Committee on Student Life  
Annual Report AY 2017-2018

TO: The Faculty of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering

FROM: Jamie Kirsch, Andrew Ramsburg, co-chairs, Committee on Student Life

The Committee on Student Life (CSL) collaborates with the administration to imbue in student life the principles, ideals, and values characteristic of the University. Committee activities broadly relate to policy and regulatory oversight, judicial action, and improvement of the student experience. Examples of committee responsibilities include: review and approval of constitutional changes to the student government, review and approval of changes to student governmental procedures and documents, oversight of student groups including Greek organizations, inquiry hearings related to misconduct within or by campus groups, adjudication of appeals by students who have been disciplined by the university, and administering the Wendell Phillips Award.

The following Annual Report describes CSL activities for AY 17-18.

Wendell Phillips Award

The CSL is charged with administering the Wendell Phillips Award. Work in AY17-18 was again collaborative with the Tufts University Chaplaincy. The Chaplaincy plans the Baccalaureate Service, where the Wendell Phillips Awardee speaks. The partnership with the Chaplaincy related to the Wendell Phillips award continues to grow.

For this AY, CSL worked with the Chaplaincy to plan the award process. The Chaplaincy facilitated the nomination process, assembled the applications, and hosted the finalist talks. The CSL developed the prompt for the application, reviewed the 19 applications, selected five finalists, and selected the winner.

The finalist event occurred on March 14, 2018 in Goddard Chapel. The finalist event that was open to the entire Tufts University community. After hearing the five finalist speeches, CSL selected the Ms. Anna Del Castillo as the Wendell Phillips Award recipient.

Following the finalist event, the CSL reviewed the selection process. Changes in communication and perhaps selection processes were discussed. CSL plans to continue this discussion early on in AY 18-19.
Disciplinary Hearings and Appeals

Judicial Training
Annual judicial training is required for all CSL members. Mr. Kevin Kraft, Director of Community Standards, conducted this training on 08 Sep 2018. At the start of spring term, CSL welcomed two new student members. Mr. Kraft trained these students individually. All CSL members completed judicial training prior to participation in any hearing or appeal.

Hearings Related to Group Misconduct
The fall term was particularly busy as the investigations into many Greek letter organizations that commenced in Nov 2016 concluded with complaints against nine Greek letter organizations. The details of the investigation process are summarized in several updates from President Monaco and are not further described herein. As the fall term began, CSL had to schedule six hearings related to the Greek investigations. Efforts by DOSA led to five groups accepting Administrative Resolutions, with some occurring within days of the scheduled hearing. In addition, two other group hearings occurred (i.e., hearings related to conduct violations occurring outside the Greek letter system or after the aforementioned investigations concluded).

In October, CSL convened a hearing with Theta Delta Chi. Theta Delta Chi was charged with violating numerous policies. At the outset of the hearing, the group accepted responsibility for all of the violations. Given the severity of the policy violations and the group’s recent disciplinary history, CSL revoked recognition. Additional information is available through the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life website on the organization status page.

In October, CSL convened a hearing with the Men’s Club Soccer team. The team was charged with violating the Code of Conduct. At the outset of the hearing, the team accepted responsibility for all of the violations. Based on the hearing, CSL suspended the team through 20 May 2018. The team will be on probation through 31 August 2019.

In April, CSL convened a hearing with Pi Rho Omega. Pi Rho Omega was charged with violating multiple aspects of Tufts’ policies related to alcohol at social functions. At the outset of the hearing, the group accepted responsibility for all of the violations. Based on the hearing, CSL suspended the group through at least 31 Aug 2019. Return from suspension is conditional and accompanied by a one-year period of probation. Additional information is available through the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life website on the organization status page.
Individual Student Appeals
Tufts University Student Judicial Process allows disciplinary decisions to be appealed based on any of three reasons: new evidence; denial of fair process; and severity of consequence.

