Student Senate Meeting October 26, 2011

-Meeting called to order at 3:17 by Matt.
-Opening prayer by Chris.
-Review of minutes from October 12, 2011, motion made to approve by Chris, motion passed.

-Committee Reports
  -Internal Affairs
    -Brief overview of the curling club, by president Cat Penning.
    -Amber made motion to approve Science club, motion passed.
    -Off-campus slots now opened up for all students.
  -Bethany Activities Committee
    -Had over 100 people at cookie decorating event.
    -Showing of Hocus Pocus in movie room.
    -Haunted house Friday night, with Halloween dance Saturday.
  -Public Relations
    -Met to start work on Toilet Paper, going to publish twice a month.
    -Talk to housekeeping about publishing Toilet Paper in academic buildings.
    -Looking into gift certificates for the Lab for trivia winners once a month.
  -Religious Affairs
    -Martin Luther Birthday party, question on eating or not in movie room. Possible reimbursement to Chaplain for refreshments.
    -Suggestion for a hymnal rack for piano that is by Old Main.
    -Peter brought up idea for Braille hymnal for chapel.
  -Campus Concerns
    -Student directory, no search feature. Possibility for buildings to have hours posted on the website, going to talk to Dave Norris.
    -Met with IT for Milton Tweit Hall, not enough traffic to justify putting in the computer. You can print from any copier with a flash drive, IT going to add instructions for that.
    -FOB problem with Anderson Hall got fixed. Possibility of FOB access for same genders into residence halls.
  -Luther Hall Ad Hoc
    -Almost done painting, ready to put up pictures, still collecting jerseys.

-Financial Affairs
  -Peter made a motion to approve up to 250 dollars for MAPCS fees, motion passed.
  -Motion made to approve budget by Jenny, Amber seconded, motion passed.
  -Will brought up idea of asking for matching funds similar to organizations such as Thrivent.

-Open Discussion
  -Fall workshop
    -Possibility of waiting for the new senators to be brought on before going over procedure, general consensus is to wait.
  -Motion made to attach Matt Behmer’s response to Scroll article about ethics of Senate, placed on senate website, motion passed.
  -Motion made to adjourn meeting, meeting adjourned at 4:08.

Excused absences: Andrew Soule
Present: Matt, Amber, Hannah, Will, Peter, Evan, Bret, Lindsay, Allison, Jenny, Nikki, Chris
Absent: Jason, Jessica
October 26, 2011

This statement intends to address questions presented in a recent Scroll article titled *Decisions, Ethics of Student Senate Come into Question* published on 10/18/11.

The purpose of the Student Senate is to represent students in all matters of concern and to serve as a liaison between the students, faculty, and staff. Senate desires to function in an ethical manner, and as a democratically elected representation of the student body, where elected senators vote to approve policy and funding to benefit the student body of Bethany Lutheran College. To this end:

- Student Senate adheres to its constitution.
- Student Senate has an internal affairs committee to ensure that it is functioning within the parameters of its constitution.
- Matters presented before the Senate are voted upon according to procedure identified in the Student Senate Constitution, including: meeting quorum, majority rule, the non-voting membership of the president, etc.
- Student Senate subscribes to the tenants of “Robert’s Rules of Order.” Any senator has the opportunity to call “point of order” if they feel something is not progressing properly.

Student Senate nor myself do not in any way desire to quash the freedom of speech, but do encourage responsibility when speaking of others, and adhering to the principles of the eighth commandment, specifically in Luther’s explanation where it states in regards to our neighbor that we do not “give him a bad name, but defend him, speak well of him and take his words and actions in the kindest possible way.” To this end:

- The OPINION voiced in the article that remaining finances at the end of the year be dispersed, “equally among all the clubs and organizations on campus” is respected.

- The OPINION voiced in the article that, “funding be stopped at smaller priced items” is respected.

- The OPINION voiced in the article that, “But does sending $4,000 to one specific club support Bethany’s mission?” is respected.

It is in regard to the article’s questions of Student Senate ethics that compels me to share and address the facts there were omitted from the October 18th, 2011 Scroll article. To this end, following are presented facts:

- All Student Senate meetings are open to anyone who wants to attend. The agenda, minutes, meeting times, and locations are public knowledge.
• The Student Senate on April 6, 2011, while meeting quorum in a regular session meeting, approved the allocation of an amount resembling the balance of the un-used Student Senate financial account to X-Terrain Sports Club by majority vote as a gesture of the Student Senate’s confidence in the club’s request. X-Terrain Sports Club’s financial request was presented by non-Senate member. I, as Student Senate President, did not comment or vote.

• In the 2010-2011 academic year there was no constitutionally mandated $700 cap on funding for clubs or organizations as implied in the article. The 2010-2011 Student Club & Organization Financial Request Packet recommended that clubs ask up to $700 with the ability to accommodate special situations as noted below:

  • “Clubs can ask for up to $700. Special circumstances can be discussed with the FAC” (2010-2011 Student Club & Organization Financial Request Packet)

• To this end, there were a number of examples of the 2010-2011 Student Senate approving requests above and beyond $700.00 including:

  • $708.49 to Up To Dawn
  • $1,200 to the Lab Coffee Shop
  • $1,150 to PAMA
    o that included support for speaker Michael Leahy and a speaker on Human Trafficking
  • $23,603.62 to BAC

• The Student Senate allots funding based on funding requests presented. These are discussed on a case-by-case basis on the floor of the entire Student Senate. The Student Senate does not have a policy of dividing or dispersing funds equally.

• It should be noted, that at the time of the April 6, 2011 Student Senate meeting, there were no additional outstanding funding requests. It should be further noted that no club or organization in 2010-2011 was denied funding by Student Senate.

• It should be noted that the October 18, 2011 Scroll article did not include a single statement supporting the accusation of unethical practices from student senators who were actually present at the April 6th, 2011 meeting.

• Official financial records indicate that X-Terrain has received to date a total of $4,500 since its inception, not $6,500 as portrayed in the article.
• The Scroll Article of October 18th, 2011 states, “while I have tried to get the meeting’s minutes, which are supposed to be public record, they have not been made available.” This statement, made within the context of the article, implies that the Student Senate, Dean Manthe, or myself are trying to hide or with-hold information. Minutes from the Student Senate Regular Session Meeting on April 6, 2011 cannot be found simply due to the fact that the 2010-2011 Student Senate Secretary, Mehlhouse, was not present at that meeting. It was an accidental oversight that no minutes were kept in her absence. For this oversight, I take full responsibility.

I again respect the opinions presented in the article, but I find no basis for the accusation of unethical practices. I stand behind the actions of last year’s student senators who were elected on behalf of the student body to represent and serve.

I consider it an honor to serve on Student Senate where opinions can be openly expressed, and the power resides in the democratic process of the vote. The senate floor provides a wonderful opportunity to express opinions. I encourage anyone to participate in senate and/or bring your concerns directly to the Student Senate’s attention.

Matthew R. Behmer
Student Senate President 2010-2011, 2011-2012
Bethany Lutheran College