**Wednesday, November 15th, 2017**

**I. Call to Order – 7:12 PM**

**II. Recognition of Senators**

**III. Guest Speakers**

1. Scott Jordan, CFO, University of Connecticut
2. Scott is also the Executive VP of Administration
3. University Budget
	1. Scott gave a presentation that puts the state budget climate into perspective, explains where UConn’s funds come from, and also put hard numbers on the past and current budget cuts and operation costs. Please contact us for a copy of the Powerpoint presentation.
	2. Question from Jennifer Caffyn: Where does athletics fit into the pie charts of revenue generation and profit? The current league that UConn is in is not as big or revenue generating as others such as the Big East or Pac 12 so in reality, UConn Athletics doesn’t make as much money as one may think.
	3. Question from Bahareh Deljoo: If X lot is going to be used for a building, where is that parking space going to be diverted to especially if it’s already such a big issue? UPass and No Loss of Parking strategy which will replace any current parking that gets lost.
	4. Question from Amy Fehr: Can you please comment on the discrepancy in funding between the physical sciences and the humanities, specifically the continual reduction of budgets for the departments in the humanities? University budgets that are allotted can be rescinded/reduced depending on the amount of funding granted from the sources described in the presentation. As resources come in during the year, the funds get redistributed as they become available. Furthermore, resources are allocated based on enrollment and it is often the case that science classes are overfilled so as a result, funding is reallotted due to need.
	5. Question from Cristian Gogu: The implications of the answer to d. mean a huge detriment to us who are in the humanities. Class sizes end up being much larger as they are general requirements for graduation. Can you please comment on this? “The money follows the students” may be initially resented by the Humanities but the reality of it is that often the initial resources deviated from the Humanities actually allow more to be generated by the number of students who are not in your departments.
4. Abigail Colburne, Grad Student Career Council Representative
	1. The GSCC is a group that just formed this year to help grad students with the various aspects of professional development such as resume writing, interviewing, networking, etc.
	2. To learn more about what’s available and to access resources, please contact Abigail.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

1. Senate meeting minutes from October 25th, 2017
2. Executive meeting minutes from November 8th, 2017

Motion to approve both minutes started by Jennifer Caffyn; seconded by Bahareh Deljoo. Unanimous approval of minutes by the Senate.

**V. Unfinished Business**

**VI. Executive Committee Reports**

1. President – Deepthi Varghese
	1. Tax Reform Bill
		1. The purpose of Deepthi’s email was to create awareness of this bill, which if passed in its current form, would create a huge detriment to the financial health of the entire graduate student population, not to mention many other populations that would be be negatively affected by this.
		2. The most impactful thing we can do is to reach out to and contact our respective state representatives and senators to voice our concerns and plea to not pass this bill.
	2. Graduate Student Symposium
		1. The date for this Symposium is set for March 8th, 2018.
		2. The email notification for Call for Papers will be sent out on December 1st. We highly encourage participation.
		3. Question from Gyuho Sung: How are the judging criteria determined at this time as I saw that it may be modeled after the 3 Minute Thesis competition? We are still working on carving out the details for judging the presentations. Also details on length of presentation, etc. will be communicated in the Call for Papers email.
	3. Provost Search
		1. The decision for the new Provost has been made and will be announced shortly.
		2. He/she will not be starting until next fall.
	4. SEC meeting report – Anything that can be disclosed from this meeting was already discussed by Scott Jordan so we will not repeat them here as to avoid redundance.
	5. SFAC budget – We have to present our case for the GSS budget to SFAC soon. There is a very real possibility that our funding will not be renewed due to the high carryover amount left at the end of each fiscal year. We believe that a demonstration of intent to spend the carryover amount will help us in getting the budget approved. To this end, we are proposing to increase the amount for special allocations in the current and future years. The added benefit here is that these funds will go back to our account if they aren’t spent by the end of each year.

Motion to pass the proposal for the SFAC budget as shown was started by Kevin Boyd. It was seconded by Shannon Mooney and unanimously approved by the Senate.

