

Delegates' Agenda Discussion

Webster University Officer's Summit 2003

Students voted for the top seven (7) items that they wanted to see discussed at the October 7 session with key university administrators. 40 students turned in ballots and submitted topics for the discussion.

Twenty students participated in the discussion, which was facilitated by Mathias Jackson, SGA president. The administrators included Richard Meyers, president; Neil George, executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs; Deborah Dey, vice president for students and enrollment management; Dave Garafola, vice president for finance and administration; and Larry Haffner, vice president for information technology.

Votes Topics

26 **Campus Safety**

Student Comments: Many students walk through the parking lots from garage to WH and Pearson House – we'd like to see more lighting. Parking garage needs mirrors to help people avoid accidents at the corners. Crosswalks needed at Big Bend.

Administrators' Response: We've seen some rather dramatic changes in traffic patterns as a result of new buildings and campus development. We've added lots of street lighting. We're building new academic buildings and will create a new quadrangle on the east side of campus. We're doing traffic and parking studies as part of the campus master plan development. Our intention is to create new sidewalks and lighting in conjunction with new buildings. We'll look at adding mirrors to the garage; good suggestion. County and city have to approve mid-block crosswalks. City has been very resistant to this. We are attempting to do brick crosswalks at Garden and Edgar. We can look at making request to County.

Student Comments: Concern about Public Safety officers doing things unrelated to their jobs, such as lounging and sitting around watching TV.

Administrators' Response: We have specific rounds that the officers are required to make and we can follow up on that. May have seen someone on a break, but Jamalh will check up on that concern. We need to check up on that and deal with that perception. We'll let the students know after checking into it. Lounging while working is not allowed.

25 **Facilities/Renovations**

Student Comments: Need new art building – any plans for that? I've heard that it might be moved off campus – that would be a bad idea.

Administrators' Response: We are working on studying how much space is needed for a new VAS. 2nd phase of housing will cause current VAS to come down. VAS is not the highest priority of all the building projects, but it will be addressed. Our intent is to keep VAS on campus as of now.

Student Comments: Ground floor of Loretto and Maria – bathrooms and vending area really need to be renovated – what are the plans?

Administrators' Response: We're looking at a renovation of Maria, not sure for what. We are doing a remodeling of the cafeteria this coming summer. Some drawings are now displayed in the cafeteria. Restrooms in that area really need to be done.

Student Comments: 2nd floor of Webster Hall – no climate control, doors are backwards, and there are no trash receptacles in the computer lab. The doors swing in rather than out. The computer labs are much better than they used to be.

Administrators' Response: The center drop-in lab does not have AC and no windows.

Will cost \$5 million to fix the HVAC systems in Webster Hall – something we plan to do down the road. We're not sure why the doors were designed to swing in, but the fire marshall required some things like that. We can look into changing the doors. More computers are coming for drop-in space.

Student Comments: The classroom desks in HSPC and Pearson are old and too small. Can this be resolved? In four years there have been terrific changes to the campus.

Administrators' Response: We have a furniture replacement cycle and you'll see new furniture coming and the desks will be bigger.

Student Comments: Can we install a few more scanners around campus?

Administrators' Response: We can look into adding more scanners, as space permits.

Student Comments: Why doesn't Conservatory have its own box office?

Administrators' Response: There was a box office added that Conservatory shares with Opera Theatre.

Student Comments: We need more rec space, especially a gym for playing basketball. Can we get access to high school gyms so we can play rec basketball? Student organizations also need more storage.

Administrators' Response: Get involved with Ted Hoef and John Ginsburg on needs related to expansion of UC. The campus is severely land-locked.

Student Comments: Sidewalks all around each apartment building is needed.

Administrators' Response: We can look at the sidewalk issue working in conjunction with student affairs. Work within the WVA community to look at this issue.

20 Scholarships/financial aid for upper class students in relation to tuition increases.

Student Comments: This is a very big issue for students on financial aid. When there are tuition increases, our financial aid is not rising proportionately. I have to work two jobs now while taking 18 credits because of the tuition increases. If a prospective student would see that financial aid increases along with tuition increases, enrollment would increase and this revenue would help the university. Retention rates are lower than other schools in Missouri; if financial aid was increased for returning students, our retention would be better.

