

Minutes Undergraduate Council (UGC) meeting 10.19.20
 Prepared by Debbie Zelizer

In attendance at Zoom meeting: Hanna Nekvasil, Jason Trelewicz, Norm Goodman, Jason Trelewicz, Brenda Anderson, Christine Pitocco, Deb Serling, Arlene Feldman, Kevin McDonnell, Jennifer Dellaposta, Debbie Zelizer, Diane Bello, Shellie Germana, Judith Lochhead, Peter Gergen, Srini Pentyala

Invited guests: Paul Shepson, Dean, SOMAS and Kamazima Lwiza, Director of Undergraduate Programs, SOMAS

Agenda Items	Notes
Acceptance of the minutes	<p>Hanna called for a vote to accept the minutes from 9.21.20</p> <p>Norm made the motion Jason seconded - vote carried to accept the minutes with one revision (year of tuition not a semester).</p>
New business – amending the withdrawal and the G/P/NC deadline	<p>Changing the G/P/NC and withdrawal deadline was based on input from the undergraduate student government, they have been working with interim provost on some issues.</p> <p>It was noted that administration should not make these decisions without consultation with the UGC.</p> <p>Hanna will communicate with the interim provost to discuss this issue and explain that any changes that affect undergraduates should be presented to this committee prior to implementing changes.</p>
Elections and membership of the UGC	<p>Roy is technically chair of the committee – Hanna is co-chair until the end of the semester.</p> <p>Hanna’s tenure on the committee has ended but she was asked by exec council to remain in the chair position at this time.</p>
Old Business SOMAS discussed the benefits and the process of creating the MOU with Pace.	<p>Invited guest presented an overview of the MOU outlining a 3+3 program between SOMAS and Pace Law School. The dean emphasized that this is not generic 3 + 3 program it was purposefully created to benefit SBU students by providing a choice to obtain a law degree in 6 years versus 7 years. Pace’s environmental law program is the top ranked program in the country.</p> <p><u>Benefits:</u> The proposal for a 3+3 program for environmental/sustainable studies majors with Pace law school will be beneficial for SOMAS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental law is a growing field, having this 3+3 program will attract many new students local, out of state, and maybe international students to these SOMAS undergraduate majors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NYS legislation just passed an ambitious climate act, 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2040 and economy-wide, net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. ● This MOU can position SBU/SOMAS to be a leader in this field. ● Another driving factor was parents and students ask about employment opportunities upon completion of these majors. Completing a law degree in environmental law will position students for employment in a growing area of law. This will benefit the students involved in the program. <p><u>Process:</u> Many law schools with an environmental law program were contacted (e.g., Touro, Columbia, Buffalo). Only PACE responded to the request to collaborate. Meetings with Charlie, legal, and some members of the committee were had during the discussion phase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Once the MOU is finalized the curriculum will be send to the curriculum committee, then the proposal goes to the provost and finally SUNY central to get approval.
<p>3+3 MOU with Pace: feedback and questions from the UGC members</p>	<p>New innovative programs are wonderful, but it is our job to make sure we are preparing students for success and ensure we are developing programs with the right partners. Hanna stated that this body typically does not get involved with program specific initiatives, but this is a contract between a public and a private organization – Hanna at the last UGC meeting alerted members to some serious issues she has with this proposed contract. Hanna’s research documented that Pace is a very low ranked law school and their environmental law program is ranked 4th in the country.</p> <p>Questions/Comments from committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why have you not considered Buffalo Law School- it is ranked 8th in the nation in environmental law and is a 1/3rd of the tuition? Given our student population – this is only an option for a segment of students that can afford Pace high tuition rate. Why not have several options for students? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Response: Buffalo Law School law school never responded to the request to develop a 3+3. It was assumed they had no interest. We found an enthusiastic partner that is ranked the as the top environmental law program in the country – opening up partnership with other laws schools might jeopardized our partnership with Pace.

- Concern over students that drop out or determine that they no longer want to pursue environment law, stand to lose everything.
 - If they drop out, not only will they not have an undergraduate degree but will have to pay off student loans from a high-priced private school.
- Why can't the MOU include an incentive to SBU students –SBU students should be given a tuition break during the first year.
 - Response: we proposed that the first year of PACE tuition for students in the 3+3 be reduced (reduced to halfway between SBU and PACE tuition). That was rejected by PACE.
- Some committee members stated that it is unfair to SBU students, law schools are “*cash cows*” for universities. This MOU is good for Pace but not for our students.
- Pace has few full-time faculty – they use adjuncts. Nowhere is it in the MOU is it stated that Pace is required to offer the courses SBU/SOMAS students need during the first year. What happens to our students if Pace move those courses to later in the degree program?
- No mapping of courses – why is this not included the MOU? The UGC needs to see the curriculum mapping plan that address the following concerns.
 - How do credits in law school map onto SBU credits?
 - How will the first year Pace courses satisfy SBCs?
 - How will students be advised about the major and SBC courses?
 - How will this 3+3 program be mapped for transfer students?
 - Without curriculum mapping we cannot see if the residence requirements will be met for transfer students.
 - If a student drops out and returns to SBU to complete their degree, typically a student can only apply 6 credits of graduate course work to their undergraduate degree. There is no mention of a waiver to apply more than 6 credits to the undergraduate degree in the MOU.
- Dean explained that curriculum mapping will be the next step in the process – curriculum mapping and CAS curriculum committee review of revised/new courses. We will address those concerns – articulation and course mapping need to be resolved.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The MOU documents lower admissions standards for veterans – will this practice set students up for failure?• SSW has a dual degree program in which full-time students may obtain both a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW) and a Juris Doctor (JD) degree in law following four years of study.
Action plan	Hanna will circulate the MOU with her comments to the committee. She asks that everyone add comments/concerns to that one document, and she will present the written comments to SOMAS