**Wednesday, October 25th, 2017**

**I. Call to Order -7:06 PM**

**II. Recognition of Senators**

At the time of senator recognition, we only had 18 senators. Quorum requires 19 senators. Ruth Yusted Alonso arrived while Kay was speaking so the quorum has been fulfilled.

**III. Guest Speaker Kay Gruder**

1. Kay Gruder is the Assistant Director of Graduate Student Career Programs and Services at the University. Her target audience for service comprises graduate students and post-docs.
2. There are many resources specifically geared towards grad students that can be accessed on career.uconn.edu.
3. A free professional head shot can be provided to grad students at the Career Development Center on Wed. 1:30-3:30 and Thurs. 10:30-12.
4. ImaginePhD is a free, web-based platform designed for careers available in the humanities.
5. MyIDP is a free career assessment and planning website for careers in STEM.
6. Versatile PhD is another resource that provides career options for all types of fields which can open up alternative opportunities for those who may be interested in something different than their advanced training. What’s special about this website is that it shares many successful individuals’ career path and the route they took to get them where they are now.
7. Tithi Basu Mallik is one of the newly hired GA in the CDC. She is a PhD candidate in Philosophy and wanted to start a program that would allow her and other grad students to explore the possible career opportunities in their respective fields.
8. Another initiative that she started is the Graduate Student Career Council to examine and assist in graduate student career preparedness. They meet once a month and work on monthly individual projects that would promote and invest in student career preparedness.
9. If you have a group of
10. Question from Chau Vy: Does the CDC offer printing of business cards for grad students? The answer is no, however, the CDC can assist in formatting and designing the content.
11. Question from Gayatri Phadke: Can you describe a little about what the HuskyLink is for? The answer is that it connects current students with alumni to develop connections, answers their questions, develop their current
12. Question from Melanie Klimjack: If you have a target list of employers, how best to reach out with them and start a connection? The CDC can help you effectively use LinkedIn as a connection tool. Also they can potentially connect you with alumni who might be part of the company. Personal or community networks are important and they will really help facilitate the first connection.
13. Question from Gayatri Phadke: LinkedIn has now limited the connection map to what can be viewed. Does the CDC have a premium account? No but there are some strategies that can be used to circumvent this. See the CDC for more info.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

1. Senate meeting minutes from October 4th, 2017
2. Executive meeting minutes from October 18th, 2017

The motion to approve the minutes was started by Ruth Yusted-Alonso; seconded by Jen Caffyn. The Senate passed minutes unanimously.

