



Marywood

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STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

MARYWOOD UNIVERSITY
SCRANTON, PA 18509-1598
TEL: (570) 340-6016
WWW.MARYWOOD.EDU

October 16, 2015

To the Marywood University Board of Trustees,

On behalf of the Marywood University undergraduate student body, the Student Government Association (SGA) is writing to express our deep concern regarding current university administration. As an organization, SGA holds the obligation to fully analyze and summarize concerns of all undergraduate students. Early in the fall 2015 semester, there was thought to be a small number of students voicing concerns. As the semester continued, SGA has recognized that there are not just a small number of students voicing concerns, but a fairly large amount raising valid, clearly targeted concerns.

SGA has listened to all Marywood students and have found three key themes of concern that have become prevalent. Below you will find several examples of issues directly related to (1) university communication, (2) student spaces, and (3) financial transparency. All of these concerns have been brought forth directly to Sister Anne Munley, President of Marywood University, and Joseph X. Garvey, Vice-President of Business Affairs. Attempts to share our concerns, and work collaboratively with these two individuals have been unsuccessful.

The first area of major concern for undergraduate students is the seemingly nonexistent forms of communication with administration at the Vice-President level (or higher). Students have shared that they are able to access and successfully communicate with Assistant Vice-Presidents, however many of these issues need to be passed on to higher level administration. Several of the examples listed below have been shared with university officials through SGA, however upper echelon administration have not been receptive or proactive in addressing these concerns.

Work Study Policy

In 2014-2015, the Office of Human Resources changed their policy on student eligibility for work study students, reducing the available positions by 50%. Students only received a single email with regards to this change, and no explanation as to reasons for this change.

Smoke Free Policy

In 2015, a campus wide smoke free policy was implemented. A single undergraduate student sat on this University committee, but when the student raised general concerns on behalf of SGA, they were never addressed. The policy was implemented without addressing and answering these apprehensions.

Fundraising Policy

In 2015, the University implemented a Fundraising Policy. This policy again, never received undergraduate student input before implementation. This caused campus-wide confusion and distaste toward the policy. Suggestions to make the policy more conducive for students were voiced by Student Life staff on behalf of students and were never addressed.

Parking Policy

In fall of 2015, an update to the university parking regulations was implemented with no formal notification to students as to the reasoning behind this change. This has resulted in students forming their own conclusions such as addition hidden fees added to student's tuition to offset cost. In addition, the lot designations were not available for students or faculty until early August, allowing little time for proper communication.

Budget Allocation Notification

In the summer 2015, SGA was issued a budget cut of 25% for the 2015-2016 academic year. Compared to previous years, this was a large reduction, with no explanation. SGA was notified of a final budget in early August. An education inspired by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

July, when in years past, allocations were distributed in January. This posed a large problem. Due to contract deadlines and budget distributions SGA was forced to allocate their funds for the upcoming year based on previous year's allotments. With such a large amount removed from their budget, SGA was forced to retroactively make drastic changes.

Communication with University Vice Presidents and President

The lack of access to the Vice Presidents and President has increased exponentially over the past few years, although with a select few Vice-Presidents being receptive, SGA has found that the majority have been notorious for canceling or continuously re-scheduling meetings with students. In addition, it is widely understood that the only undergraduate allowed to consistently have a meeting with Sister Anne has been the President of SGA.

University Structure Communication

In the fall of 2015, the Vice President of Student Affairs, Raymond Heath retired. Consequently, the university chose to combine the position of Vice-President of Enrollment Services to oversee the Division of Student Affairs. Although the students have been working with Ms. Boland-Chase, the current Vice-President, students were not brought into the conversation, or even asked how this merge of departments would impact their experience. Once the change had been implemented, it was not clearly conveyed to the students. Even today, a year later students are still confused as to why this change happened.

In addition to a strong lack of communication, students have also felt a lack of respect due to consistent removal of widely-used student spaces. Although the Learning Commons became available to students in fall 2015, this building simply replaced the space lost in the closing of the former library. Also, the removal of the locations mentioned below without student input demonstrates a continued example of administrative superiority.

Removal of Commuter Lounge

Prior to 2012, students had access to a Commuter Lounge on the lower level of Nazareth Hall. Without student discussion, this space was renovated to be the new home of Campus Safety and student mailboxes. This space was never recuperated or relocated.

