University Resources Policy Committee

Minutes from Thursday, December 12, 2013, 3:30-5:00 PM, AGAD 128

In Attendance: Mo Trout, Doug Nelson, Steven Johnson, Pam Aaltonen, Al Diaz, Jody Banks, Blake Hylton, Holly Mason, Richard Johnson-Sheehan (Chair)

I. Old Business (None)

II. Presentation by Beth McCuskey, Associate Vice President of Housing and Food Services regarding recent changes and initiatives in student housing at Purdue.

Beth McCuskey reviewed the recent moves by Purdue’s Housing and Food Services to build and renovate dorms as well as change food policies to make meal plans cheaper for students. In a few different ways, she reported, the administration has asked Housing and Food Services to find ways to make everything less expensive so those savings could be passed on to students. Specifically, she talked about the food plans. Purdue has always been known for its excellent food in the dorms; however, the costs have been higher than average. By making some strategic changes, the prices could be brought down. McCuskey also talked about strategies for bringing more students back to campus living. Convincing more students to live on campus rather than off campus is one of President Daniels' goals. She also talked about Purdue’s attempts to consolidate food services to bring down costs. Food services, she explained, may have become too decentralized.

McCuskey was asked about the Purdue Village and married student housing. She replied that the population of the Purdue Village has been shifting with fewer families and an increasing number of international students. Any development in the area, she said, would need to pay for itself, so it is likely that the area will be re-purposed into some kind of housing for undergraduates.

She was asked about a “performance space” for musicians and artists, perhaps even a campus bar of some kind. She thought this was a possibility. What is happening, though, is the creation of “pocket parks” where performances could happen.

She was asked about housing for graduate students, who often get “short schrift.” She replied that the graduate student population is expected to grow, so housing will need to better cater to their needs.

McCuskey was asked about how more students would be brought back to living on campus. She mentioned “academizing” the dorms to make them more attractive rather than appealing to students with granite countertops, tanning beds, and pools, which are used by apartment complexes to lure them away. Academizing means providing mentors, tutors, and academic and social communities here on campus.

She was asked about retail services like food trucks driving onto campus at lunch time. Al Diaz mentioned that this kind of service is something that might need to be shut down, and that this is something Purdue’s food services should be doing.

III. New Business (None)