

COMMITTEE ON STUDENT LIFE ANNUAL REPORT – 2009-2010

The Committee on Student Life has jurisdiction and operates in five spheres: (1) it conducts the Wendell Phillips Award competition that culminates in the choice of the undergraduate speaker at the Baccalaureate ceremony; (2) it serves as the hearing panel of first instance in cases brought against student groups for violation of university and school policies and regulations, and as the appeal panel for decisions rendered against individual students by the Dean of Students Office or decisions of the TCU Judiciary regarding individual students and student groups; (3) it oversees the operations of student government, including vetting proposed changes to the TCU Constitution to ensure that the changes would not violate university/school policies and regulations; (4) it collaborates with the Administration in the formulation of the policies and regulations that guide undergraduate life and are set out in the Pachyderm handbook and other publications; (5) it examines, if need be, other aspects of student life on the Medford campus.

The Committee on Student Life met 5 times during the academic year 2009-10.

An initial meeting was organizational, to welcome new members, review the responsibilities of the Committee as mandated by the faculty Bylaws, and preview upcoming activities. New members also participated in a training session with University Counsel Deke Mathieu, to prepare them for judicial hearings.

The Committee's major activities this academic year, under the headings delineated above, were as follows:

(1) A series of meetings were devoted to the Wendell Phillips Award competition. Committee members formulated the questions for the oral and written presentations of candidates, judged the submitted presentations in order to select the finalists, and judged the finalists' oral presentations and chose the winner, David Mok.

(2) The Committee received 1 petition from a student appealing a disciplinary decision made by the Judicial Affairs Officer in the Dean of Students' Office. In this case the two faculty co-chairs and the student chair made a determination that there was no valid basis for the appeal and that the full committee would not hear the appeal. This was in accordance with a procedure worked out by a previous chair of the Committee with University Counsel to protect the committee from an undue workload by weeding out cases that did not merit a full hearing. In these instances, the decision by consensus of the chairs is regarded as constituting an appeal.

(3) The Committee vetted several proposed referenda to amend the TCU Constitution, to ensure that they did not violate university policies and regulations. One involved new procedures for putting referenda on the election ballot, and several involved new methods for allocating and renewing community representative seats on the TCU Senate and

choosing the community representatives, and the creation of a Diversity and Community Affairs officer.

(4) In a joint meeting of the Committee on Student Life (CSL) and the Equal Educational Opportunity Committee (EEOC) on April 2, 2010, the new, Trustee-approved Policy on Freedom of Expression and the challenges of implementing it in Arts, Sciences and Engineering (AS&E) were discussed. Since the new policy is a general policy for the university as a whole, the individual schools must determine how that policy will be interpreted and administered in each school. CSL is mandated in the faculty bylaws to work with the administration to create policies and regulations that govern students in AS&E. EEOC is committed by the bylaws to ensure that all members of the community have equal access to the educational opportunities available at Tufts. Thus, these two committees have a primary role in formulating the application of the new policy to AS&E. Following on a productive, wide-ranging discussion of the relevant issues, it was determined that the next step will be to create a subcommittee comprised of members of the two committees who will continue the discussion and endeavor to create clearer guidelines that can eventually be included in the online Pachyderm, which instructs students on the policies of AS&E and the expectations of members of that community.

On behalf of the Committee on Student Life.

Steven Hirsch and Thomas Downes, Co-chairs

CSL Members: Christoph Borgers, William Carpenter, Veronica Carter, Alva Couch, Joe Golia, Manuel Guzman, In-Goo Kwak, Christina Maranci, Colin Orians, Bruce Reitman, Brandon Sultan, Rosemary Taylor, Andrew Thorne, Joanna Xylas