SGA Sponsored Commuter Lounge

In response to complaints about lack of student space, in fall 2015, with their own Student Activities Funds SGA sponsored the renovation of old office space on the second floor of Nazareth Hall. The location is HIGHLY used by students (even after the opening of the Learning Commons), but unfortunately not handicap accessible. Because SGA was forced to fund this space using student activity dollars rather than university allocated funds, there is little distribution of funds to upkeep this space.

Reduction of Game Room Space

In 2012-2013 during the renovation of Nazareth Hall Upper Main Dining Room, the student Game Room space was reduced to accommodate Chartwell's Dining Services. Several feet of the Game Room were eliminated to accommodate for a dining service's storage closet. This space was never regained by students.

President Only Spaces

There are a number of spaces on our campus that can only be reserved by the President of the University. The Lynett Board Room was previously used to house student group meetings. After renovations, this space is only used by the Board of Trustees, approximately twice a year. Ligouri, although auspicious, is also unable to be used or reserved by students. This space was once the cafeteria and at a one point, a chapel. All requests to use both these rooms must be endorsed by Sister Anne Munley and are very rarely approved for use.

Room Reservation Availability

SGA continually receives several complaints each semester from student organizations about the lack of availability to reserve rooms on campus. The areas that are most desired by these organizations (Fireplace Lounge, Upper Main Dining Room, Swartz Conference Rooms) are commonly reserved by outside patrons, paying to use the space. Marywood students do not receive first priority in reserving rooms for use, and many times have to cancel or re-schedule Marywood focused events.

The lack of communication and student space on campus are large concerns expressed by students. However, the most pressing concern is the lack of financial transparency and fiscal motives. Concerns have been expressed multiple times on behalf of the students and most questions are still unanswered. This causes false information to be circulated through campus and makes relations between administration and students difficult.

Student Activities Fee Distribution

Student Government received \$250,000 for the 2015-2016 academic year. The undergraduate activity fee is currently \$125 per person per semester for full-time students. Part-time students are charged \$75 per semester. With our current undergraduate enrollment numbers (1761 FT, 194 PT) the approximate incoming is \$469,000. Students would like to know in detail, where the remaining funds are being allocated and the specific amounts for each line item to better understand what student services are being supported. Both Sister Anne and Joe Garvey refuse to supply us with this information after repeated requests.

Student Activities Fee Reductions

Student Government understands that enrollment has been declining, therefore resulting in a lower amount of overall Student Activities Fees. This academic year (2015-2016), SGA's budget was reduced by \$60,000. Student Government's allocation has never been reduced during past budget cuts because of the firm belief that regardless of enrollment, student experiences should remain the same and should not be detrimentally affected. Given several years of mutual understanding that these funds are to remain intact, students would now like to know why there has been a change in this approach and a reduction in the allocated fees. Both Sister Anne and Joe Garvey refuse to supply us with this information after repeated requests.

Renovation Costs

SGA has received numerous requests to confirm the renovation costs, speculated at \$900,000, of Sister Anne's home to reduce false rumors and student speculation. We asked both Sister Anne and Joe Garvey for these numbers, and as with the above financial questions, did not receive an answer.

Student Bill Charges

For several years students have reported an increased charge under "General Fees" on their tuition bill. The current cost being charged to students is \$750 per semester. Students, as well as SGA have made several inquiries as to what this charge is for, and why it keeps increasing. The Cashier's Office, Financial Aid Office, and Registrar Office were all unable to speak to the reasoning for the charge. When SGA asked Joe Garvey, he did not address the question directly.

The above concerns regarding lack of communication, reduction of student space, and financial transparency have strongly impacted undergraduate students' faith in administration under the supervision of Sister Anne Munley. This also includes her appointed Vice President for Business Affairs, Joseph X. Garvey. As the undergraduate Student Government Association, it is our responsibility to convey the strong sense of unrest within our student community. For many of us, the choice of Marywood University is the curriculum and core values, which are based on our faith, in our God, and in ourselves. We urge you, the Marywood University Board of Trustees to take action as you see fit to restore the faith lost in our current administration. We thank you for the opportunity to voice these concerns on behalf of Marywood University students, as these students represent the future of Marywood University into the next hundred years.

Respectfully submitted,



Student Government Association
2015-2016



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