**Wednesday, September 13th, 2017**

**Attendance**

E-Board Members:Deepthi Varghese, Vignesh Vasu, Alexis Ernst, Ngoc Chau Vy, Graham O’Toole

Senators and other members by card swipe.

**Meeting began 7:06 pm CHEM A203**

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Recognition of Senators**

**III. Guest Speaker – Dean Kent Holsinger**

1. There are a number of changes that have occurred over the summer in the responsibilities and duties of the Graduate School and some of the past roles have shifted to the Registrar’s office.
2. The Graduate School will focus more on graduate and post-grad programming and affairs.
3. The Graduate School will continue to serve as the body that screens graduate applicants for meeting requirements.
4. The Registrar will now handle the administrative portion of the degree audit, plan of study, report on general examination, etc. One of the reasons for this is because if an official audit of these logistics were to be performed, it would be the Registrar’s Office that would be held responsible.
5. There are a couple of active searches for staff and faculty under way. Currently, they are Conduct Specialist (Jennifer Caffyn is on search committee) and Assistant Dean of Student Life (Chau Vy is on search committee). Two new positions that will be opening up will be i) an administrative role in Student Services and ii) a fellowships officer. Details and requirements are still being ironed out and will be announced in the near future.
6. Questions
7. Amy Fehr: “How did the funding for the new positions come about?” The Provost’s Office committed to investing additional/new resources to make these possible.
8. Gayatri Phadke: “In the past, there has been rumors that funding for graduate students is limited to only five years. Can you please comment on that?” The funding decisions vary and are based on the policies of individual departments. There is no University-wide policy so the decision is really department-specific.
9. Gyuho Song: “I think the split of the responsibilities is a very good thing. Is there any statistics on the drop-out rate of graduate students?” The data exists but we have not reviewed it to a deep enough extent to make conclusions based on the data. This is mostly due to limited resources.
10. Sam Surowitz: “There has been a change in some departments to increase the number of required credits from 24 to 30. It doesn’t seem fair to those who were accepted on the original 24 credit requirement. Can you please comment on this?” This is a balance between accreditation requirement but we will try to work with individuals admitted before this on a case by case basis.
11. Gayatri: “Not all departments require 24 or even 30 credits. Is it possible to return to the 24 credit?” No, the 24 credit requirement is simply an accreditation requirement and cannot be changed.

**IV. Approval of Minutes:**

1. GSS meeting minutes, 26, April, 2017
2. GSS meeting minutes, 3 May 2017
3. GSS exec meeting minutes, 25 May 2017
4. GSS exec meeting minutes, 09 August 2017
5. GSS exec meeting minutes, 06 Sep 2017

Motion to approve all minutes started by Jennifer Caffyn; Seconded by Amy Fehr. All aforementioned minutes approved unanimously by the Senate.

