COWBOY PARENTS COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2010

The Cowboy Parents Council held its spring meeting on Friday, February 12, 2010, beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the East Rendezvous Room of the Washakie Center on the UW campus. Dan Herlihey, Chair, presided. Those present included Council members – Trish Arthur, Sara Axelson (ex officio), Robert Balzan, Danielle Bamberg, Karen Blaker, Joe Gulino, Maryalice Gulino, Patricia Horton, Dan Herlihey, Vickie Herlihey, Carlene Irion for Brad Irion, Pete Kuhn, Galand Thaxton, Brad Wiesley, and Trenda Weisshaar; Staff – Mary Aguayo, Janicca Lee, John Nutter, and Erin Olsen; and Guests – Julie Balzan.

Welcome: Dan convened the meeting and welcomed all members and thanked them for giving their time to the Council and its meetings. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.

Vice President’s Update: Sara complimented the association on its momentum and the leadership demonstrated by the Gulinos and Herliheys.

She provided background on an assault, which occurred Sunday, February 7, in McIntyre Hall. She provided a copy of the handout distributed in the residence halls, which focuses on maintaining security and safety. It appears the perpetrator gained access by following other students through a locked door. She directed people to UW’s safety website and noted that Resident Assistants are given training for dealing with safety issues. She expressed pride in the quick and appropriate response of the University community, including the floor residents.

Tuition and fees will increase for Academic Year 2010-11 and again in 2011-12. UW trustees approved a two-year plan for adjustments. The increases still leave UW at the bottom of the list in regards to tuition rates for 150 public doctoral institutions. Tuition increases will be five percent per year and will be directed to library acquisitions and instructional enhancements. Several Student Affairs departments are self-supporting and must rely on student fees. Fees will increase 5.6% in 2010-11 and by 3.6% in 2011-12. UW still offers good financial aid packages and it’s a great “buy.” She provided a handout with details. Federal stimulus funds have been received by UW and will be used to offset the tuition and fee increases for 2010-11 for all students. Additional stimulus funding will be used for major maintenance projects across the campus.

Another focus for the university is serving non-traditional students. Sara provided copies of a report on current services for this population. UW is maximizing its scholarship and aid offerings and examining possible gaps in services. She has also established a task force on services to veterans, who are returning to college in increasing numbers. To create a better system of
calendaring university events, she has created a task force, chaired by a student, to design/acquire a central system for listing all activities occurring at UW. This will be designed to offer students, faculty, staff, and the public a full view of what’s happening at the institution. Another task force is looking at ways to track certificate and non-credit course offerings by UW now that the Outreach School has had to drop that process due to budget cuts. Finally, Janicca Lee is leading a task force on marketing and Web services for the Division of Student Affairs.

[In response to a question raised, Wyoming senior citizens, age 65 and over, who have been admitted to UW may enroll in university courses on a space available bases at no cost upon presentation of evidence of age and Wyoming residence prior to the beginning of the term in which classes will be taken. Student benefits will not be available under this policy unless full tuition and fees are paid.]

Each Student-A Person Award: Council members voted to select the 2010 recipient of this award honoring Dr. James C. Hurst. First, each member voted for one of the 18 nominees. From that tally, three finalists emerged—Dia Matsuura, Jane Warren, and Mary Alice Bruce. On a second ballot, Jane Warren was selected as the recipient. She will be honored at the Student Affairs Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday, March 24, from 11:30 – 1:00 in the Crane-Hill Dining Hall.

Gatekeepers Program: Erin Olsen, a graduate student in Counseling, serving in the University Counseling Center, discussed the Gatekeepers Program. Recent research indicated 44% of students indicate being so depressed at times that they cannot function. Therefore the Counseling Center is working to reduce the stigma of mental health and asking for help. People are urged to escort a friend with challenges to the Counseling Center, which now has a “drop-in” service whereby a client can see a counselor immediately.

Training through the Gatekeepers program is available to all. It is about more than suicide prevention. Council members discussed various incidents with which they were familiar and complimented UW staff on their efforts. They asked if the statistics shared by Dan Socall about student interactions with the Counseling Center have changed.

