

- I. Call to Order** at 7:07pm.
- II. Recognition of Senators**
- III. Special Guest/Speaker**
- IV. Approval of Minutes:** 9 October 2013 approved
- V. Unfinished Business**
- VI. New Business**
 - a. GAHS Reimbursement Issue (look at attachment)
 - i. Senator Bowman: This is actually my fault, so if anyone wants to ask a question I can help answer, if not I am also okay making a motion
 - ii. Senator Rutovytsky: Yes, I would like more information
 - iii. Senator Bowman: It started when I recruited a professor from Yale to come, we actually were planning on getting a different professor but it fell through so we got this one instead. I sent out emails to different departments (humanities and medieval studies) and did not realize that I should put this out on the listserv. With that said the turnout was good, we did fill the room with faculty members and it was a positive event. I technically opened it up to everyone but I did do it too late
 - iv. Senator Flaig: So the executive committee decided to pay money and recommend that we pay the money in full?
 - v. Treasurer Beriša: We recommend that the GSS pay the event, and deplete the further money by \$500, the money will then go to the special allocation fund
 - vi. Senator Flaig: It seems like they take all the responsibility that it was late, the proposal seems completely fair and the money that gets taken away does not seem crippling. Will they be able to get this money in the future?
 - vii. Treasurer Beriša: They will have the opportunity to apply for the money through the special allocations budget.
 - viii. Senator Tomaszewski – So in beginning it was a reimbursement request?
 - ix. Treasurer Beriša: Well that is not entirely true, first it is a reimbursement and the GSS only funds after, the reimbursement is only for the event

- x. Senator Tomaszewski – So, if we don't approve of this then does this mean the honorarium will not get paid?
- xi. Treasurer Beriša: The department will pay for the speaker if we do not pay for it
- xii. Senator Doran - Two points, beside the timing of the announcement, the Art History department admitted that it was not designed to be for all graduate students, and in the rule it says its required to be required
- xiii. Secretary Wong: Correct, I mean there was a lot of contention about this in exec and that is why we are bringing it to the Senate because it is technically your money and within your realm to help decide on this
- xiv. President Charrette: It is within Safet's purview to deny a reimbursement at his whim; if it does not meet a certain standard then we can do this. We want to set a precedence, and see what the senate thinks of what should the appropriate set of action should be. Should we reimburse this event and have future events be penalized? We thought it best for you decide what is best
- xv. Treasurer Beriša: We would be taking 50% of their leftover budget
- xvi. Senator Rutovytsky – So, if we penalize for this event then they get no money all together?
- xvii. President Charrette: It is up to you leading up to precedence
- xviii. Leland Aldridge: My feelings is that things are not half in compliance – They are either in compliance or not. Did they send out the grad listserv email? Yes they did, did you cover this with the CFOs?
- xix. Treasurer Beriša: I covered it at the meeting (October 9th) and also sent out an email
- xx. Leland Aldridge: This event was presumably one that was budgeted for that was previously approved as meeting the requirements as something that GSS can fund was the event as it occurred different than described?
- xxi. Senator Bowman: It was a different speaker who was equally as prestigious
- xxii. Leland Aldridge: It was appropriate, regardless of language to describe it, the real question was whether or not advertisement was sent out giving people enough time to change their schedules

- xxiii. Parliamentarian Gutierrez : Yes, to me, the issue we are debating is the language around what is needed and debating whether or not advertisement of 4 hours is enough time
- xxiv. Treasurer Berisa: Speaking of emails, the email from their COO clearly states that it was not intended to be for the whole graduate population
- xxv. Senator Bowman: I would like to correct my language – technically when GAHS started (we are a pretty new department, only eight years old) we started to recruit and bring in speakers. I decided to ask more people, and didn't think to put it out on the listserv I only specifically emailed to certain departments that I thought would be interested. It was only a stroke of luck that Safet emailed me before the event.
- xxvi. Senator Butler: I have records of the emails – It was circulated in August. Do you have the equivalent of a program assistant in charge of spreading information?
- xxvii. Senator Bowman: We did have someone emailing other departments
- xxviii. Senator Butler: I am in charge of publicity and I know sometimes it takes a couple of months to be up to speed on things. The reason we did not attend this event is because our program also had another guest speaker at the time.
- xxix. Senator Hutson – It was a short warning outside of the circle of departments that were emailed. It does seem like this was unintentional and there was an attempt to reach out. In my personal sense there should be some punitive measure. It does not seem to have significant impact on the academic commission – it is reasonable to do a measure – we just need to determine what is appropriate money wise
- xxx. Dawn Savage: The executive board did make an email attempt to tell GAHS that they were missing something it and they did follow through
- xxxi. Senator Coleman: At the first meeting we voted to add a psychology guest speaker and we voted to give them money and one point was that brought up was that this was a specialized thing. The GAHS did try and open it up, it was last minute, but I do not think that it was intentional.

