



# GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

*University of Connecticut*

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## Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 3 October 2012

- I. Call to Order: 4:39 pm.
- II. Recognition of Attendees
  - a. Present: Leland Aldridge, Safet Berisa, Erin Eighan, Chantelle Messier, Ian Yue. Absent: Anish M. Kurian. Presiding: Chantelle Messier, Secretary: Erin Eighan.
- III. Approval of Minutes: 19 September 2012
  - a. Summary of Amendments
  - b. Approved
- IV. Officer Reports
  - a. Parliamentarian: Leland Aldridge
    - i. Still collecting constituency registration forms. It's past the cut-off date (September 30), so I will start updating the Master Constituency Record.
    - ii. Art/Art History has only one senate seat allotted, but at the last GSS meeting there was one representative from Art and one from Art History. This is an issue the Procedures Committee will have to deal with.
  - b. Secretary: Erin Eighan
    - i. Feedback on meeting documents and secretarial duties?
      1. SUBOG Policy Council needs to be changed to "SUBOG SU Policy Council"
      2. University Budget Committee is the official name, not Senate Budget Committee.
      3. According to the new Bylaws (Bylaw V), Ian will send Erin a copy of a handbook for short-term loans. Ian will be working with Bing to prepare it.
    - ii. Distributing committee reports beforehand?
      1. This suggestion was raised in our last GSS meeting, and a standing vote indicated that an overwhelming majority of those present would read through committee reports prior to the meeting to facilitate and expedite meetings. What action should we take? How should we manage reporting during the meeting? Do we need official, anonymous feedback from the Senate to act?
        - a. In Chantelle's opinion, the reports are necessary because we often don't know what details will be relevant to different constituencies until they're brought up during a meeting.
        - b. Create a worksheet or form to standardize committee reports



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- i. Bullet points that encourages people to list items.
      - ii. Yes or no: did anything happen at this meeting that is significant to grad students?
      - iii. Emphasize action items
      - iv. Make the informational point very bulleted, and encourage them to refer to the minutes.
    - c. Should we do internal committee reports?
      - i. Yes, it would be useful. For Ian, it would be burdensome during those times. Also, the Finance Committee may make some decisions that aren't ready to be published yet.
      - ii. From now on, please send a report after standing committee meetings
  - iii. Public Relations Committee
    - 1. *The Commons* ([gssuconn.wordpress.com](http://gssuconn.wordpress.com))
      - a. Administrator will be the secretary, PR Committee will serve as editors, all others will be contributors
      - b. The goal is to transform this into a newspaper-like electronic resource for the graduate student community at UConn
      - c. Initial results of poll conducted in the first blog post indicate that the top 4 demands for this site would be (in order) a forum for professional development, announcements about events, graduate student op-eds, and a marketplace/classifieds section.
        - i. How can we facilitate a Professional Development forum?
          - 1. Reblogging is a big thing. There's a lot of grad school and higher education sites. Consider doing a weekly round-up. Have an editor do a kind of annotated bibliography.
          - 2. Gathering feedback on topics people would like to see covered. Every week or month or so we could get different articles across the blogosphere and then maybe one new contribution from a UConn community contributor. Could ask professors as well.
          - 3. Contact Career Center, CETL, Grad School.



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- ii. Ryan Tomchek will be the Activities Correspondent, and he will have a post drafted by the end of the week reviewing GAIN and/or Ted's Social Night.
  - iii. Google calendar to announce and advertise events? How else could we turn this section into something functional and manageable?
    - 1. You could probably use Google calendar as the back-end and have some kind of third-party way of presenting that information that would connect with the Google calendar. Sure there are different front-ends.
  - iv. A marketplace/classifieds section would help fill a need that the Grad-Listserv will be limiting with the implementation of Listserv guidelines. Feedback about developing a marketplace/classifieds section?
    - 1. Could we model it on something like UConn off-campus housing. Some parts of the website are public, some private.
    - 2. It would be a shame to keep this from the public.
    - 3. It might block our access to professional students and postdocs that want to have access to it.
    - 4. Consider having classifieds private and everything else public.
  - v. How best to attract contributors? Should I email a call for proposals? Or should I turn this into an actual survey with one question having the option to include contact info/proposal?
    - 1. Direct solicitation via email.
- d. Access and Audience
- i. Because GSS is funded by the graduate student activity fee, do we need to worry about who has access to GSS-funded sites/blogs?
  - ii. Should we consider this service accessible by NetID or subscription/registration only? This might be important to consider especially if we develop a Grad Student



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Marketplace. How should I go about doing this if deemed necessary?

- iii. Get secure stuff onto the UConn server and hook it up to the NetID system.

