

The Minutes of AUA Student Council Meeting
February 20, 2007
(Started at 16:30 p. m)
Room 20, American University of Armenia

Yerevan, Armenia

Presided:

Lucig Danielian, AUA Vice-President

Mary Lackie, AUA Registrar

Attendees:

1. Tigran Davtyan, President, Student Council (SC)
2. Anzhelika Sargsyan, Vice-President/SC
3. Nvard Chalikyanyan - Public Relations Coordinator
4. Edmon Mikayelyan -APP Coordinator
5. Christina Abrahamyan– Secretary
- 6.

Absentees

1. Laura Gevorgyan – Coordinator, Foreign Languages Coordinator
2. Diana Baziyan-Treasurer
3. Narine Aslanyan-Web Page Editor
4. Armen Pahlavuni-Campus Wide Events

Late

None

Agenda

1. Presentation of AUA's New Policy of Financial Aid
2. Q&A session

Background

In respect with merit scholarship policy replacement with a newer system of financial assistance and 10% raise of Tuition fee in AUA, the Student Council (hereinafter referred as SC) of the same University has asked its Registrar Mrs. Mary Lackie and Vice president Dr. Lucig Danielian to call a meeting and present principles of newer policy to SC. One of the reasons of asking for such a meeting was that many APP students approached SC and ask for assistance since they were not aware why merit scholarship is removed and what will replace it. The main concern of students was that they were informed about it very late. Even though Mrs. Lackie said she has done this same presentation for APP students three times and that Registrar's office has already received 47 applications for financial assistance, during the meeting organized SC on 17 February 2007 with newly enrolled students (former APP students) SC collected totally 95, first year, 2nd yearsignatures who voiced mainly against removal of merit scholarship, secondly increase of Tuition fee.

1. PowerPoint presentation

Mrs. Mary Lackie made a PP presentation where she explained in details the new financial need based scholarship system which will replace former merit based scholarship system. AUA administration's decision of Tuition fee increase was made due to new reality of Armenia's economy, shift of scholarship policy was due to AUA's willingness to recruit more students who are not able to afford study at AUA. Mary Lackie also mentioned that this was the first change

taken place since last three years. AUA will allocate money for each student based on his/her financial need. Several documents will be provided by applicant to prove the need. AUA developed a reliable verification mechanism to check reliability and validity of provided documents. Any student who would provide false documents or would hide true financial status will pay penalty. This will include not only interruption of assistance but also cash penalty. The information included in applications for financial aid will be confidential, the application review process - blind (anonymous).

2. Q&A session

Dr. Danielian joined the meeting at 17:00 pm. She answered to all questions of SC president and members. She described the whole process of policy formation. She mentioned that “Deans and professors insisted that merit scholarship should be restructured, since along years they had constantly been approached by students and asked to review their grades thus putting them under psychological pressure and harassment” as defined by Dr. Danielian. A task force was formed to undertake policy formation. Task force members did a research and observed different policies. They selected various criteria for restructuring. The final report was submitted to president of AUA, AUA board and the minister of education.

To the question if removal of merit scholarship would cause a decrease of competition among students and consequently their overall GPA Dr. Danielian replied with an optimistic opinion that this would not yield a worse performance of students. She added that merit scholarship turned to be not effective since it was based only on GPA.

3. Summary

- Restructured financial assistance will include:
 1. Financial need based scholarships for 1st year students from 10 to 90 % of total annual tuition fee and will be granted for one year term.
 2. Merit scholarships will be applied from 2nd year based on GPA plus other criteria. The amount of this type of scholarship is not yet decided. Besides, AUA will review the possibility of granting other recognition and awarding possibilities for excellent performance. A graduation with honor was mentioned as one possible version.
 3. Loan program will be granted as before, its amount is 750 000 per year. Applicants should pay a 5000 AMD application fee as it is done currently.
 - Mrs. Lackie will organize another meeting with AUA students to speak about new financial assistance policy.
 - Tigran Davtyan will meet Mrs. Lackie to hand her the above mentioned survey results which was conducted on 17 February 2007.

4. Next Meeting

Unspecified

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 18:30 p.m.

Submitted by Christina Abrahamyan