

- I. Call to Order** 7:05pm.
- II. Recognition of Senators**
- III. Special Guest/Speaker: Victoria Blodgett, Assistant Dean of the Graduate School**
 - a. Victoria is filling a position specifically for the co-curricular life for graduate students. She is looking at your life experience as a graduate student at UConn. The likelihood of a graduate student finishing work is largely dependent on whether or not they get the support from the Graduate School. Her responsibility is to work with the Senate and to help take a moment to think about the ways on how we can be successful.
- IV. Approval of Minutes:** 23 April 2014 approved
- V. Unfinished Business**
- VI. New Business**
 - a. GSS Treasurer Election
 - i. Senator Gutierrez nominated Michael Ambroselli
 - ii. Michael Ambroselli was elected by a majority vote
 - b. 14/15-1: That the GSS authorize the increase of the short-term loan fund from \$1,000-\$1,500
 - i. Senator Amponsah motioned
 - ii. President Charrette explained how the loan can help in dire times of need; we have up to \$170,000 in our budget to help. It is interest free, does not count against you, goes into your bursar account, and the max limit is \$1,500. You should get it within 3 business days. It is pretty straightforward, you can go to SABO (student accounting business office) or you can see Ross in the office and sign there.
 - iii. Motion passes.
 - c. 14/15-2: That the GSS amend the Bylaws for the addition of a GSS Service Award
 - i. Senator Gutierrez motioned
 - ii. Senator Gutierrez proposes to postpone this motion to the next meeting to give him time to describe it
 - iii. Motion postponed to be discussed at the next meeting
 - d. Finance Committee Election

- i. Finance committee helps with money, it consists of a committee of 5 but the parliamentarian is already on the committee. We are looking for 3 more members, two need to be senators, and one needs to be a non-senator. Cannot be from either Physics or Medieval Studies.
- ii. Nominations
 - 1. Chad Pope (Pharmaceutical Sciences, senator)
 - 2. Kobby Amponsah (Agricultural Economics, senator)
 - 3. Tony Patelunas (MC Bio, non-senator)

VII. Executive Committee Reports

a. President – Jason Charrette

i. Update

- 1. There was a memo sent out that concern our health care stipends. The stipends are considered to be taxable income, which is a debatable thing. But now, for the non-resident alien tax, those stipends are now going to be taxed at the same level. They can be spread out across payroll deductions but they didn't let us know and new students didn't have the information. Now if you have dependents it becomes an extra \$1400 bill.
- 2. Want GSS to become an avenue for leadership. We have the opportunity to do this. There is an academic service, a national association representing over 600 graduate student organizations (National Association of Graduate-Professional Students: NAGPS, <http://www.nagps.org>). It includes all kinds of universities. I was contacted to be part of the Northeast region. There are benefits regarding professional development and research. They also have lobbyist. It ads us to an organization of over 600,000 people. It can make us matter more and have a positive effect. The membership is only \$500 a year. For the benefits we will be getting it is entirely in our budget. It is critical you pass on this information

ii. External Committees

1. Danielle will send out an email regarding the external committees you would like to represent us on.
- b. Vice President – Erin Eighan
 - i. Goals and Plans
 1. I am here to facilitate a lot of the communication between different the different branches. I have three goals: dealing with the housing situation on campus, the 2016 rec center the BOT has tried to advocate for, and dealing with the Health Insurance field.
 2. Rec Center
 - a. Right now trying to have it that graduate students only have to pay a membership fee based on their own request
 - i. Update on the rec center – BOT Jeremy advocating for grad student rights in regards to fees
 3. Graduate Career Counselor - We also want to have a greater focus on the professional development of graduate students Gruder (kay.gruder@uconn.edu) as a whole; we have hired a new graduate career counselor, Kay Kimball . It will be the job of the student life committee to work with her on the needs of the grad. Population. They are currently having a brown bag lunch series on professional development issues.
 - ii. Off Campus Housing
 1. Senator Starnes asked whether or not it was possible to work outside campus to help regulate costs. It is hard to do that since it is not under our control. It became a big issue last semester. Vice Provost Michael Gilbert came to speak to the senate. Not many students, 50-100, were kicked off campus. They waited for the natural attrition of grads leaving campus. But now they are trying to make off campus resources available to graduate students. Eileen Rodriguez works with off campus housing and she suggested looking at the new off campus housing website. There will also be a Housing Fair in November to help.

