

Student InterCouncil

Monday, April 20th, 2020

WebEx

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Draft Minutes

I. Call to Order and Approval of MinutesTristen Tellman, SIC President

Meeting was called to order at 5:40 PM. Tristen polled the members for any objections or corrections to the minutes from the March 23, 2020. Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved.

II. Advisor Announcements.....Eric Solberg, Vice President for Academic & Research Affairs, Yuliana Nunez, SIC Advisor, Charlie Figari, Vice President and Chief Auxiliary Enterprises Officer

Yuliana Nunez reminded SIC members to send in mailing addresses for certificates.

Eric Solberg provided a brief update on return to campus and the U.S. Department of Education

- a. Students are learning remotely and meetings continue to be held remotely. Likely, this will continue into the summer, with SPH having already made an official announcement to keep their classes online. Other schools are currently working to make an official decision as to the status of classes for the summer semester. A task force has been assembled to discuss a specific plan for a return to campus which will occur in stages and will likely prioritize those students with research and clinical placements, though the task force has not yet established what exactly this will look like. Facilities personnel have already increased sanitization in all UTHealth buildings based on the CDC recommendations and will continue to do so once a return to campus protocol has been put in place. Mr. Solberg advised that mandatory masking will likely remain in all buildings and gathering will likely be discouraged.
- b. The U.S. Department of Education has distributed funds to institutions for emergency grants for students who were directly impacted by COVID-19 from the CARES Act. Individual institutions have to prioritize how this money will be spent. Students who were scheduled to graduate this Spring (May 1st) who cannot graduate because their degree program was interrupted either by postponement of clinical or other similar educational experiences such as a practicum or internship. Students who may have to finish incomplete grades in the summer will not be enrolled so they do not have to pay tuition and fees, though international students will be required to enroll for 1 semester credit hour in the summer, will be supported financially during the time that they need to make up this incomplete grade to satisfy degree requirements. After these needs have been met, there may be additional funds available that will be prioritized to the next level of students in need of support. Interest free loans from the university will be coming and the deadline for payback will be extended.

Question to Charlie Figari from Tristen Tellman – Do you have any updates regarding the extension of leases for those whose graduation has been postponed due to COVID-19 shutdowns? UT Housing is evaluating each case on an individual basis but is making an attempt to help anyone that is experiencing issues. Unfortunately, some of these apartments already have new leases coming in so they won't be able to stay. UT Housing is trying to find temporary accommodations for these students, but it is quite difficult. There is also the potential that many

students will cancel leases because they can no longer afford to come to school with the current economic climate.

Question from Jeff Ackroyd – How will orientations at each school be affected by the current situation? And how are the issues of students being unable to get some immunizations or unable to take TOEFL/GRE exams being handled? Eric Solberg advised that these situations are being handled on a school-by-school basis, though the institution is working to relax certain requirements and allow students to do these things within a defined window after starting at UTHealth.

III. Final Committee Business

- a. Project Funding Committee – Sehej Kaur Hara
 - International Student Association (ISA) project funding – approved for \$500 pending new event date
- b. Outreach Committee – Sonia Patel and Brittany Trinh
 - SPH Nourish proposal – approved for \$289 for pruners and garden gloves
 - COVID-19 Hospital Donation – approved for \$900 to UTHealth affiliates in the TMC
 - It was suggested to convert remaining SIC funds to a scholarship for students affected by COVID-19 a motion made and seconded, request was approved, will have another meeting to discuss specifics after discussion with Financial Services and the Development Office.
- c. Operations Committee – Jeff Ackroyd and Tristen Tellman
 - Discussion of SIC Bylaw edits – motion made to approve edits with no revisions motion was seconded and Bylaws were approved.
- d. Ad Hoc Committees
 - Parking Committee – Paul Emeonyi
Discussion on the stop times of shuttles during peak hours. Paul will send in a write-up regarding stops at schools and other observed shuttle issues.
 - Environmental Wellness/Recycling Committee – Rachel Buckley
Will send in a final report with recommendation and information from her investigations at the School of Dentistry. Final implementation at SOD has been delayed due to COVID-19.

V. SIC Business and Important Dates.....Tristen Tellman, SIC President

- a. Reminder that committee reports were due April 3rd and should be submitted ASAP.
- b. Deans' Dinner will take place April 22nd at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will take place in a virtual format and the officers will present for all committees to the University leadership.
- c. Announcement of officer election results:
Rachel Pham, President
Rachel Buckley, Vice President
Niharika Neela, Treasurer
Ankita Podichetty, Secretary
Special election for Historian position – Melissa Yang, nominated, accepted, and appointed.
- d. SIC T.F. Burks Service Award winner – Rachel Buckley
- e. International Top 10 issues list – Tristen will speak with the international representatives on these topics and make sure that the appropriate offices are addressed

VI. Other Business/Open Forum

Commendations for all SIC members and the efforts that have been given to SIC in the 2019-2020 academic year.

V. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, seconded motion adjourned 7:17 pm

Respectfully submitted by Tristen Tellman on 05/06/2020.
Approved by Student InterCouncil on 05/28/2020.