**V. Unfinished Business** – None to discuss

**VI. Executive Committee Reports**

1. President – Deepthi Varghese
   1. Meeting with Scott Jordan, UConn’s CFO
      1. Scott acknowledged the issues that happened this semester in terms of applying the fee to GA’s and TA’s accounts.
      2. They said that this fee cannot be removed as it is being used to support services and paperwork processing fees for international students.
      3. Ruth commented that much of the usage of the fee doesn’t apply to graduate students and are for programs geared more towards undergrads.
      4. Gayatri commented that since it has been implemented, the description for what it’s used for has changed. A foyer request might be made to see how the money is actually being used.
      5. Ruth has asked that the committee in charge of making decisions for this fee be more transparent and communicate changes, implementations and usage of such fees.
      6. Regarding support for dependents of GAs/TAs/etc.:
         1. Not much can be done at their office.
         2. It was recommended to bring this up to the GEU.
   2. Transportation update from meeting with Tanya Hussick
      1. Construction on N Eagleville will be suspended during winter and will resume at the end of the spring semester. It’s possible that it won’t finish until the end of next year.
      2. The Red Line should be restarted by the end of this month.
      3. The plan of the University is to minimize parking at the core of campus so in the future, parking will be kept at the outskirts of campus.
      4. Any permit holder may part in J lot at this time.
      5. The Committee for Transportation will likely hold a meeting soon as the number of people negatively affected by parking issues and public transport has increased significantly this year.
   3. Short term loans clarifications
      1. Bursar pointed out to us that according to our by-laws, there is only one extension allowed. The length of the extension period is 30 days.
      2. Extension applications only open 2 weeks before the due date.
      3. Loans are due in full 90 days after the disbursement date (unless an extension is applied for and approved).
      4. If a student would like to use payroll deductions to pay off the loan, this must be processed within 10 days after the start of the semester.
      5. The short term loan form and promissory note are being moved online to facilitate and speed up processing and disbursement of the loan.
      6. The responsibility of ensuring only one extension is granted rests on GSS, not bursar.
      7. According to our current by-law, short term loans taken in the middle of the fall semester and not repaid until after the start of the spring semester will cause the account to appear to have an existing loan, preventing a new loan from being taken in the spring.
      8. We are working on changing this so that:
2. A student can take out up to three short term loans per year.
3. As soon as one loan is paid off, the student can immediately qualify for another loan.
4. These changes will require a Senate vote as they would mean a by-law change. We will present the change next meeting.
   * 1. The maximum amount allowed per loan is $1500. However, still only three loans are allowed per year.
     2. All mentions of year in the aforementioned refers to the academic year (start of fall semester to end of summer).
     3. The following penalties would be incurred for delinquent payments:
        1. Late fees will apply in a similar fashion to delinquent student fees.
        2. Technically, if the due date of a loan is past the date of graduation, there is currently nothing in place to require repayment, unless one works in the state of Connecticut.
     4. New students can apply for the loan but it will only be disbursed two weeks after the start of the semester.
     5. Bursar has asked that we encourage applicants to enroll in direct deposit so that loans can be immediately disbursed rather than wait for paper checks which are only issued once a week.
     6. Payroll deductions are very difficult to change or revise after they have been initiated so consider it seriously before selecting this option.
   1. Deepthi has office hours with coffee on Wednesdays from 5-6 pm in the GSS office. Please drop by to chat or bring any questions or concerns you may have.
5. Vice President – Vignesh Vasu
   1. New committee for University Government Relations
      1. Kevin Boyd
      2. Joseph Skaleski
   2. External committees
      1. Faculty Standards Committee – Shannon Mooney
      2. University Senate Diversity Committee – Hao-Jan Luh
      3. President’s Working Group on Immigration Changes – Tom Briggs
6. Treasurer – Justin Fang
   1. Student Activities and Service Fee Advisory Committee (SASFAC) Report
      1. The committee reviews are complete and decisions have been made. Many campus organizations such as SUBOG, Jorgenson, Mental Health Services, etc. out in budget requests.
      2. A number of funding requests were made, approved or denied.
   2. Paperwork flowchart is done. It will be emailed to the treasurer list and be posted to the GSS website on the Funding page.
   3. New PO form is complete. It will be emailed to the treasurer list and be posted to the GSS website on the Funding page. Please note that while it is available online, we require that the PO form comprising two carbon copies be filled out. These special-print copies will be available in the GSS office.
   4. There is also a new checklist for reimbursement requests. It will be emailed to the treasurer list and be posted to the GSS website on the Funding page.
   5. We are now taking comments for FY19-20 budget. Please email Justin (justin.fang@uconn.edu) so that your comments and suggestions are in writing.
   6. The Tarang Special Allocation Request will be brought up during new business.
7. Communications Director – Ngoc Chau Vy
   1. Website updates – Committee members have been updated on the committee pages. The Funding page has been slightly reorganized with the 17-18 budget and new forms posted.
   2. Assistant Dean of Student Life search committee is in the final stages. The two finalists have been announced and will be invited to on-campus interviews next week. Please keep your eyes out for the public announcement via email from the Grad School.
8. Activities Director – Alexis Ernst
   1. Halloween Happy Hour is next Tuesday. Please stop by for free apps and a special on drinks. Keep your eye out for the announcement on the Graduate Digest this Monday.
   2. Thanksgiving Lunch is almost done being planned. The issue here is that the quote given by catering is a couple thousand more than last year. Alexis has asked the Senate to give her approval to move some of the allocated funds from other GSS activities to make up for the funds needed for the Thanksgiving Lunch quote.
      1. Gayatri suggested asking some offices such as ISSS or the Graduate School for co-sponsorship.
      2. Motion to approve Alexis’ request was started by Melanie Klimjack; seconded by Kevin Boyd. The Senate approved the motion unanimously.
   3. Grad Prom Ideas
      1. Chau suggested an international theme so students can showcase their formal attire from all around the world if they want.
      2. For other ideas or suggestions, please email Alexis (alexis.ernst@uconn.edu).
9. Parliamentarian – Graham O’Toole
   1. Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Report – No one from the Executive Committee could attend the meeting this past week.
   2. Policies and Procedure committee will begin to meet soon, especially now that we need to make changes to the by-laws regarding the short-term loan.

**VII. New Business –**

* + - 1. Special allocation request for Tarang’s Diwali
         1. Hillel is both inaccessible this year and is too small to hold the typical crowd that attends.
    1. Amy Fehr motions to pass the request; seconded by Junyeol Kim. Senate approves this motion unanimously.
  1. Bahareh Deljoo is the new Senator at Large.
  2. Daniel \_\_\_ is collecting signatures to become Senator at Large.

**VIII. Committee Reports**

1. Student Welfare Committee – Represented by Melanie Klimjack
   1. No news on budget.
   2. Safety of grad students who are being harassed by undergrads. Suggestions were to increase circulating officers and have undergrads adhere to schedules more strictly.
2. Search Committee for Graduate Conduct Specialist – Represented by Jennifer Caffyn
   1. The person in this role would work in the Dean’s office.
   2. One final candidate has already been interviewed. Another will happen next week so they should have a final decision by November’s end.
3. President’s Working Group on Immigration – Represented by Tom Briggs
   1. The number of visas granted to international students this year has not changed from past years, which is a good thing.
   2. There are no undergraduates currently on this committee. Tom has asked that we reach out to USG to ask them to send UG’s to the committee as it affects many UG international students as well.

**IX. Issues Forum**

1. Gayatri asked that we participate in the polls sent out by the GEU as a majority approval is required for the bargaining goals.
2. Melanie asked that we advocate to get better public transport to the Depot campus. The purple line is currently closed to the Depot campus and will stay this way. Currently, the only way to get to and from there via public transport is by calling the transportation office to arrange for a ride by their shuttle service.
3. Bahareh, who recently got into an accident and hurt her leg, discovered that there are no existing services or accessibility assistance for those with injuries. The van service does not apply to those in similar circumstances. We need to bring this up to transportation services and do something to change this.
4. If people see that their GA-ship drop or fees change, please contact the GEU to get these corrected immediately.

**X. Adjournment – 8:56 pm**