- iii. Student Life Committee
- iv. GSS Meeting Dates
 - 1. Wednesday, October 1, 7pm, Whetten 200
 - 2. Wednesday, October 22, 7pm, Whetten 200
 - 3. Wednesday, November 12, 7pm, Austin 163
 - 4. Wednesday, December 3, 7pm, Austin 163
- c. Treasurer – Michael Ambroselli
 - i. 30-Day Reimbursement Rule
 - 1. GSS is a tier III organization and is bound by policies set forth by the student activities business office. We have a memo on the website but we are bound by those policies. Part of those policies is that reimbursement requests need to be submitted no later than 30 days after the event. Moving forward Treasurer Ambroselli will be strictly adhering to the 30 day policy.
- d. Communications Director – Danielle Wong
 - i. Attendance
 - ii. Tote bags and Key Chains
 - iii. Public Relations Committee
 - iv. Senator Registration – we will be going to have a quick senator orientation for 15 min before our next meeting.
- e. Activities Director – Nicole Flaig
 - i. GAIN Wrap-Up
 - ii. Nathan Hale Happy Hour, September 17th, 5-7pm
 - iii. Activities Committee
- f. Parliamentarian – Pat Butler
 - i. Roberts Rules of Order
 - ii. Senator Registration
 - iii. Procedures Committee
 - iv. Presidential and Treasurer Pay
 - 1. Presidential and Treasurer pay will stay the same

VIII. External Committee Reports

- a. University Senate – Erin Eighan
 - i. This past Monday we had our first meeting which was an orientation for new senators; They are encouraging us to fill the standing committees of university, 6 of them require at least one graduate student. They are also creating a third access road into campus and giving upgrades to Montieth.
 - ii. There was a report by the Office of Diversity and Equity. They presented a comprehensive evaluation of diversity among UConn faculty and staff. It ranked 13/30 of public institutions for diversity. There were 86 faculty hires and 46% female. Of those new hires, none of them were underrepresented minorities. We are not as diverse as we need to and they are now creating a task force, if there is interest in being on this task force they are looking for a graduate student representative. On their website they have a detailed 140 page report that you can read.

IX. Issues Forum

- a. Ian Gutierrez – GSS Service Amendment
 - i. Added an amendment to the GSS bylaws when he was parliamentarian that proposed the graduate student service award. Motion presented start with motion as is, motion to amend (vote whether or not) seconded if themselves. Senator Gutierrez would like to amend the amendment to change the agreement from 4/5 to 3/5.
- b. George Moore –Issues
 - i. Are there issues that are important that GSS could be focusing on? Is it possible for the tax accountant to come in again?
 - ii. There is also a huge problem with transportation. Is there someone we can bring in for that?
 1. Dwight Atherton came into our meeting last semester and he discussed parking. Unfortunately the crowd is normally hostile. If there is interest we do have the parking advisory committee which looks for a graduate student representative.

2. Ruth Yuste Alonso brought up how not only parking but there is also poor bus service offered to the Willimantic communities.

X. Adjournment at 8:59pm

Bylaw XIV: GSS Graduate Community Service Award

1. Name
 - a. The name of the award shall be "The GSS Graduate Community Service Award."
2. Purpose
 - a. The GSS shall institute the annual awarding of the GSS Graduate Community Service Award to honor a graduate student who, through his or her exemplary service, has made a significant contribution to intellectual, cultural, and professional capital of the graduate student community at the University of Connecticut.
3. Eligibility
 - a. Eligible award candidates must:
 - i. Be enrolled in a graduate-degree granting program at the University.
 - ii. Be in good academic standing.
 - iii. Have completed at least one full year of study at the University at the time of awarding.
 - b. Individuals ineligible to receive the award shall include:
 - i. Current executive officers of the GSS.
 - ii. Current Service Award Committee members.
 - iii. The Graduate Student Representative to the Board of Trustees.
 - iv. Past award recipients.
4. Service Award Committee
 - a. Each year, the GSS shall form the Service Award Committee (hereafter, "the award committee") to certify nominations and award the nominee who has demonstrated the most significant contribution to the graduate student community over the course of his or her graduate career at the University among those nominated.
 - b. Membership
 - i. The award committee shall consist of five voting members. All committee members must represent different constituencies.
 - ii. The Communications Director shall serve as the chair of the award committee. All other GSS officers shall not be members of the award committee.
 - iii. All other graduate students may be members of the award committee.
 - iv. All committee members shall be appointed by the Senate.
5. Nominations
 - a. Nominations for the GSS Service Award shall open March 1st and close March 31st. The Communications Director shall announce this fact via the graduate student listserv and the GSS website.
 - b. Nominations may be submitted by graduate students, faculty, or staff of the University.

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- c. Nominations shall be submitted to the Communications Director.
 - d. The award committee shall determine the method and procedure for accepting nominations.
 - e. Self-nominations shall not be considered by the award committee.
6. Voting
- a. The award committee shall meet to select the recipient of the GSS Service Award within one week after nominations close.
 - b. The award committee shall select the recipient of the GSS Service Award from among those nominated by a four fifths vote of the committee.
 - c. The award committee may, in the absence of a meritorious nominee, elect to suspend granting of the award for that year by a four fifths vote.
7. Presentation of Award
- a. The Vice President shall notify the awardee and invite him or her to the next meeting of the senate.
 - b. At the next meeting of the Senate, the awardee shall receive a certificate of award and \$500 as a token of the Senate's appreciation for his or her service.
 - c. The awardee shall be given the opportunity to address the Senate.



GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
University of Connecticut

Agenda
10 September 2014

Attendance: