz kept the committee informed on activities in the Provost's office of interest to the committee.

A number of issues have been raised and addressed during the year through invited presentations. These included:

- Julie Misa, Director of International Student and Scholar Services, attended to give an overview of the services that are provided by International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) including:
 - pre-arrival and new student services. International students are mandated to meet with ISSS prior to obtaining their I-card. ISSS offers an orientation program but only 5-10% of international students choose to participate. ISSS is working on an online orientation program to encourage better participation;
 - advising;
 - immigration services;
 - financial assistance;
 - income tax software; and
 - programs and workshops.
- Charles Tucker, College of Engineering Associate Dean, and Lori West, Academic Achievement Program Assistant Director, attended to provide information on the programs for international undergraduates in the College of Engineering. The information they shared included recommendations made by the Council of International Deans Committee, including improving:
 - registration and orientation for international students;

- English as a second language courses – students who are not native speakers are required to take an English placement test;
 - Career Services – international students make more visits to the Career Services Office than domestic students; and
 - the housing process – Most residence halls are closed over breaks (Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring). What does this do to the student climate and socialization of international students if only a few residence halls are open over breaks? More international students choose to live in those halls that remain open, encouraging self-segregation.
- Andrea Cailles, Assistant Director of Residential Life, attended to discuss initiatives for international students including the production of three orientation videos: pre-arrival orientation, academic success components, and cross-cultural differences. The goal is to have the pre-arrival video available by May for incoming international students to view over the summer. She also noted that living and learning communities can be helpful to provide an in-house support system for international students and to help them get to know campus and become part of the community.
 - Nicholas Osborne, Assistant Dean, attended to discuss Veterans’ Affairs on campus. He noted that there has been an increase in veterans coming to campus to further their education after leaving the military. Although the military is a self-sufficient atmosphere, making it harder for these students to reach out for help when needed, the campus is working to create a community for veterans to help their transition from military life to university life.

USL urges that student input be solicited through as many Senate committees as possible. The Committee especially urges that USL be included in all Senate deliberations in which university student life is or may be affected. This will be particularly important as campus leaders consider allocation of future budgets.

COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY STUDENT LIFE

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