CAS Student Advisory Board Minutes 10-15-15

Attendees: Dean Laura Stephenson, Dean Bruce Mactavish, Dean Matt Arterburn, Grace Hildenbrand, Guillermo Rodriguez, Fritz Helbert, Sarah Walker, Katherine Wade, Christina Garcia, Christianna Pope, and Rachel Beiker

Dean Stephenson began the meeting by reiterating that this group plans to meet 1-2 times per semester. She also invited everyone to visit the CAS office (Morgan 209). We have art on loan from the Mulvane Art Museum and faculty art on display. She also suggested students go to as many homecoming events as they can.

Then she had everyone go around and introduce themselves. Our icebreaker question was “What do you think makes a great teacher/professor?” Some of the responses included:

* Knowing their craft
* Passion and desire for teaching
* Passion for their subject
* Experience from past career(s) or research
* Having office hours and an open door policy
* Interactive teaching styles.

Next, Dean Stephenson asked for advice on what students see as a need for improvement with teaching at Washburn. Some of the responses included:

* Concern with organization in some classes. Sometimes teacher expectations are unclear.
* Some professors are difficult to get a hold of, especially some of the adjuncts who are off campus a lot of the time.
* Concern with general communication across different campus units, especially regarding scheduling events.

Dean Stephenson then asked: “How are we doing in preparing students for life after graduation?” Some of the responses included:

* Received help in applying to P.A. school. Specifically, faculty have answered questions relating to the application process, interview process, and helped with the personal statement and offered to write reference letters.
* Received help from faculty in looking up possible opportunities for study abroad.
* Department faculty encourage students to attend graduate school. The department posts graduate applications and post which schools are hiring for Music Education majors.
* Professors help students to find internships and help with the internship application process. They also provide encouragement.
* Bringing in speakers related to career programs or fields has been useful.
* Professors are in touch with the larger community and adapt their course material based on what is currently being used in the surrounding community.
* Faculty are well connected to the community and are good at networking.

The next question asked was, “What could we do differently for the future in better preparing students for life after graduation?”

* One student had trouble with advising and has had to figure it out on her own. We then talked about what some departments do to help advise their students. Some departments have a handbook or pamphlet with advising worksheets or have group meetings to help students with advising.

Next, students were asked about social media use by their department and which social media outlets are best for sharing information:

* The Biology department has a twitter run by Dr. Mullican.
* Modern Languages uses Facebook.
* Music department has a Facebook page to share events and updates.
* Twitter is better for short messages or reminders and Facebook is better for including links or more details about an event.
* Students thought Facebook would be better for the College of Arts and Sciences to use instead of Twitter because there are more people on Facebook and it is less restrictive in terms of the amount of information that can be posted.
* The students do not know much about LinkedIn and think it is useful when looking for jobs. You can’t post a portfolio to it though; it is more of a place to put your resume.

General thoughts about Washburn or what you want to see changed?

* Students like the new Morgan Hall and getting the opportunity to hear from guest speakers.
* Dean Stephenson asked about whether or not any students had heard about the King Lecture and the students said they had not. Someone suggested inviting people to events via Facebook so they are more likely to see it.
* A suggestion was provided that incoming freshmen and new students be given a tour and/or orientation to better understand their department and major expectations, as well as learning the physical location of the department. A couple of departments already have an orientation for new students.

Our next meeting will be scheduled for later this semester or early next semester. Please feel free to send us any ideas for discussion.