Administrators' Response: We won't be looking into this because we are reliant on tuition revenues and we have lots of things we need to do. Costs go up and everyone has to help make the enterprise work and pay our bills, give faculty good salaries, etc. We understand, but there are ways that you can appeal your financial aid if your family's financial status changes. Work-study awards increase each year while you're in school. Loan eligibility increases each year. We do give out \$11 million in Webster aid. We're not going to look into this because we cannot afford it. However, in our next campaign we hope to raise more funds for student scholarships. Long term, we will raise the endowment and this will help with scholarships. We wish tuition was less and scholarships were more. The average tuition increase across the U.S. was 11% last year. Our increase was less. We work hard to keep our tuition in the medium range. We have to be careful not to grow too much, but you have a good point. As we raise more money for scholarships, we are hoping to devote more of them to returning students.

15 Food Issues

Student Comments: Students want food service in the evening on the east side of campus – Pearson and HSPC – can we get a food cart instead of a vending machine dinner? Students don't have time to get dinner before class. Or could you move the classes out of the high school and Pearson/Priest into Sverdrup?

Administrators' Response: We already have five campus locations for food service. On a campus of this size there would usually be 2 locations. Can't afford it without having someone subsidize it. In the past, meal plan students have had to subsidize these retail units that lose money. It is a volume-driven decision. Maybe student organizations can help out and sell pre-packaged food purchased from the food service. All the classrooms are in use, or we would move classes. We'll ask the vending contractor to look into adding a food machine to the lounge in HSPC, if faculty in that building are okay with that.

Student Comments: Students would like to get a return of the 50-cent vending machines.

Administrators' Response: We'll ask the vendor to look into adding cans to some of the bottle machines.

Student Comments: Food is better than last year and I do like events like the Soul Food night. But some food is not good, such as "cardboard" fries. Cost is also too high, especially for French fries. Cheese fries are really bad and stuff sits there a lot. I'd prefer to wait for freshly prepared cook-to-order food.

Administrators' Response: We are going to a better French fry product. Some products at Gorlok Grill don't hold up well, but people don't like to wait and when there is very little traffic this is a problem. Would you like to see us go to a cook-to-order system and you would have to wait a bit?

Student Comments: Sometimes the recipes are not right, like some really nasty lasagna.

Administrators' Response: We do work with the cooks to evolve the menu. Please fill out the comment cards and be specific when you have a problem with the food.

Student Comments: I've been here for four years and I've never had a problem with the food. I've seen positive changes. Would paying with debit/credit cards be an option?

Administrators' Response: We are adding credit cards/debit cards at Jazzman's, but this comes with a cost and it will have to pay for itself. If it is successful at Jazzman's this might be added at other locations.

Student Comments: Why keep the Gorlok Grill open when it is dead and there are at least 6 classes in HSPC and Pearson? Why not try a trial run in the evening?

Administrators' Response: We're looking really carefully at evening hours of places like Jazzman's but we're not seeing much business. Even at Sverdrup there was not sufficient volume to make it work, that's why we're reluctant to try something in spaces with less student traffic.

14 Fitness Center expansion

Student Comments: When will it happen? It would help but it is not crucial like other projects.

Administrators' Response: No intermediary plans prior to the UC being expanded. Talk with UC officials about any ideas you have for interim ideas for how to accommodate the demand.

12 More budget jobs on campus.

Student Comments: Any way to make budget jobs more readily available on campus?

Administrators' Response: It is up to each department to request more funding for student employment in the budget process. It is not a centralized process. There is money left over each year when you look at it in aggregate, so it looks like we don't need more money. Not sure of how to solve the problem. We could look at a policy decision to pull out budgeted funds from each department, but each department would not like that. There are some jobs that are not as attractive, so those funds go unused.

Student Comments: Have you looked into adding more funding for international student jobs on campus?

Administrators' Response: Each year, Dr. Meyers has committed to increasing the funding for international student jobs, as a result of discussions at this delegate's agenda program in the past.

