

Faculty Senate addresses alcohol issues

By Sarah Peters
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The University Faculty Senate reviewed the success of initiatives to address excessive alcohol consumption and online Student Ratings of Teaching Effectiveness yesterday and adopted a revised academic freedom policy.

Vice President for Student Affairs Damon Sims presented a report on student alcohol consumption and a review of Penn State's initiatives to curb excessive alcohol consumption.

"Few topics we deal with in higher education are more sobering than alcohol abuse," Sims said.

By the beginning of November, there were 275 alcohol-related vis-

its to Mt. Nittany Medical Center and 699 referrals to the BASICS program, Sims said.

But Sims said National Public Radio's representation of Penn State students in an episode of "This American Life" last year — which portrayed Penn State students as heavy drinkers and partiers — was inaccurate.

"The typical experience offered at University Park is not dripping with alcohol," Sims said.

"Half of the undergraduate population falls between parameters of light consumption to abstinence."

The expanded prohibition of alcohol in on-campus student residences next fall, alcohol-free recruitment periods for fraterni-

ties and sororities and an expansion of the offenses that result in referrals to BASICS and judicial affairs are some of the university's initiatives to curb excessive alcohol use, Sims said.

He encouraged faculty members to provide students with a "robust, five-day week," to hold classes the Friday before State Patty's Day, and to assign homework due the Monday following State Patty's Day.

Faculty senators also discussed the decrease in responses for online SRTEs compared to those given in the classroom.

Professors on the tenure track need to submit SRTEs with a two-thirds response rate in their dociers, and the senators voiced

concerns that the online SRTEs make that more difficult. For the fall 2008 semester at Penn State DuBois, the mean response rate for paper SRTEs was 84 percent, compared to a 69 percent mean response rate for online SRTEs in spring 2009, according to a report by the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs.

After a lengthy discussion and review of several proposed amendments, the Senate passed a revision to Policy HR64 on academic freedom — which deals with what professors can say in a classroom setting, among other things.

The amendment clarified language in the policy regarding the definition of academic freedom

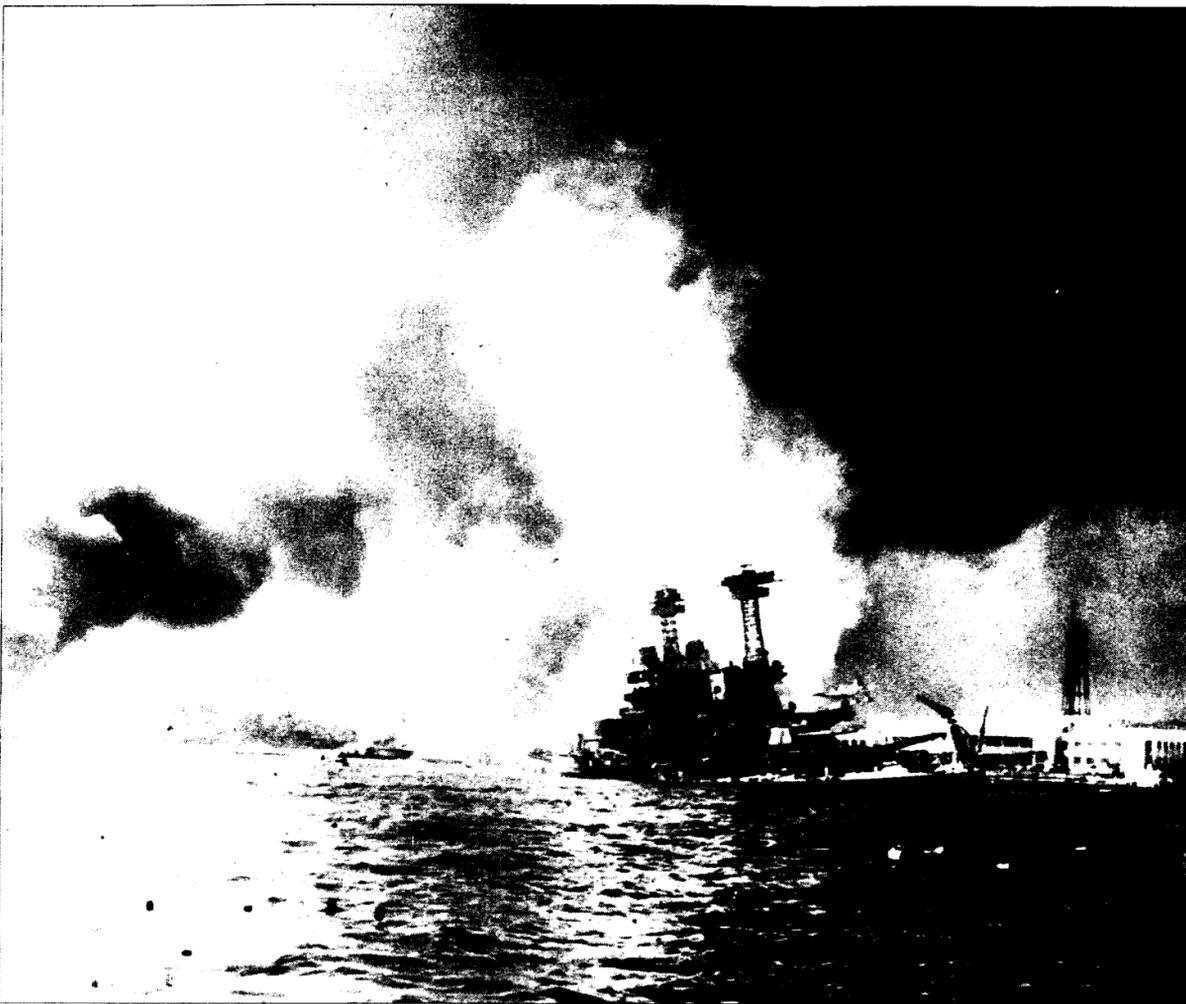
and the responsibilities of instructors. The revised policy also grants librarians access to academic freedom.