1. GSS 13/14-5: That the GSS Treasurer fully reimburse the GAHS event in question, but that the Executive Committee reappropriate \$500.00 from the GAHS budget.
 - xxxii. Senator Tomaszewski: Is the Treasurer asking for an advisory decision from senate or is this a binding decision
 - xxxiii. Parliamentarian Gutierrez: This will be a binding decision
 1. Senator Hutson moves to vote, seconded
 2. GSS 13/14-5 passes
 - b. External Committees
 - i. Dawn Savage – Board of Trustees Honors and Awards External Committee, approved
- VII. Executive Committee Reports**
- a. President – Jason Charrette
 - i. Update
 1. Found out that Associate Dean and Dean Holsinger heard that Breakfast with the President was so impressive, that President Herbst emailed the graduate school to commend everyone for their demeanor, and they now want to make it a permanent thing
 - ii. USG Executive Board Meeting, joint committee members
 1. We are planning on having a joint committee headed most likely by Danielle with the undergraduate student government. This committee will help to create joint resolutions (that can be passed in both bodies), to facilitate conversation, and it will also to help students have one voice
 - b. Vice President – Steve Mollmann
 - i. Student Life Committee
 - ii. Health Insurance – sent email to listserv, and directions on to get locator to work
 - c. Treasurer – Safet Beriša
 - i. Policy Reminders – We met with USG and I talked to their comptroller, we are trying to get joint meeting with the bursar and color important issues. Two things have changed, loans and the late fee graduate students have to pay. If there are

any further suggestions related to bursar's office feel free to email me or talk after meeting

- ii. Finance Committee: I have been talking to the finance committee about getting the finance committee to meet next week. Budget season is coming upon us we will be helping CFOs correctly submit their budget and answer any questions that they may have

d. Secretary – Danielle Wong

- i. External Committee Reports – make sure to email your reports and in the email tell me whether or not you want to be on the agenda
- ii. Attendance

e. Activities Director – Anish Kurian

- i. Social Mixer – Friday, November 8, Time TBA
- ii. GSS “Thanksgiving Dinner” Lunch – Wednesday, November 20, 12-2pm, Student Union Ballroom 330/331
- iii. Grad Prom Save the Date February 21, 2014

f. Parliamentarian – Ian Gutierrez

- i. Presidential Pay
- ii. Senator registration is complete

VIII. External Committee Reports

- a. Board of Trustees – Jason Charrette
- b. Graduate Student Career Counselor Search Committee – Steve Mollmann
 - i. It would be good for us to show up to these presentations, the purpose is for this person to work with graduate students

IX. Issues Forum

- a. Graduate Student Unionization - Maria Seger and Laura Wright
 - i. Maria Seger: I represent an interdisciplinary task force on unionizing UConn graduate assistants. Early this month, we began exploring whether a movement to unionize UConn GAs might gain traction in the present climate. We believe that we have gathered significant evidence that it would. We know that there have been frequent attempts to unionize in the past--both within and outside of GSS--

but we think that this moment and these circumstances are significantly different than past conditions. As you know, over the past year, the University has instituted significant changes to our status as students and as employees, including decreased health and dental coverage, increased student fees, the proposed recreation center, and budget cuts affecting GAs on a department-by-department basis. In most if not all of these cases, GAs were not represented at the negotiating table. While GSS has vigorously defended our rights as students, collective bargaining may be the only way to protect our rights as laborers. Unionization would give us the opportunity to negotiate legally binding agreements with the University; by law, they would no longer be able to make changes to our labor conditions without our consent. If the increasingly significant changes over the course of the past year are any indication of the University's intended course for handling GAs moving forward, we need to act soon to protect--and hopefully to improve--our current labor conditions. Unionizing GAs involves a few simple steps: 1) gathering significant evidence of support across departments, 2) contacting and interviewing unions that could represent us, 3) selecting a union to represent us based on the resources they are able to offer us and their vision for a collective bargaining agreement, 4) holding a card drive where 50% of GAs need to sign to cards (1,050 GAs), 5) drafting a collective bargaining agreement, and 6) sending that agreement to the University for approval. The University can appeal to the National Labor Relations Board if they so choose. We've taken the initial steps required to form a union. We have begun forming an interdisciplinary task force, now composed of 10 GAs from 7 different departments across campus. Though we are still in the early planning stages, we have assembled a list of approximately 150 GA contacts from 18 departments interested in unionizing. We've contacted five unions (UAW, CWA, AFT, SEIU, and AAUP) that could potentially represent us. We've also distributed a survey that shows 95% support among those who responded. We had our first informational session last week with 50 attendees from 8 different departments. We have also joined a monthly conference call between over a

dozen GA unions--formed and in the process of forming--across the country. We're reaching out to GSS to let others know about our efforts and to ask those interested in learning more to 1) be in touch with us via email at uconngradunion@gmail.com, 2) distribute these flyers to others that may want to learn more, 3) record your contact information on the sign-up sheet we're distributing, 4) respond to the survey, and 5) come to our next informational meeting on Tuesday, November 5 from 5:30 to 6:30 in Video Theater 2 on Level 2 of the Homer Babbidge Library. We aim to begin meeting with unions that can potentially represent us soon, but we would like to increase the diversity of departments represented on the interdisciplinary task force first. If you have any interest in volunteering, please don't hesitate to be in touch. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this effort with the GSS. We're happy to address questions here, at our meeting on Tuesday, or via email.

