

Student Affairs and Campus Life (SACL) Advisory Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Time: Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Attendees:

- Ashe Laughlin, Associate Professor of Painting and Drawing, Chair of Committee
- Melissa Jones, Dean of Students/Associate VP of Student Affairs (ex-officio Committee Member)
- Mike Walsh, Vice President for Student Affairs (ex-officio Committee Member)
- Sarah Morealli, Senior Lecturer, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Committee Member
- Randall Reif, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Physics, Committee Member
- Sushma Subramanian, Associate Professor, Communications & Digital Studies, via Zoom
- Antonia Delgado-Poust, Associate Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures
- Maya Schram, Conservation Biology, Student Committee Representative
- Mackenzie Martin, Studio Art, Student Committee Representative

Secretarial Duties

- **Antonia Delgado-Poust** will serve as secretary for the **Fall semester**.
- **Sarah Morealli** will take over in the **Spring semester**.
- They may swap roles if needed.

Guest Speaker: Shannon Finney, Director of Student Activities and Engagement (SAE)

- UMW alumna, Class of 2018.
- Presented on the **Presidential Emerging Leaders Program (PELP)**:

This type of program helps students remain happy at UMW.

- Current cohort: 27 students, 8 leaders, 1 Senior Student Coordinator.
 - Inaugural cohort (Class of 2025):
 - 90% longitudinal retention rate (percentage of students who decide to continue and graduate from UMW)
 - 3.44 average GPA
 - 88% hold leadership positions
 - Goal: Grow the program and attract Tier 1 (strong) students.
 - Application process: Students apply to UMW and then to PELP with a leadership essay.
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Student Organizations

- Over **150+ active organizations**, including:
 - Academic & Professional
 - Club Sports
 - Multicultural
 - Performance (e.g., a cappella, PAC)
 - Political
 - Service & Advocacy (e.g., COAR, Big Brothers Big Sisters, SPCA)
 - Student Governance (e.g., menstrual products initiative passed)
 - There is a full list of current clubs available at MyPresence
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Event Programming

- **Weekly Events:**
 - Bingo (Tuesdays)
 - Crafternoons (Wednesdays)
 - Karaoke (Wednesdays)
 - Trivia (Thursdays)
 - Farmer's Market visits (Saturdays), which help foment town-gown relations
 - **Night & Weekend Programming:**
 - Great Eagle Duck Hunt
 - CPB's Block Party
 - Night Market (student vendors)
 - Cinema on the Circle
 - "Hot Ones" (hot wings challenge)
 - Seeing strong student attendance; students would love to have faculty/staff attend
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Student Engagement & Support

- **The Implementation of the Co-Curricular Transcript:**
 - Tracks out-of-classroom experiences (e.g., study abroad, internships, clubs) to include them on their resumé.
 - Helps students articulate their full college experience for post-UMW opportunities.
- **Engagement Statistics:**
 - Club participation increased from 37% (2019) to 44% (2025).
 - Student leaders increased from 12% to 16%.
 - 71% of students attended at least one event in 2025.
 - Number of clubs declined (COVID impact), but number of events increased.
- **Addressing Loneliness Epidemic & Need for Belonging:**
 - "Sammy Squad": low-stakes engagement group (e.g., hiding ducks, First Friday) that can help students feel as though they are a part of something bigger than themselves.

- **Lunch Buddy Program:** Peer mentors take students to lunch on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
 - 60 students joined the GroupMe at Club Carnival.
 - **Distribution of Involvement Questionnaire:** Students can fill out the form, indicating what activities and interests they had in high school, and then staff reads over them and then reaches out to students to determine if they would be interested in participating in certain clubs.
 - **3rd Floor of CRUC:**
 - Safe space for students seeking community and connection.
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Club Carnival & Admissions

- **Club Carnival:**
 - Traditionally held on Ball Circle; moved indoors due to typical heat in August.
 - Indoors is more accessible to a larger number of people.
 - **Admissions Collaboration:**
 - SAE shares literature and presents at Destination Day.
 - Clubs perform on Ball Circle during admissions events on the weekends, with the hope of demonstrating to prospective students what activities and clubs are available to them should they enroll at the University.
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Faculty Involvement

- Faculty can serve as **club advisors:**
 - Roles include being available to students and club presidents, mediating conflict, serving as sounding boards, and supporting leadership development.
 - Not required to attend meetings.
 - Help club leaders with continuity and delegation.
 - **Student Leader Challenges:**
 - Frustration with low event attendance.
 - Encourage partnerships within and also with other clubs, creative marketing and advertising, proactive inclusivity and making potential newcomers feel comfortable and welcome, as well as co-hosting events.
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Advertising & Communication

- **Event Promotion:**
 - Monthly calendar posted outside SAE.
 - **SAE Weekly** email (sent Sundays) is the best source.
 - QR codes on napkin holders link to 3-month event calendar.
 - Suggestion: Provide printed list of fall/spring events to distribute to faculty and staff, so that they can distribute or post the list in their classrooms and offices.

Leadership Development

- **Dean Jones** has been focused on speaking with student leaders about:
 - Being intentionally inclusive and inviting to outside members.
 - Leadership rotation and succession planning.
 - Encouraging leaders to reflect on their growth and mentor others.

Questions from Committee Members

- **How can we, as faculty/staff better support SAE and our student leaders?**
- **How are student clubs and activities/events incorporated into Admissions events and recruitment?**

Additional Updates

- **Mackenzie Martin** is the new **Student Committee Representative** for Fall 2025.
- **New Talley Center Director:** Dr. Chad Simms (announced 9/4/25).

Next Steps

- **Next Meeting:** Brainstorming session to plan for the upcoming year.
- **Action Item:** Let Ashe know who else should be invited to the **November meeting** (e.g., Dr. Chad Simms).

Adjournment

5:00 p.m.