Penn State President Graham Spanier also addressed a question about the upcoming fiscal year.

Spanier said he doesn't "think we're going to have any difficulty in being listened to," but he anticipates difficulty in getting financial help because of the state's multi-billion dollar deficit and Governor-Elect Tom Corbett's pledge to not raise taxes.

"What we're trying to guard against is a massive cut in new appropriations," Spanier said.

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Associated Press file photo

This Dec. 7, 1941 file photo provided by the Department of Defense shows the USS California, right, after being struck by a torpedo and a 500-pound bomb during a Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. The attack triggered the U.S.'s involvement in World War II 69 years ago. On Tuesday, about 50 people gathered at the Pennsylvania Military Museum in Boalsburg to commemorate the attacks and the soldiers who died.

Museum remembers Pearl Harbor

By Eddie Lau
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Sixty-nine years ago Tuesday, aircraft from the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Hawaii.

America was at war.

And despite the cold weather, about 50 people gathered Tuesday at the Pennsylvania Military Museum in Boalsburg to honor the soldiers who died during the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Nearly 2,400 servicemen died on the day of the attack, with more than 1,500 killed in the first 15 minutes of Japanese bombings on the USS Oklahoma, USS Utah and USS Arizona.

The day after the attack, the United States declared war on Japan, a declaration that brought the U.S. into World War II.

The small tribute started at 12:15 p.m. and lasted about 20 minutes. Joe Harvath, the museum's educator, and David Rhoades, a member of the Friends of the Pennsylvania

Military Museum, delivered short speeches.

"The significance of Pearl Harbor is that it threw America to the war and forever changed the case of the globe," Harvath said.

Harvath and Rhoades both emphasized the Pennsylvania citizens' contribution to the war effort during World War II.

Many participants said the tribute was meaningful since Pearl Harbor was a painful day that Americans should not forget.

"We had a great service, one that everyone should come to," said Linda Cook, a resident of South Philipsburg. "We must always remember Pearl Harbor. When I was young there was much remembrance. Now, not so much."

Cook said it is a shame that people are forgetting the past and those who gave their lives so Americans today can live free.

"Our history books contain less and less about the important moments in America's history,"

"It was like a big black eye to America when that happened. You know, a lot of lives were lost, a lot of families were torn apart."

Maggie Kwok

Penn State Veterans Organization president

she said.

"We can't let that happen," Maggie Kwok, president of Penn State Veterans Organization, agreed. She said Pearl Harbor was one of the most important events in 20th century.

"It was like a big black eye to America when that happened," she said. "You know, a lot of lives were lost, a lot of families were torn apart."

As a veteran who served in the Navy for five and half years, Kwok said people should focus on healing instead of blaming those who carried out the Pearl Harbor attack.

"We shouldn't focus on the attack," she said. "We should focus on people who lost their

lives at the attack and the subsequent lives we lost during the war."

This is the second year for the Military Museum, located three miles east of State College, to host the tribute.

"The reason we do it here is because we have the guns from the USS Pennsylvania, which was at Pearl Harbor during the attacks," said Chuck Smith, the museum's administrator. The USS Pennsylvania, in dry-dock at Pearl Harbor, was among the first ships to return fire on Japanese warplanes. Smith said it is important to remember those who served and defended the country.