12 Larger class selection at overseas campuses.

Student Comments: Freshmen fly free requires that you study abroad in junior or senior year, yet there are few upper level courses at these campuses. Haven't seen a lot of Education classes overseas – will that be changing?

Administrators' Response: We are looking at opening up the Freshmen Fly Free program to students who want to study abroad earlier. Students are not aware of all the elective courses that are available abroad. And this is expanded regularly. We are also starting short-term classes in China and Japan. Some discussions are taking place to try and identify what can be done to teach Education classes abroad – should see some developments soon – this is a challenge due to certification requirements. We're also looking aggressively at short term classes over break periods. We want more students to study abroad. Another opportunity for study abroad is to do an exchange program.

Student Comments: Concerned about cost of housing in St. Louis not being waived while housing is free in Thailand.

Administrators' Response: Housing costs in St. Louis are waived for freshmen who participate in the Thailand initiative.

11 Technology

Student Comments: Students expressed concern regarding adding smart classrooms to HSPC and Pearson.

Administrators' Response: We looked at all classrooms around campus and decided on which ones to do. We may add some more this Spring. There are some space issues in some rooms in those buildings. We added data projectors to 20 classrooms.

Student Comments: Student's free websites get deleted every summer and all our work disappears – can there be an option to change that?

Administrators' Response: We'll look into that, I'm surprised it disappears. It shouldn't be a problem, because it is not widely used.

Student Comments: Some of the computers in the public spaces around campus are really old – can't replacement computers be used for this?

Administrators' Response: We're looking at finding all the places that have been outside our replacement cycle and looking to increase the pool to get these replaced.

Student Comments: Can you sell old computers to technology students?

Administrators' Response: We now have an arrangement with Dell for computers that can't be used on campus, or they are stripped for parts.

Student Comments: Really happy with the technology opportunities that I get in my broadcast journalism major. Is there any way the radio station can get back on normal broadcasting?

Administrators' Response: Some advances in technology have been made as a result of these delegate's agenda discussions. We're trying to increase access to studios but we do have space constraints. We're putting money into upgrading technology in the communications area. We have aggressively pursued options for the radio station, but nothing has worked out yet. Perhaps the radio station should come up with a catchier name more suited to the Internet and then listenership may increase.

11 Environmental Tobacco Smoke

Student Comments: Some students would like smokers not to stand in front of the buildings. Is there any way to build a shelter away from the building entrances for smokers? A smoking gazebo would be great. Except for the one student's impassioned speech, not many students would have supported the position that smoking should be banned at the entrances to buildings.

Administrators' Response: Think about what the smoking areas look like at the airport. We understand the issue for those who are affected because of health concerns.

10 Sheltered bike pole/racks

Student Comments: Some students would like to see covered bike racks, maybe in the garage and/or somewhere around the apartments.

Administrators' Response: We will look at the possibility of putting bike racks in the garage. We can also look at that for the new residence halls and the expanded UC. Students should work with Student Affairs on what types of racks/poles are needed.

The discussion adjourned at 5:00. The rest of the identified topics may be addressed by Student Government, or in other settings, later in the year.

9	Common Hour
8	Additional work-study opportunities; better advertisements, not jus a web site
7	Additional funds for student organizations
6	Campus Pub
6	Women's Resource Center
6	Bookstore Buy/Back program
5	Roof top garden on library for students
5	Releasing student financial aid funds earlier to student accounts
5	Advisor/seminar for double majors
5	Free parking for village houses
4	Storage space for clubs and organizations
4	Literacy corps funding
3	Maintenance
3	Plastic bottle recycling
3	Handicapped parking
2	Bulletin Board flyers
2	Graduate student employment assistantships
1	On-campus doctor
0	ATM in Webster Hall or Sverdrup

Renovation Ideas: sidewalks, on-campus housing, better desks everywhere, new art building, bigger photo lab, science building labs, renovation of kitchens in Maria and Loretto Hall, renovation of ground floor Webster Hall, Air conditioning in Webster/Pearson/Priest, beautification of dumpster area.