**V.** **Unfinished Business –** No unfinished business as this is the first meeting.

**VI.** **Executive Committee Reports**

1. President – Deepthi Varghese
	1. Emerging Scholars Travel Initiative (ESTI) – The purpose of this proposal is to provide funds for graduates in their first two years to obtain funding for travel. Receipt of this grant will not prohibit a student from getting the Graduate School’s travel award.
	2. Campus-wide graduate student symposium – The date for this is March 8th, 2018 in the Student Union Ballroom. Organization for this symposium is under way.
	3. Senate Executive Committee Report – All points discussed were confidential so no details can be disclosed at this time.
	4. Dean of Libraries search committee – This search is ongoing. If anyone has any comments or feedback on what they would like to see in a Dean of Library or what they are looking for in their vision, let Deepthi know.
2. Vice President – Vignesh Vasu
	* 1. Tier-II trainings – Two sets of trainings were held. We had decent turnout but now that this is established hopefully we will have greater attendance in the future.
		2. Internal committees – If anyone is interested in joining these committees, please let us know via email.
			1. Activities Committee
			2. Finance Committee
			3. Policies and Procedure Committee
			4. Student Life Committee
			5. Public Relations Committee
		3. External committees – If anyone is interested in joining these committees, please let us know via email.
			1. Board of Trustees – Chaired (Kevin B.)
			2. SUBOG – Chaired (Ross)
			3. University Senate – Chaired (Deepthi)
			4. Senate Executive Committee – Chaired (Deepthi; Alexis)
			5. Graduate Faculty Council – Chaired (Graham)
			6. Senate Budget Committee – Chaired (future Treasurer)
			7. Student Activity and Fee Advisory Activity – Not chaired (future Treasurer)
			8. Joint Elections Committee – Supposedly chaired by Graham
			9. Student Welfare Committee – Not chaired; Previously chaired by Tom Briggs
			10. Senate Diversity Committee – Not chaired
			11. Senate Faculty Standards Committee – Chaired by Amy Fehr
			12. Scholastic Standards Committee – Not chaired Senate Growth and Development Committee – Not chaired
			13. Provost Advisory Committee – Nominating Graham
			14. Parking Advisory Committee – Not chaired
			15. Student Recreation Advisory Committee – Chaired by Vignesh Community Resource Team – Not chaired
			16. Environmental Policies – Chaired by Vignesh
			17. AAUP Marth Mentorship Award Committee – Not chaired
			18. Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor Committee – Not chaired
			19. Smoking Policy Committee
3. Treasurer – Deepthi Varghese
4. Reimbursements and quarterly bill
	1. Quarterly bill has been paid and we are all set until the next one is due.
	2. All reimbursements have been processed or are currently being worked on via an individual basis.
5. ICOU and GBA budget issues
	1. Deepthi presented the allotted budget allocations for ICOU and GBA. Both organizations’ spendings were within their total budget but the issue here is that the spending in individual categories significantly exceeded the 10% switch between categories that is allowed. To change the categorical allocations, the financial committee must vote and approve by majority. However, in lieu of a financial committee, the vote was brought to the Senate floor for consideration.
	2. Sam Surowitz motioned to adopt the new budget allocations for ICOU and GBA as shown. Seconded by Ruth Yusted. The revised budget allocations were passed unanimously by the senate.
6. Tier II treasurer training – Two sessions have taken place to educate treasurers on the funding processes and policies of GSS.
7. Deepthi was thanked with a round of applause from the Senate for her efficient services in returning all fiscal issues to a leveled state.
8. Communications Director – Ngoc Chau Vy
9. Assistant Dean search committee – It is ongoing and there will be a meeting to determine interviewable candidates next week.
10. Website changes – The website is currently as updated as possible based on information that is available to Chau. As more committees form and contact info for senators are collected, further edits will be made to the website.
11. Contact updates for executive officers, senators and active GSS members – While a good number of organizations have responded, Chau still does not have the contact info for the E-Board of all GSS funded Tier II organizations. It is expected that by the end of this meeting, that information will be supplied via the senator declaration forms.
12. Activities Director – Alexis Ernst
13. Welcome BBQ – Great turnout. We hope to increase the budget to get more variety for food for next year.
14. Halloween Happy Hour – Instead of a full out Halloween party, we could hold a happy hour on Halloween at Huskies Tavern.
15. Thanksgiving Lunch – The date is Wednesday November 15th. The room has already been reserved and the catering order will be placed soon.
16. It is our understanding based on conversations with the Business Office that guests can attend so long as they pay for their own refreshments.
17. Parliamentarian - Graham O’Toole
18. Attendance Policy – Every constituency needs to send senators to every GSS meeting and are only allowed to miss two meetings per semester in order to receive funding from GSS. Furthermore, the more senators you send, the greater your organization’s voting power and participation in the decision making process.
19. Apportionment – The apportionment for this fiscal year is complete.
20. By law and constitution amendments – This is a work in progress and we hope to have help from the Policies and Procedures committee. If you are interested, please join.

**VII. New Business**

Executive Committee travel fund vote – Motion to approve Executive Committee travel fund as shown just once per fiscal year was started by Tithi Basu; Seconded by Kevin Boyd. Motion passed unanimously by the Senate.

Special allocation graduate writing – Motion to approve the special allocation was started by Shannon Mooney; seconded by Sam Surowitz. Motion passed unanimously by the Senate.

Treasurer election

Justin Fang was the only nominee.

He was voted as Treasurer on a majority basis by the Senate.

GEU bargaining – Gayatri Phadke came up to speak and relayed the following information:

The bargaining agreement between the University and GEU is expiring at the end of this year which means they will once again be in negotiation status for some time.

To this end, they need your feedback and participation. Please complete the survey send out by the GEU. The link is still open.

Their website is **uconngradunion.org** . To contact them contact them at uconngradunion@gmail.com .

There might be a glitch in the system that added fees to international Gas. Please contact the GEU if this is still on your fee bill as the late fee is $250.

To be on the email list, you must contact them directly by email.

**VIII.** **Committee Reports**

1. Thomas Briggs would like to step down as the GSS representative for the President’s Working Group on Immigration Changes.
2. If anyone is interested in taking his place, please let us know by email.

**IX.** **Issues Forum**

1. Gayatri asked for GSS to reach out to GAs to ask whether they received the international student fee and if so, to contact the GEU immediately.
2. Amy Fehr asked for us to bring up the limited bus services, specifically on the closure of the Yellow and Red line. This makes it extremely difficult for students, especially those with disabilities, to get to the north/northeast side of campus.
3. North Eagleville Road will stay closed until at least through December. Also because of the divider on Glenbrook Road, a bus cannot go from North Eagleville to Glenbrook.
4. Sam Surowitz announced that the Veteran Student Association has been approved so he is stepping down from Senator at Large to represent the VSA. The VSA will be used a test case to try out collaboration at the student organization level between different campuses.

**X.** **Adjournment – 9:01 PM**