

Minutes Undergraduate Council (UGC) meeting 9.21.20
Prepared by Debbie Zelizer with revisions from Hanna Nekvasil

In attendance at Zoom meeting: Hanna Nekvasil, Norm Goodman, Sandra Brennan, Charlie Robbins, Jacqueline Rowe, Jason Trelewicz, Brenda Anderson, Christine Pitocco, Deb Serling, Arlene Feldman, Kevin McDonnell, Jennifer Dellaposta, Debbie Zelizer, Diane Bello, Shellie Germana

3+3 Pace contract

SOMAS put forth a proposal for a 3+3 program for environmental/sustainable studies majors with Pace law school.

- Why is this being pursued in general – how does this help increase students in the major? How many normally go on to law school?

Summary of the concerns:

- Serious fiscal issues – SBU bears all of the burden (lose a semester of student tuition) while Pace Law School benefits.
 - Public v. private: SBU loses one year of tuition, what is Pace law school losing – nothing. They are recruiting students from SBU and still getting 3 full years of very high tuition.
 - Wouldn't it be fair to charge the SBU students a lower tuition rate for the first year of their law program?
- There are other schools much lower priced and higher ranked - Is this going to be explained to the students?
- While Pace is ranked 4th in the country for Environmental law, overall they are one of the lowest ranked law schools in the country.
 - In law your ability to get a job is often based on the quality of the school you attended – what if a SBU student decides during their second year they don't want to stay in Environmental Law – will they be able to change. If yes, will they be employable?
- Although there is some financial aid available to students at PACE, there may be insufficient aid to allow a low-income student to choose this path and the student cannot participate in the program.
- Environmental lawyers are among the lowest paid – compared to other law specialties. Do students know that?

- We have many programs on campus that allow students to do their last year in another area (i.e., SPD BA/MAT programs, Scholars in Medicine, etc.) but the money stays here or in the SUNY/CUNY systems. Why not a partnership with a SUNY Law school?
- If a student wishes to drop out after the first year due to finances, there is no guarantee in the contract that all of the remaining courses for the B.A. degree at SBU will have been covered in that first year at PACE.
- There is nothing in the contract that obligates PACE to ensure that all of the courses that are need to complete the BA will be taught annually to ensure that each new batch of students from SBU can complete their requirements during their first year at PACE and still withdraw if needed.
- The contract does not map out a plan for transfer students but instead uses “sophomore year”, “junior” year, etc.

Questions/statements made by members of the committee

- Buffalo has a law school, the tuition is a 1/3rd of the tuition at Pace Law School – why did SOMAS choose PACE?
- It’s ultimately up to the student to make the decision whether this program is right for them.
- For downstate/local students, Pace Law School might be better option than going upstate.
- This is a special program, not all Law schools have Environmental law as a specialty.
- Why not other law schools? Pace has a very high acceptance rate. Pace accepts lower qualified students than other schools – has SOMAS explored other law schools?
- Quality of the education is substandard- Pace has more adjunct faculty than fulltime faculty.
- No mapping of courses
 - What if a student transfers back from Pace because of overall unsatisfactory performance, how will the department decide which courses can be transferred as substitutions for SBU courses?
 - If a student drops out and returns to SBU to complete their degree, typically a student can only apply 6 credits of graduate course work to their undergraduate degree.
 - How do credits in law school map onto SBU credits.
 - Where is discussion of a waiver of the grad course rule?
- This is an advantage, it gives students a choice and access to something SBU does not offer.
- It’s a poor law school and a binary choice. We should be presenting students with a number of options. As it stands, this

option only provides an option to students that can afford the tuition at Pace.

- Diane Bello chatted a link to the financial information on Pace's website, Pace does offer scholarships and financial aid: <https://law.pace.edu/admissions-aid/financing-your-education>