On 08 Sep 2018, CSL voted 13-0-0 to grant co-chairs the authority for Executive Review of all appeals. Executive Review has been used by the CSL for the last several years and requires an annual vote at the beginning of each academic year. Executive Review comprises an initial review of each appeal to determine if any of the three criteria for appeal are sufficiently stated to warrant a full committee review. If all co-chairs unanimously decide that no sufficient grounds for appeal are stated in the submission, the appeal is denied. If one or more of the co-chairs feel that at least one sufficient grounds for appeal is stated, the appeal is reviewed by the CSL membership. Decisions to deny appeals in Executive Review must be unanimous. That is, each co-chair has the ability to forward any appeal to the full committee.

This AY, CSL decided five individual student appeals.

Case A involved a Dean’s Decision of responsibility for violation of Tufts Violence Free policy. The student appealed based on denial of fair process and severity of consequence. At the conclusion of deliberations, the CSL denied the appeals.

Case B involved a Dean’s Decision of responsibility for violation of Tufts Alcohol Policy. The student appealed based on denial of fair process and severity of consequence. At the conclusion of deliberations, the CSL denied the appeals.

Case C involved a Dean’s Decision of responsibility for a noise disturbance. The student appealed based on severity of consequence. At the conclusion of deliberations, the CSL denied the appeal.

Case D involved a Dean’s Decision of responsibility for violation of Tufts Code of Conduct. The student appealed based on severity of consequence. At the conclusion of deliberations, the CSL denied the appeal.

Case E involved a Dean’s Decision of responsibility for violation of Tufts No Smoking Policy. The student appealed based on denial of fair process and severity of consequence. At the conclusion of deliberations, the CSL denied the appeals.

Student Conduct Policy Review
In the spring term, CSL commenced a thorough review of all AS&E policies related to student conduct. Note that sexual misconduct is a University Policy and, thus, falls outside of the review. Dean Mary Pat McMahon, Dean of Student Affairs, commissioned the review. Dean McMahon notified the Dean Jim Glaser of School of
Arts & Sciences and Dean Jianmin Qu of the School of Engineering of the review. CSL co-chairs notified AS&E faculty through email. Dean McMahon and Mr. Kevin Kraft, Director of Community Standards, announced the review publicly via email and through an article in The Tufts Daily and invited comment from all students. Mr. Kraft and Ms. Shaughnessy, Project Administrator facilitated the review.

In preparation for the review, CSL co-chairs coordinated with the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, and the co-chairs of the AS&E Executive Committee. The purpose of this coordination was to discuss the review generally, and determine how to increase representation in the review process. The need for increased representation related to the recent integration of SMFA and limited representation of graduate students on CSL. CSL co-chairs discussed SMFA participation with Dean Nancy Bauer and Dr. Eulogio Guzman (SMFA representative to Faculty Senate).

As the review began, Dean Glaser invited the co-chairs to discuss the review at the 07 March 2018 meeting of the A&S faculty. Dr. Jamie Kirsch (CSL co-chair) and Mr. Kevin Kraft led the discussion.

CSL conducted six review meetings through the course of the spring term. The review is ongoing, and the committee anticipates providing final recommendations to Dean McMahon over the summer so that new policies (excluding the academic integrity policy) can take effect for the new academic year. In addition, the committee anticipates working with Dean McMahon and DOSA staff to present an overview of the review to the AS&E faculty in the fall term. CSL will forward other recommendations that require faculty action to the AS&E Executive Committee for further consideration.

Other Business

Greek Letter Organization Faculty Advisors
Many of the Administrative Resolutions accepted by the Greek letter organizations required faculty and staff advisors. The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life approached CSL for assistance given that the deadline for establishing these advisor relationships was short. CSL authorized the co-chairs to hold monthly meetings with the four groups between November 2017 and February 2018. DOSA and OFSL agreed that these meetings would allow the groups to comply with the Administrative Resolution requirement of monthly meetings with faculty advisors. Groups were responsible for finding advisors before the end of March 2018. OFSL and DOSA approve the faculty advisors, so it is unclear how many of the four groups are currently in compliance with their Administrative Resolution requirement for faculty advisors.

CSL held meetings in Nov, Dec, Jan and Feb. These were group settings, where members from each of the four Greek letter groups and CSL attended. The first two meetings had programing developed the by co-chairs that focused on: (i) developing good descriptions of the advisor role, (ii) understanding the faculty perspective, and (iii) talking with prospective advisors about the role.