**Wednesday, October 4th, 2017**

**I. Call to Order – 7:07 PM**

**II. Recognition of Senators**

1. Fifteen senators were announced at the time of recognition. Quorum required fourteen senators.
2. Additional senators arrived a few minutes late.

**III. Guest Speakers**

1. Jim Wohl
   1. Jim Wohl is the Ombuds officer for graduate students at UConn. In summary, Jim is excused from reporting obligations which allows a greater level of confidentiality in conversations with him. He is not an agent of the university and therefore operates with more independence and neutrality. Communications and discussion with Jim are almost exclusively in person.
   2. To obtain his contact info, please see Chau for a business card.
   3. Some of the most common topics of discussion with Jim involve disagreements with academic advisors, peer-peer interviews, and issues with other members of UConn staff and administration.
   4. Jennifer Caffyn asked whether a file or record is kept to track meetings with Jim. The answer was no. He seldom takes notes either.
2. Cinnamon Adams
   1. Cinnamon Adams is from the Graduate School and Office of Student Affairs and is the student advocacy officer which will soon become the student conduct specialist.
   2. Her goals are to help graduate students be successful. Cinnamon does fall under reporting obligations but still observes FERPA. Therefore, conversations with her do stay confidential.
   3. Cinnamon also oversees the the appeals and complaints process.
3. Jim and Cinnamon want to encourage everyone to attend a series of seminars in the spring that help develop negotiation and communication skills professionally and now, most applicably in interacting with your academic advisor.
4. Gyuho Song asked whether Jim can demand an academic department pursue an investigation if he sees fit. The answer is no as Jim does not have the authority over faculty or offices at UConn. On the other hand, while Jim can’t demand, what he can do is use the relationship between Ombuds and other offices at UConn, such as the Graduate School, to recommend or pursue such requests. It’s a sort of informal power. He is also a great resource to make anonymous inquiries.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

1. Senate meeting minutes from September 13th, 2017
2. Executive meeting minutes from September 27th, 2017

The motion to approve was started by Jen Caffyn; Seconded by Melanie Klimjack.

**V. Unfinished Business**

**VI. Executive Committee Reports**

1. President – Deepthi Varghese
   1. Campus-wide Graduate Student Symposium - The date is March 8th, 2018. The structure is almost finalized. A call for abstracts will be sent out in December. There will also be prizes to encourage participation.
   2. Coffee (and Tea) Hours with Ross and GSS President - This will be held in the GSS office as was in the past.
2. Vice President – Vignesh Vasu
   1. Internal Committees
      1. Activities Committee – Jennifer Caffyn; Stephanie Barnes; Bahareh; Catherine Gensler
      2. Finance Committee – Justin; Chau; Deepthi; Tithi B; Kevin Boyd; Bahareh
      3. Policies and Procedure Committee – Graham; Vignesh; Chau; Tony
      4. Student Life Committee – Vignesh; Andrew M.
      5. Public Relations Committee – Ross; Chau; Andrew M.; Cristian Gogu
   2. External Committees
      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 (Justin)
      7. Student Activity and Fee Advisory Activity – Chaired (Justin)
      8. Joint Elections Committee – Supposedly chaired by Graham
      9. Student Welfare Committee – Melanie K.
      10. Senate Diversity Committee –
      11. Senate Faculty Standards Committee –
      12. Scholastic Standards Committee – Gretchen Geer
      13. Senate Growth and Development Committee
      14. Provost Advisory Committee – Graham O’Toole
      15. Parking Advisory Committee - Jen Caffyn & Gabrielle Corso
      16. Student Recreation Advisory Committee
      17. Community Resources Team
      18. Environmental Policy Advisory
      19. AAUP Marth Mentorship Award Committee – Stephanie Barnes
      20. Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor Committee
      21. Smoking Policy Task Force
3. Treasurer – Justin Fang
   1. Reimbursements - Please email Justin, not Deepthi. Also, a common issue with all requests is that the organization did not provide original receipts. SABO requires original receipts in order to process reimbursements.
   2. The finance committee member search is now complete as we have 6 members.
   3. Student Activities and Service Fee Advisory Committee (SASFAC) Report
   4. Paperwork flowchart status – Just waiting for approval from the administrative side of things.
4. Communications Director – Ngoc Chau Vy
   1. The senator contacts on the GSS website is updated based on declared senators. If your organization’s senator is listed as “not declared”, you will not receive attendance credit which will put your organization’s funding eligibility at risk. If you’re unsure if we’ve received your Senator declaration, just fill out another form and turn it in.
   2. If you did not receive an email regarding the announcement of this senate meeting and you are a senator, an executive board member of your organization, a committee member or a voluntary active member, please see Chau at the end of the meeting and give her your email and affiliation.
5. Activities Director – Alexis Ernst
   1. Halloween Happy Hour has been planned and will take place on 10/31/17, 4-7 pm at Huskies Tavern.
   2. Huskies Tavern woud like to promote graduate student specials during happy hour, 4-7 pm.
   3. Gyuho Song has suggested that announcements for events also take place on the Graduate Student Digest as many peers do not have or use Facebook.
6. Parliamentarian – Graham O’Toole
   1. Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Report – Degree audit and registration related questions should be directed to the the Registrar.
   2. Senator(s) at large – We have six spots for senator at large. There are two senators at large and Bahareh is obtaining signatures. Assuming Bahareh becomes SaL tonight, we still have three spots open.

**VII. New Business**

1. Special allocation request for Anthropology – Motion to approve the request started by Shannon Mooney and seconded by Junyeol Kim from Philosophy. Motion was approved unanimously by the Senate.
2. Special allocation request for GBA – Motion to approve the request was started by Melanie Klimjack; seconded by Jennifer Caffyn. Motion was approved unanimously by the Senate.

**VIII. Committee Reports**

**IX. Issues Forum**

1. Shannon Mooney is announcing an anti-fascism panel event by Thursday October 12, 2017 in Laurel Hall 201.
2. Tithi made an announcement that Diwali is coming up and the first 150 tickets for grad students will be free.
3. Sabine from Linquistics brought up the point that in other countries, GA-ships are more for those with dependents but that is not the case here. She inquired to whom this issue should be brought in order to pursue change.
4. Ruth Yalonso asked what GSS has done in response to the Connecticut state budget cuts. There was some back and forth between the executive committee and some members of the senate on the views of how such political matters should be handled and addressed.

**X. Adjournment – 8:23 pm**