

2006-2007 Year-End Report of the Committee on Campus and Community Life

The Quality of Student Life (QSL) Committee and other standing previous committees have been subsumed and in the 2006-2007 academic year and renamed the Committee on Campus and Community Life.

The fall meeting was to review the responsibility of this Committee, which defined their role as to understand the issues related to community relations, quality of student life, and safety and security, and enhance communications among students, faculty and staff. Spring Fling is not in this committee's domain, but some attention should be devoted to exploring a festival for graduate students at Penn.

Additionally, the CCCL's goal is to stay actively engaged with the Divisions of Public Safety and Government and Community Relations to best understand and communicate regarding the critical issues involved with the success of their programs. There is potential for sub-committees and task forces to bring a finer degree of attention to various issues. For example a sub-committee on communications and campus safety is being formed to bring attention and focus to this critical issue of campus life. Additional subjects included student mental health programs and housing for graduate students.

The December meeting focused on improved maintenance of **campus facilities** to sustain a high quality of life on campus. A request was made for future meetings to be devoted to a presentation on basic issues of how maintenance is performed. In addition, there was a point made to have a better understanding of how the capital budget is organized and managed by Facilities and Real Estate Services. Student committee members submitted that student-on-student violence was a safety concern. The subject of safety on, versus off, campus was introduced, and a goal to find a balance where students feel as safe off campus as they do on campus was mentioned. The subject of increasing lighting was introduced. **Guest speakers** included Maureen Rush, VP of Public Safety who presented a comprehensive report on the state of public safety on campus, and in West Philadelphia and summarized the OPERATION SAFE multi-faceted public safety program designed to keep the Penn community safe against crime. She spoke of an additional investment in public lighting off and on the campus, and the coalition of neighboring institutions who have contributed to the plan. Van McMutry, VP of Government and Community Relations which included a brief update on community relations, including the development of a comprehensive plan to promote Penn's initiatives in West Philadelphia, including the use of the "First Thursday" meeting as the main vehicle for community input and feedback. The CCCL agreed that more time should be devoted to this subject at future meetings.

January's meeting was a review of the public safety and community relations strategy at Penn and how best to communicate this good work across campus. The idea of a sub-committee on communications and public safety was mentioned and Deborah Linebarger (Annenberg School for Communications) volunteered to chair. The committee has asked Karima Zedan of Public Safety to support this. The initial meeting took place with

Linebarger, Zedan and Tony Sorrentino of the EVP office. A communications strategy for academic year 2007-2008 has been outlined and will be refined over the summer of 2007 for presentation to the committee for feedback at the first meeting. Among the initial ideas generated are to communicate crime statistics graphically in map format with more clarity, and more frequently in various mediums such as Web and print publications. The mediums that students use is always changing and we need to survey students to determine the most effective way to contact them about public safety issues. In addition, exploration of a coordinated strategy in which each school and center can play a role in promoting safety awareness at a local level, while more macro messages are communicated by the division of Public Safety.

In February members of the CCCL were invited to attend and participate in a special meeting of the “First Thursday” community meeting. Guests included Susan Taylor was Gil Casellas, Penn Trustees and members of the Trustee Committee on Neighborhood Initiatives. The meeting was designed so these Trustees could hear directly from local civic leaders, businesspeople, clergy and citizen activities about the communications between Penn and the surrounding neighborhoods.

March report highlighted success of trustees meeting and the continued work of GAPSA representatives in working with public safety communication. Committee recognized the vast amount of activities that Penn faculty, students and staff are involved in with the community.

April 24, 2007 is the last meeting of the year and is devoted to setting the schedule for next year, as well as better defines the role of campus safety sub-committee and organizes a set of meetings on this topic specifically. This sub-committee is to be chaired by Deborah Linebarger of the Annenberg School of Communications, working in conjunction with Karmia Zedan, director of external affairs for the Division of Public Safety and was charged by the CCCL to identify current status of campus representation to public safety and relevant committees and explore effectiveness of public safety resources and communication with campus groups.

Issues for CCCL to review and recommend moving forward include:

- A goal is to keep an open link with public safety and facilitating a system for keeping students informed about issues related to public safety on and off campus, and we will work directly with the Vice president of Public Safety, on adopting direct communication about safety tips for undergrads and graduate students. This will result in a recommendation for a communications plan produced by the sub-committee on public safety communications in the fall of 2007.
- On going and regular dissemination of information regarding Penn’s community relations strategy.

- Graduate student housing improvements to create a more robust sense of student life on campus among graduate students.
- Undergraduate members suggested work in promoting the on-campus programs available to students in the mental health field.
- A review of capital planning and budgeting, as well as a presentation on how maintenance projects are managed.
- Recommendation to explore feasibility of a relational database for university activities serving the community.