### 2. Branding and Graphic Design

- a. To revamp our visual presence, it would be wise to contract someone to be the GSS graphic designer. Is this possible? If so, how do we go about doing this?
  - b. Rich Colon is researching other University-affiliated formal insignia
  - c. Look into contracting an internal vendor for a service (like that contracted for the GSS website). Close-ended service on a contract. The print shop may offer some design services.
  - d. Consider having a contest for creating a GSS logo.
- iv. GSS on the Graduate School Website – Erin, email Dr. Chafouleas with a logo and a blurb for a link to our website.
  - v. Graduate School Handbook information on GSS needs to be updated.
    1. Chantelle will revise most of the information. Ian will revise the financial information. Upload it as a google doc. Chantelle will forward it to Erin to excerpt a blurb for the grad school website.
- c. Treasurer: Ian Yue
- i. Bing's payroll: he will work at minimum 10 hrs/wk up to 15 hrs/wk, and he's currently moving our old website content to the new website
  - ii. Regarding an honorarium for state employees for the professional development symposium: I will contact Beth tomorrow and get a clear answer.
  - iii. Perhaps conduct a Doodle poll to start scheduling information sessions. Contact the financial points of contact. Lunch meetings usually work well.
  - iv. Art and Art History are two different Tier-II groups. For them, it might be significant that their representatives still remain separate. We may need to make a change to the apportionment if they are both legitimate Tier-II groups. Would one senator represent both groups? It's up to those groups. The Education Department also has three different Tier-II groups. With Green Grads, right now Hayley Kilroy is representing both Green Grads and EEB. Is this permissible? It's not taking a vote away from them because Green Grads is not a voting constituency, but can she represent both or is there a conflict?
    1. Can we announce a solution to this by the next meeting? Leland will take this up with the Procedures Committee. Apportionments should



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- better represent how these groups would organize themselves. Leland will email them personally.
2. Ian, please send Leland an email summarizing these issues to bring them up to the Procedures Committee
- v. Will be presenting the September budget for the next meeting. Please send it out to Exec to review prior to our next meeting.
  - vi. Computers in the library are now all on the Virtual PC system. They've been trying to alert the community about this, but it has been slow going. We should bring this up at a Senate meeting.
    1. In the Spring we usually have someone from the library come to speak at a meeting. Consider asking them to give us a VPC tutorial.
    2. Ian, raise this in issues forum.
  - vii. At the next University Budget Committee meeting, would like to discuss the tuition on federal grants policy. How has it affected enrollment?
    1. Implemented 3 years ago, and affects people who work as RAs. It makes grants cover RAs instead of your department covering RAs. Tuition also comes out of the grant. Makes it a lot more expensive to hire a graduate student than it had been previously. A decision made by previous President Hogan without much feedback from faculty. Extra revenue we got from it was supposed to be given back to graduate students. Only about half of the money had actually been spent on grad students; the rest had been sitting there with no decisions about when or how it will be used. One of the things they are doing is supporting international students on fellowships. If you can find fault with the working group, that's one of the best ways to push back against this. For example, ask how they thought it was possible that three years can generate statistically significant data? Consider asking Kent Holsinger for a copy of a report.
      - a. If you have any more feedback, please email Ian. He will also bring it up at the next Exec meeting.
  - viii. Special Allocations request from the Graduate Association of Public Policy Students.
    1. Ian, consider adding a form to the special allocations request that specifies how many graduate student attendees are expected; how many non-graduate students expected; if non-grads expected, will there be other methods of funding besides GSS?



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2. 28-30 attendees; usually about 20 grad students, a few interested undergrads or community members
  3. There are no other funding sources right now. If GSS couldn't fund the total request, then they would look for additional funds elsewhere.
  4. On the surface this is a great request; however, only approximately two-thirds would be grad students. Could consider funding two-thirds of the request.
  5. If departments are doing topical events, then we ought to recommend to them that they seek additional funding (via co-sponsorship for example) from their own or related departments/organizations.
  6. Executive Committee would recommend the full amount with the caveat that they ask their department that they ask their department to supplement their funding and present those results at the meeting.
    - a. VOTE: Unanimous.
- d. Vice President: Safet Berisa
- i. Tomorrow, Safet will ask the Chuck Morrell, SU Associate Director for Operations about the GSS bulletin board in the grad student lounge.
  - ii. Student Life Committee will have its first meeting this Friday at 4 pm.
  - iii. Branding Committee has not yet contacted Safet for meetings. Chantelle, try contacting the committee representative again.
  - iv. Still working on the listserv guidelines, but should have something drafted by tomorrow.
  - v. How many non-voting constituencies do we have in the Senate? We may want to consider putting voting members in a specific area of the room for Senate votes. It's hard to keep track of who can or who can't.
    1. Can also consider changing the namecards to visually display Senatorship.
    2. Report of registered senators will be compiled by the end of the week.
- e. President: Chantelle Messier
- i. Between now and next week (before the Senate meeting next week), we all should individually take a look at the "office detritus" and rescue things that need to be rescued. Anything that was records-related will be kept.
  - ii. Provost Choi will be at the meeting next week. Should we put something in the meeting documents beforehand to get the Senate thinking about questions beforehand?
    1. The Provost makes lots of really important decisions in the University. It is worth generating some good questions for him.