- ii. President Charrette: Unionization has come up multiple times, generally once a year and every time I have thought this would never happen. Right now there is an opportunity to do this – though I do think that it will be hard to happen without GSS. I think it is achievable but there is a need for people to go to departments and win the argument that a union will achieve
- iii. Senator Flaig – Does anyone know of a reason why we shouldn't go further on this
- iv. Maria Segar: Well there are downsides, the movement in 2008 and 2009 the union that was brought in was overly optimistic and glossed over potential negative consequences. The administration could backlash, could shut down open negotiations, or they could back down and give us what we want. There is a fee that pays for things, offices, staff; it would be 1-3% of our salary or what we decide as a union, which is a significant cost that we need to consider. But then again it also has benefits, salaries and student fees, health insurance can be negotiated. We will not be losing anything we currently have
- v. Laura Wright: Forming a union takes time, It will not fix our needs right away

- vi. Leland Aldridge: If we pay fees 1-3% - one victory on not paying for the rec center fee that we don't want would pay for itself, one achievement with the union would pay for itself
- vii. Maria Seger: I have been compiling information to see how graduate students were preunion and post union
- viii. Senator Makray: It is also important that if we become a union, there will be more benefits for society but the aggregate could become more expansive, leaving less spots in the future.
- ix. Senator Reeds: This came up at the information meeting – it is not like there is a fixed ceiling of how much the university spends on graduate students, they can spend more on grad students than undergraduates
- x. Maria Seger: UConn is not going to stop being an R1, how departmental budgets are may fluctuate and this will be looked at as an adhoc basis
- xi. President Charrette: One thing I want to reiterate independent of my capacity, is that graduate students never ask for anything, and we don't get anything because of that, they don't want to make anyone mad. NYU did same thing, and lost – and this is something we need to take note of, we do have more power than they did, we do a lot of grading teaching, we have a lot of power and influence, this is something that needs to be aware of. If we are willing then we can go all of the way – we can't be afraid to be political
- xii. Parliamentarian Gutierrez: Going off of those points, I agree with Jason, there is a mindset of culture, we need to be aware of the time this would take, it would take a lot of time
- xiii. Treasurer Beriša: I would also like to point out how ridiculous parking is, and it is only going to go up
- xiv. Maria Seger: Once we choose a union, they will spend resources, to talk to us, face to face, also to mobilize it. We need to choose a union, it is my understanding that in 2008-2009 they got to a point of interviewing rather than choosing

- xv. Senator Coleman – I am a small department all I know is from Jason talking. I know my department gets paid way less – if we unionize does it become a base salary for everyone?
- xvi. Maria Seger: It depends on how the CBA works out. We have control on setting things like that and can work it out, We understand that the sciences may be paid by grants and that stipend is factored in
- xvii. Secretary Wong: Will they be taking into consideration that people with different degrees get paid more, so there will not be some people straight from undergrad getting paid then people who have Master's Degrees
- xviii. Maria Seger: Yes, they are used to working with people that get paid different amounts
- xix. Laura Wright: We are dealing with people that have a lot of experience and understand the needs of graduate students
- xx. Erika Phillips: How long do you expect this to happen? And how long do you expect for it to take for us to see these benefits?
- xxi. Maria Seger: Ian made a great point at the meeting, you may graduate before it gets accepted, but it will heighten the value of your degree. It is important for recruitment and to protect the value of labor
- xxii. Parliamentarian Gutierrez: I do not see a foreseeable loss for it
- xxiii. Senator Reeds: Time is against us and there are factors against our control. Some departments will be directly affected while others will not. We do have control on how much time this will take and how fast this procedure will move.
- xxiv. Maria Seger: We are holding ourselves to a strict timeline
- xxv. Senator San Pedro: In visiting this issue, does this have to do because of the recent meeting Dean Teitelbaum about wanting to create certain sections?
- xxvi. Maria Seger: If this is in reference to the English department, then yes. There is a proposal to increase English Graduate Students to a 2:1 teaching load. Everyone will have personal motivation for signing up. Most departments have different issues and will have different motivations.

X. Adjournment at 8:33 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Name	Email	Constituency	Senator
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Steven Mollmann	steven.mollmann@uconn.edu	English	Vice President
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Ian Gutierrez	ian.gutierrez@uconn.edu	Psychology	Parliamentarian
Danielle Wong	danielle.wong@uconn.edu	Political Science	Secretary
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Christopher Tomaszewski	christopher.tomaszewski@uconn.edu	Philosophy	Yes
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Mike Robillard	michael.robillard@uconn.edu	Philosophy	At Large Senator
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