

**Student Commission Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 11, 2021**  
**Zoom Meeting 2:00pm**

**Present: Sarah Anderson, Joe Cooper, Caroline Czyzewski, Zofia Freiberg, Marc Geborkoff, Tim Griffin, David Holden, Beka Horsch, Joel Isaacson, Mia Kempainen, Margaret Landsparger, Justin Liakos, Jeremy Lundy, Keith Machiela, Michael Maurer, Wesley McGowan, Ally O'Neill, Bryce Walbrun, Matt Weekley**

**Updates**

- Winter Carnival - Report Out
  - Marc Geborkoff: It was one of the quietest Winter Carnivals to date. There were a lot of people enjoying Winter Carnival but people maintained social distancing and mask wearing. Music was condensed into two separate areas to prevent group gatherings.
  - Matt Weekley: Everything was quiet on the Housing front. Very few incidents overall and people really had a good time.
  - Tim Griffin: There was little to no damage this year! Winter Carnival ran very smoothly even on the weekends, very uneventful.
  - Sarah Anderson: The MUB Board - Karaoke Night was moved outside and went very well.
  - Joe Cooper thanked everyone, especially the student groups that made the job for everyone else easier.
  
- COVID-19 Update - Joe Cooper
  - Wastewater is being monitored and when there are spikes in the COVID levels people will be contacted for testing. Please encourage people to get tested if they are contacted through UGL Health.
  - Decision was made to keep the saunas closed due to the limitations and capacity issues.

**New Items**

- Campus Climate and Diversity Initiatives - Joe Cooper
  - Based on a campus climate survey a few years ago, the Tech Forward initiatives were created. One of the initiatives is the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative. Kellie Raffaelli has been the lead on this initiative and has been putting forward clear recommendations and action items.
  - Dr. Wayne Gersie is leading the development of a strategic plan. This plan would be embedded within every single department and unit on campus.
  - Michael Maurer: The GSG held a special session last Tuesday to approve an action plan focused on diversity and inclusion. GSG is working with USG as a small diversity committee that will break down the action plan into manageable sections. They will figure out how they can be held accountable for carrying out this plan.

- o Matt Weekley: Residence Education and Housing Services has been working hard on their residential curriculum and building diversity initiatives within that curriculum. Looking at an equity audit within the department.
  - o Jeremy Lundy reported that Transportation Services is committed to equity in student hiring practices.
  - o Joel Isaacson: The GLIAC has initiated Champions for Change, a new Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. National level conversation on how GLIAC can support the student athletes in this change and facilitate those conversations on campus.
  - o David Holden discussed the Van Pelt and Opie Libraries' customer service philosophy which is based on CARE standards; Communication, Appreciation, Respect, and Empowerment. The library also has a newly released strategic plan that recognizes the need to change our culture to improve our integrity and respect for our patrons. How do we measure effectiveness?
  - o Marc Geborkof: The command staff met with Dr. Gersie to discuss how to involve other local area police departments. Public Safety has a good relationship with the students. Public Safety's approach is community oriented policing as opposed to enforcement.
  - o Justin Liakos: IFC is working with CDI to obtain diversity training for fraternity students on campus.
  - o Ally O'Neill: The Panhellenic community is increasing their Diversity and Inclusion training for all Greek Life.
- Counseling Telehealth - Joe Cooper
    - o The Counseling Center along with Laura Bulleit have been championing Telehealth counseling. Telehealth virtual counseling gives students the opportunity to choose clinicians that are more like them. Students can indicate preferences for their counselor based on gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation. Services are offered in multiple languages which is especially important for students where english is not their first language. This service offers texting, phone calls, and videos 24/7. As our on-campus counseling services are overwhelmed, more students can be helped through the use of this service. Hopeful that this service can be implemented in the fall. Preview: <https://vimeo.com/449687588/e649137131>
- Fall Break Proposal - USG
    - o Zofia Freiburg shared a presentation on the new fall break proposal. The Student Affairs Committee and USG have been investigating the possibility of having a fall break/mid semester recess/October recess. They are proposing to shift the academic year calendar. Based on data there is an intense spike in October due to stress and burnout, this recess could possibly help. The proposal suggests having the fall semester begin the Thursday before the last Monday in August with an October recess taking place the Thursday and Friday of week 7. This proposal would need a senator to endorse it in order to bring it to a Senate meeting.

## **Announcements**

- Wesley McGowan announced that next week there will be a Week of Black Excellence exhibit located in the Van Pelt and Opie Library. The Black History Month exhibit sponsored by BSA runs from 2/12 through 2/21 in the main library exhibit space on the first floor of the Van Pelt and Opie Library. It features an art exhibition and digital presentation on the Black American experience. [Event](#)
- Beka Horsch announced that the Student Leadership Awards are now open, a great opportunity to recognize awesome student leaders across campus.
- Student Security Officer position open in Public Safety. If you know of a student that may be interested, encourage them to email Marc Geborkoff for an application. [magebork@mtu.edu](mailto:magebork@mtu.edu)

## **Next Meeting**

- Thursday, February 25

## **2021 Spring Meeting Dates**

- Thursday, March 25
- Thursday, April 8
- Thursday, April 22