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2. List of topics and areas of responsibility
3. Erin, draft this as an announcement that includes a list of those responsibilities. Also request that constituency members come and bring questions and issues to be addressed.
4. Meeting with President Herbst: she would like it to be capped at 20 grad students, primarily asking GSS senators to come. Currently trying to come up with an event format. Would like to see 2 well-informed, interested people with well-thought out questions (not combative questions). Whoever's attending should be representing their department—make sure to indicate this so that there's more pressure to come prepared.
  - a. Come up with a simple RSVP system. Field emails and come up with a list of 20 spots.
  - b. Her office will provide breakfast and (hopefully) reserve a room.
  - c. Don't have a date set yet.
5. Met Rose Barham, Grad. Student Trustee, which was really productive. Grad students in professional programs and from other campuses are interested in coordinating with us while respecting our financial responsibilities to those grad students who fund GSS.
  - a. When she's no longer trustee, we don't want to lose that connection to UCHC, so we need to consider a long-term plan of maintaining a relationship with these other groups/campuses/programs.
  - b. As an *ex officio* member, we should be including her in Exec emails (whenever its not a trivial or internal thing).
    - i. Chantelle, email her to notify her of this minor policy changes we will implement
6. Grad Student Lounge
  - a. Composed a write-up of the suggestions we got through different mediums. Sent to Kent Holsinger with suggestions of how to move forward. We want to move quickly.
7. If you know alumni for the Professional Development Symposium, please let Chantelle know
  - a. Please make the initial contact personally with some information about the symposium. CC Chantelle Messier to the email.
8. Parking and Transportation



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- a. Chantelle met with them this morning and it was a productive meeting.
- b. WRTD: the relationship with UConn has existed for years now (at least 13 years). It used to be something that GSS and USG paid for. When Parking and Transportation saw that it was being used, they took over and it's now going under their budget. There has been a really sudden demand for WRTD, now they need to increase the bus system. What they're doing now is that they're shadowing buses with another bus behind them to take the overflow. Almost certainly new buses are coming. Hayley Kilroy (our rep on WRTD Committee) will be in touch with Janet Freniere, who will keep us posted on the new buses.
  - i. Was there any talk of increasing the frequency of buses? The new buses should allow them to do this.
  - ii. Ask Hayley to inquire about the additional fee UConn students have to pay when you ride the bus.
  - iii. Told them we'd keep them posting when we get results from a Housing Survey because they genuinely have no idea where graduate students live.
  - iv. Also suggested that we encourage students to like their facebook page (The transportation website) so that they can get updates about break-downs and schedules, etc. They can also contact them directly with complaints and issues.
- c. Parking: Parking at UConn has reached a crisis point for everybody. The issue right now seems to be that we don't like paying parking fees, but we charge less than any of our other peer institutions for parking. To undergrads, parking seems to be inexpensive so they park here. Within the next 2 years, they will develop a long-term parking plan for UConn in conjunction with the master planner for UConn.
  - i. A few pressure valves that can take the pressure off of Parking
    1. Mansfield Downtown Partnership; the Downtown parking garage is free for the first 2 hours, and only \$1 per hour afterwards. Let



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grad students know; they're trying to keep this quiet but want to help ease graduate student problems.

2. Also, consider F lot and I lot.
3. Have grad students watch the parking website for potential updates regarding new opportunities to park (up to 500 spaces potentially) that will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
4. Car pool matching system: Zimride. Trying to approach the new USG president to take up this project again. It would cost \$10,000/yr. If GSS thinks grad students really want this service, we could split this service (some how) to help pilot the program.

d. They will be meeting with CTRides vanpool system

e. Technically Area III parking overflow is the Depot Campus

f. Additional Items

i. Leland is displeased with the registration process for Speed Dating. We need to reconsider how to make amends to the community that was slighted during this Speed Dating event. We also need to make a plan to fix the problem for the future. It's a logistical issue that we should be aware of in the future and solve more elegantly.

1. What could have been done differently: possibly separate caps and let the registration run for the full period of registration. Not announce a waitlist until the registration is done.

ii. Exec Committee Meeting Schedule

1. Safet will put together a Doodle poll to see if there is another available meeting time
2. Include Rose Barham on the email

iii. Leland, contact Erika Del Villar re: Maternity Leave Policy and its conflict with NSF (and perhaps NIH) grants

iv. Photographer, Lyn Tieu, at GSS meeting to take pictures of us

1. Contact GSS beforehand to alert them to this

V. Prepare Agenda for the Next Meeting

VI. Adjournment at 7:25 pm.