

**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**

*Executive Meeting Minutes*

September 7, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER – 5:42 P.M.
   1. Location: Benton Café
   2. In attendance: Chriss Sneed, Matthew Parent, Donyeil Hoy, Deepthi Varghese, Jordan Rees, Ross Dardani
2. President’s Summary
   1. Event reflection – the GSS welcome event exceptionally well. Thanks to all for helping make it happen. Special thanks from the group to Ross and Chriss for stepping in to make sure it ran smoothly.
   2. Major Issues
      1. Activities director resignation – Eric Simming has officially resigned as activities director. Jordan Rees is interested in moving from the position of the Communications Director to that of Activities Director. Nominations and voting to take place at the next GSS meeting. If Jordan becomes Activities Director, nominations will immediately open for Communications Director, so that voting can take place at the next meeting.
      2. Senators at Large – Who will be fulfilling these positions?
      3. Transportation – The University is insisting on data indicating the need for transportation improvements. Perhaps we could suggest paying graduate students via mini-grants to collect said data.
      4. SEC Committee Representatives – as for representatives at the next GSS meeting
      5. SUBOG Trainings – The executive would like for GSS to sponsor these events in the future, targeting specifically for graduate students and for specific knowledge needs.
3. Notes from the Parliamentarian
   1. Attendance policy – Donyeil received a question regarding whether organizations can alternate people (senators/alternates) who attend – The executive board interprets the by-laws such that organizations can have alternates elected for their organization.
   2. Telecommunications vote – Donyeil also received a question regarding skyping counts as attendance. This could present problems for attendance. Executive board discussed sending the issue back to Constitution Committee members for an amendment indicating that skyping is for extreme circumstances, to discourage online-only attendance.
   3. Emergency Short-Term Loans & Bylaw Amendments –
      1. Activities Director Position - AD position isn’t written in as a member of the e-board; the by-law amendment would rectify this.
      2. Payment of Executive Board Members – We will propose a by-law strengthening the policy already in place, which provides payment to e-board members with a stipend, as all positions are volunteer. This will not only reiterate the policy already in place but will eliminate any future questions about the nature of the positions and our ability to pay international students, who are indispensable to the representation of the graduate student body.
      3. By-law to address future trainings – Look into creating a proposal for by-laws to address future trainings, as discussed in section II.b(iv).
   4. Activities Director Position – Covered above in II.b(i).; candidates should prepare a short speech. Candidates should also leave the room during voting, as should anyone whose pay is being decided by a vote.
4. Notes from the Treasurer
   1. GSS welcome event – paperwork has been submitted to pay Lizzie’s Curbside
   2. Payroll Authorization – E-board members need to fill out payroll authorization forms
   3. Quarterly bill – Deepthi received the quarterly bill requesting documentation for events pre-dating the current e-board’s term, therefore we do not have access to all the necessary documentation. Deepthi will request documentation from Greg and Kim.
   4. Special Allocations
      1. Eleanor from Grad Writing – the e-board unanimously voted to bring the special allocation to the next GSS meeting
      2. Melissa DePaulo - Works for the graduate school and is a student. She requests a special allocation for a health fair. However, she/the event are not connected to a tier II organization. Additionally, the event is not primarily for graduate students. Finally, even if we could approve, there is no infrastructure to pay them the reimbursement because GSS does not provide funds to departments. E-board voted unanimously not to bring this special allocation to the next GSS meeting.
5. Notes from the Communications Director
   1. Possible Events for the Fall – Could GSS sponsor an eat-local fair, introducing new graduate students to local restaurants in the Storrs/Willimantic area.
   2. Where could we host something like this?
6. Other Business
   1. Alternative to happy hours – the happy hour events are too frequent and not widely attended. What else can we do?
      1. Research methods workshops
      2. Partnering with the graduate school for networking events
   2. Chriss will be meeting with Present Herbst – any topics the other members would like them to discuss?
      1. Transportation concerns
      2. Parking – where are the studies the University has surely completed on how many employees/students are present in any given parking period? Separate from the meeting with President Herbst, is this something that would be available via FOIA?
   3. Note from Matthew about running the GSS meetings – He will make new and old business a specific reporting time (similar to president’s report etc.) to streamline this period of the meeting.
   4. Based on last year’s event we were assigned $5770 for the GSS welcome event; we actually spent approximately $8000 because we used only one vendor. Deepthi to handle this.