

Meet and Confer 2021
Annual Meeting of GSC and Administration
June 21, 2021

Attendees: A. Griffin (Assistant to the VP Education), L. Sanford (VP for Education), L. Rehn (VP for Administration), L. Ross (Director of HR), A. Windle, S. Jones, J. Johnson, K. Ramarui, M. Lahm, A. Fandel, A. Gibbs, D. Hanacek, T. Armstrong

- Collective Bargaining
 - L. Ross discussed how Meet and Confer meetings started with USM Policy that the GSC needs to meet with administration regarding the need and/or desire regarding collective bargaining. Are there any issues?
 - Bill did not pass this year (2021) in the Maryland Assembly.
 - The bill gives the right to collective bargaining, but doesn't automatically implement collective bargaining
 - USMSC student meetings: asked to weigh in on this topic; Anna & Kia did not vote on this topic on behalf of UMCES, but sent an email and distributed survey allowing individual students to weigh in
 - Anna suggested that due to the size of UMCES and the current lines of communication between students and the administration, that our current Meet and Confer works well
 - L. Ross suggested that the GSC could ensure that the general student population (GAs) should understand this concept
 - Maybe a one-page document describing this would be ideal
 - There are concerns about pay, working conditions, etc.
 - Disparity between GRA stipends and the cost of living (some discussion within the GSC) and similarly it is unclear about expectations, including hours expected to work, time off, and what to expect from our advisors regarding mentoring.
 - We probably need to figure out how to channel some of the items given the lack of student services office
 - Generally, Amy G. will pass items to L. Sanford to bring up at the Executive Council; once per year the chair of the GSC will meet with the Executive Council (maybe late summer or early fall)
- Clarify proper channels to use to get action items implemented (***bold to be approved through Executive Council meeting**)
 - **Statement of Mutual Expectations**
 - Action Item: confirm with the MEES Office whether they are doing a SME for students or not
 - If MEES is, we need to discuss with them the information, if not, UMCES should move forward with their own and iron out the topics to cover, including employment and GA expectations and working environment, etc.
 - Two sections: one for GAs and one for expectations of student-mentor

- Action Item: Amy to move forward with employment form for GRAs and a separate form for Mutual Expectations
 - If issues with SME outcomes, then the VPE needs to step in and host discussions
 - **Updating GSC bylaws/ policies**
 - Anna and Kia made recommended changes to current Policy and would like EC to approve them
 - **Code of Conduct**
 - Larry- Final draft will be distributed soon
- Follow-up meeting in the Fall to finalize action items
 - The Executive Council route might work as the follow-up meeting for discussing these points; students agreed
- Distance learning
 - There is a wish that labs would better accommodate distance learning; can we encourage lectures to be recorded?
 - How can we best accommodate all students? What avenues are there for feedback? Accommodating students with disabilities? Better expectations and plans in the syllabi
 - Hearing difficulties, other things that might affect virtual learning
 - Zoom has a subtitle feature, should encourage to have a repository for lectures that are recorded
 - Might require education on the side of the faculty as well (resources, guidance, best practices, etc.)
 - Could post on Moodle, privately on youtube, etc. - ensure it is only the face of the professor (add this to best practices)
 - Kia will bring this up at next UMCES PCC meeting
- Applied Env Science Course
 - Each time this course is taught, there are slightly different issues.
 - This year they used reports from the previous year with names on it, whereas in previous years they had lengthy reports due that seemed to be too much work for the number of credits
 - The course is not accomplishing what it set out to do and has some problematic elements
 - There is not a precise way to describe the class and its goals
 - Policy (though the 2021 syllabus states it is not this) and collaboration, two main topics of the course, are not executed well
 - The faculty need to have the ability to encourage feedback and discuss how it is a difficulty course to teach, but that everyone would benefit from moving forward with being this up front
 - True collaboration is not just mixing scientists, but to promote collaboration between different departments (sociology, economics, science, etc.), potentially through panel discussions
 - Kia will bring this up at next UMCES PCC meeting
- Anna followed up with email about potential GSC Budget

- GSC thinks a small budget (\$1000-2000) would allow more flexibility in what GSC can do for students (hire speakers, organize workshops, provide student grants, purchase swag, etc).
- Tried to register UMCES GSC as registered student organization at College Park but couldn't since not all UMCES students are MEES students and since non-College Park MEES students don't pay students fees (which are used for student organization budgets)
- Anna did some research on graduate student organization budgets at other universities and similar marine labs. Most schools get a budget from student fees, home departments, or fundraising
- We realize the budget cuts at UMCES but would like to talk about the possibility of getting a small budget in the future.

List of Action items:

- When collective bargaining gets addressed next year, make sure students know what it is- make descriptive one pager, have discussions at lab student body meetings, discuss at annual all student meeting
- Plan a special session Executive Council meeting where GSC Chair can meet with EC
- Finalize Statement of Mutual Expectations forms (before start of Fall semester)
 - Enforce the UMCES GA employment form (modify from UMD)
 - Create a new mentor-mentee SME form
- Get updated GSC Policies and By-laws approved and updated on website
- Address concerns of distance learning and AES course at UMCES PCC meeting