Council Committees/Programs/Budget: A copy of the annual budget was distributed. Dan noted that the Council has received income from the Family Weekend silent auction, the fall fundraising mailer and phonathon, t-shirt sales, and the Wal-Mart grant. Expenses were contributions to the Student Emergency Fund, the Each Student-A Person Award, and various miscellaneous items. Fundraising income is up 58 percent, from just over $7,000 last fall to over $11,000 this fall. Based on the budget, the Council will have a cushion of $3,770 to start building a reserve.

The Council has two committees – Fundraising & Development and Recruitment & Retention. The Council recessed for the two committees to have short meetings and then report back.

The Fundraising & Development Committee is composed of Trish, Jolene, Pat, Trenda, Robert, Galand, and Joe.
Fundraising brought in money from three activities. The silent auction netted $2,210; the Wal-Mart grant was for $1,000; and 110 t-shirts were sold at $20 a piece for a net of $1,282. It was proposed that an online, “buy it now” option be added to the silent auction. The group discussed the need to build a cushion of funds, while not cutting back on services and programs. A tentative goal of raising $50,000 per year was discussed, with no specific reserve amount identified. Joe, in coordination with Janicca, will work with the UW Foundation to attempt to get a list of potential donors who might want to support parent programs. Janicca will apply for the Wal-Mart grant annually. The committee expressed interest in selling more shirts, but changing the design or color. It was suggested that they be sold at a tailgate party booth.

The Recruitment & Retention committee is composed of Maryalice, Cam, Sandy, Brad W., Pete, Danielle, Brad I., Karen, Dan, and Vickie. A Welcome Call Program was implemented last summer and 29% of the parents of new students received a welcome call in late July and early August. They would like to obtain the list of all parents who attend New Student Orientation. For next year they hope to contact all 100% of the parents of new students, with the exception of Laramie parents. They also hosted a parents’ reception on Move-In day during the Summit program, and will continue this project and offered to help with set up. It was suggested that Council members be surveyed to learn of special skills and abilities they have which might be focused on Cowboy Parents projects. There was interest in entering a float in the Homecoming parade and offering a 50-50 raffle, tickets for which could be sold at the tailgate party, with the winner announced at half-time of the football game.

New Student Orientation: Mary Aguayo shared copies of the tentative schedules for 2010 New Student Orientation sessions. Council members are invited to assist with the resource fair, the luncheon in the Gardens, and the Cowboy Parents discussion session. All of these activities will occur on the first day of each session—one Mondays and Thursdays. She appreciates the involvement of parents of current students talking to parents of prospective students.

Bylaws: Dan asked for support to changing the bylaws to re-define the term of the student representatives to the Cowboy Parents Council from two years to one year. Brad Wiesley offered and Joe Gulino seconded a motion to amend Article IV, Section 9 of the Cowboy Parents Bylaws by adding at the end of the first sentence, the words, “except that the student members shall serve a one-year term.” The motion carried unanimously. The updated provision reads:

a. The Chair, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint members of the Council for two-year terms, except that the student members shall serve a one-year term. Terms shall be staggered to provide continuity in Council membership. Members of the Council may serve multiple terms.

New Council members: A suggested timeline for selecting new Council members was distributed and discussed. A request for nominations for new Council members was distributed on February 1, with a March 31 response deadline. Five positions are open; Trish Arthur, Joe Gulino, Maryalice Gulino, and Trenda Weisshaar have agreed to serve another two-year term. New members will be selected at the June 2010 meeting and will serve from fall 2010 to fall 2012.
February 13 activities: Janicca discussed Council participation in activities for the following day. Parents were asked to help with the Discovery Day resource fair and the men’s basketball game half-time reception.

Budget discussion: Currently there is $21,217 in expendable funds in the Cowboy Parents account. It is expected that about $3,770 might be added this year. Depending on the success of the silent auction and the mailer, the cushion might be higher.

Council members discussed the Student Emergency Fund, questioning whether putting $3,000 into the fund per year was sufficient. Questions included (a) are students being turned away? (b) Is there enough funding in the account to meet true needs? (c) What is the historical use of the account? (d) Is repayment encouraged? and (e) Should the rules be re-evaluated? Janicca volunteered to research these questions and share her findings by email.

Adjournment: With no further business to conduct, the meeting concluded at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Nutter