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Volunteers speak on experience

By Jessica Wabara
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Tuesday night, Penn State students welcomed back local volunteers who left the comforts of their homes to help others in need around the world.

Penn State Career Services' Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Panel event featured former Peace Corps volunteers who came to speak on their experiences with the Corps, a federal agency that promotes development around the world.

"It's about giving back and helping developing countries through service," said Mel Lawson (senior-crime law and justice).

Nellie Bhattarai, Penn State's Peace Corps recruiter, said the Peace Corps program is significant because it allows people to go abroad and learn about different cultures and people.

"We are often very self-absorbed and forget that everything we do here in the States impacts people around the world," said Bhattarai.

The panel included five graduate students — Trevor Ammons, Lindsay Usher, Brianna Buchler, Kristal Jones and Ellie Andrews — and a former Penn State faculty member, Art Heim.

The panel members shared their experiences to students about the countries where they volunteered.

Carolyn Higgins (junior-nursing) said she hopes to travel to South Africa where she sees herself using the degree she receive from Penn State to help make a difference.

"The Peace Corps has people bring their different skills to the table to help others," Higgins said.

After sharing their experiences the panel answered questions from the audience members.

The panel agreed their volunteering experiences were life-changing and taught them about the simplicity of life.

"You learn to fit your life into a backpack," Ammons (graduate-international affairs) said.

Usher, who served in Guatemala, said she learned the importance of family and community.

"The people you meet there help you more than you will help them," Usher (graduate-recreation, park and tourism) said.

Bhattarai, who was a volunteer in Nepal, said her experience was "life-changing."

"If you see something you don't like, it creates a drive in you to make a change," she said.

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Students hold candlelight vigil in support of legislation

By Matt Scorzafave
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More than 40 students and community members gathered on Old Main's steps Tuesday night to show support for the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act with a candlelight vigil.

The event, sponsored by the Penn State Latino Caucus and Penn State College Democrats, allowed students to unite and reflect on why they support the DREAM Act.

If passed, the act will allow undocumented minors in the U.S. an opportunity to seek higher education.

"This has been something in the works for a few years now," Dahiana Tejada said.

Tejada, the president of the Penn State Latino Caucus, said that as legislation currently stands, nearly two million minors who, as young children, illegally immigrated with their parents to the U.S. will not be able to go to college or join the military.

"We will not accept no as an answer."

Dahiana Tejada
Latino Caucus president

Under current legislation, undocumented minors are required to provide proof of citizenship in order to apply to college, join the military, or apply for most jobs.

"This is a way of peacefully protesting," Tejada (senior-geography and Latin American studies) said.

"A lot of these kids had no will when they were brought to America and they are being denied human rights."

Some political analysts expect the act to be voted on in Congress today, during the organization's lame duck session.

Tejada said it is extremely important for the act to be passed, and students in attendance said they support the act.

Sandra Juarez (sophomore-Spanish) said the DREAM Act hits home for her.

"I have friends and family who want the experience of a college education," Jaurez said.

"These families came to America to provide better opportunities for their family, and they're being denied that."

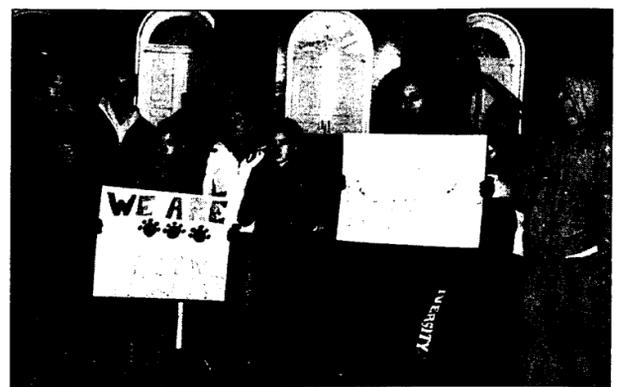
The vigil began with opening remarks from student leaders, and followed with students sharing stories of how the DREAM Act affects them.

Tejada said the candles used represent students' fire and passion in supporting the cause.

"It's symbolic of keeping our light and showing that we will continue to support the act," she said.

Rob Ghormoz, the president of Penn State College Democrats, said his organization was glad to work with the Latino Caucus.

"This is really about the persecution of people who didn't do anything wrong," Ghormoz (senior-



Courtesy of Everardo Tapia

Students supporting the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act participate in a candlelight vigil Tuesday night.

political science) said.

"They really brought the passion and we brought the political know-how."

Student leaders encouraged students to call their representative and senators today to encourage the passing of DREAM.

"We will not accept no as an answer," Tejada said.

The vigil concluded with a moment of silence and students chanting "¡Por el sueño!" which translates to "For the dream."

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