* 1. Posting Policy Committee meeting report - Deepthi and Chau attended this meeting and learned that a few changes were made to the Posting Policy at UConn, namely that snow paint and spray chalk are not allowed.
1. Vice President – Vignesh Vasu
	1. Government Relations Committee meeting report – The Government Relations Committee met for the first time and worked on a statement regarding the new Tax Bill proposed by Congress. This statement was sent out by Deepthi through the GSS Grad Student Listserv earlier this week.
	2. University Senate meeting report
		1. The Metanoia topic for next semester will be “The Environment”.
		2. Another major topic of discussion on campus was diversity on campus and how to even out the number of male and female faculty and staff. Suggestions and comments were made but no solid actions were decided at that time.
	3. External Committee – Irio Schiano has volunteered to be the GSS representative for the University Senate Diversity Committee. Irio is from the department of PNB.
2. Treasurer – Justin Fang
	1. IFTSA exorbitant cost per person warning: While the budget for IFTSA was approved by GSS previously, the actual attendance was extremely low in comparison to the anticipated attendance, making the cost per person exorbitantly high. Let this be a warning to IFTSA and all other Tier II organizations funded by GSS that attendance at events should be close to that of the anticipated attendance as decisions for approving budgets are significantly influenced by the cost per person. GSS has the right to revoke the original approved funding and only fund the number of people attending if this value is significantly different than the anticipated amount.
	2. Finance Committee meetings:
		1. One of the reimbursement requests from SACNAS was missing the original receipt. The contact was able to provide a copy of the receipt. The finance committee voted to approve their reimbursement request anyway because the request was submitted this past January. Had they been told earlier of the missing original receipt, they may have been able to locate it.
		2. EGSA intra-budget switch – EGSA requested to switch some funds from one event to another (exceeding the allowed 10%) in order to pay for an honorarium that cost $1500. The Executive Committee voted against this to discourage further honorariums exceeding $500. Furthermore, attendance at the event was low (<15 grad students) and does not justify such an exorbitant expenditure.
	3. GBA Special Allocation Request for $750 – This will be brought up during New Business.
	4. Justin would like to notify the Senate that he will forgo any pending reimbursements from the previous fiscal year 16-17 which remain incomplete after the date of January 31st, 2018. You have until this deadline to provide any missing documents. The idea here is that if you still cannot locate paperwork by then, you won’t be able to after that. Furthermore, it would be unfair to the next Treasurer to still have to file reimbursements from two years before.
	5. An important announcement to note: The 2018-19 fiscal year Tier II Budgets are due by January 31st, 2018. We are giving you plenty of notice in advance to start working on your events budgets and to ask any questions now. We have very strict guidelines for the formatting and file type that will be accepted for the budget review so we highly recommend that you submit your budgets before the due date so that any corrections can be made before then. We will continue to remind you in future meetings and send out reminders via email as the date draws near.
	6. Questions
		1. If there are remaining funds from one event, can we use these for another event? Your organizations are allowed a one time 10% switch (of the total organization budget), so in that sense, yes. However, you cannot willy nilly use funds for one event for another event. You may not even switch between categories within the same event unless you choose to use the 10% switch.
		2. Is SAGE funded by GSS? No, however, as they have disbanded and were a Graduate Tier II organization, GSS was entitled to absorb their remaining account balance. However, we voted not to as the amount was too low for the amount of paperwork it would take to get this done.
3. Communications Director – Ngoc Chau Vy
	1. Assistant Dean search – The search committee has given our recommendation to Kent who is currently negotiating now with the candidate. We believe there will be an announcement made soon.
	2. GSS listserv – I have included a link at the bottom of the email signature from the Communications Director on how to remove yourself from the GSS listserve. Hopefully soon, I can get actual management access.
	3. Joint Elections Committee report – In order to increase voter turnout, USG and GSS has held a joint election in the past. However, since our qualified voters are only GSS Senators and not all grad students, we can’t have elections for our entire E-Board through this avenue. The positions that can be voted upon by all grad students though are the At-Large Senators and Board of Trustees representative. Thus, these seven positions will be open during the Joint Election.
4. Activities Director – Alexis Ernst
	1. Halloween recap – 91 people showed up and there was still plenty of food left. The event was great and we will consider using Huskies Tavern for future events.
	2. Thanksgiving – 600 people registered; just under 500 people showed up. Also a very successful event. Thank you to all those who helped with swiping in and setup.
	3. Grad Prom dates
		1. We would like to move this event to some time in April instead of February as the weather should (hopefully) be better and planning-wise, would give us more time to book venues and get quotes.
		2. We would like to change the name of Grad Prom to Grad Formal as it has a more mature vibe. We’re not in high school after all.
		3. Suggested themes are the following:
			1. International formal attire
			2. 1920s glamour
		4. Question: Does Husky Taverns offer options for fundraising? Alexis was unsure but will ask her contact and get back to us.
5. Parliamentarian – Graham O’Toole
	1. By-Law amendment on Short Term Loans will allow three loans to be allowed per year instead of stipulating that one only loan will be allowed per period (Fall, Spring, Summer).

Motion to pass the by-law amendment as described was started by Jennifer Caffyn and seconded by Bahareh Deljoo. The change was unanimously approved by the Senate.

* 1. Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) report
		1. Cinnamon Adams is officially hired as the Conduct Specialist for the Grad School.
		2. Our question for GFC regarding those taking classes for a certificate, know that you don’t have to be enrolled in that program prior to enrollment in those classes.
		3. There is a limitation on certificate programs that they have to be completed within three years. The conversation to make this more flexible was started and will continue in future meetings.
	2. GSS By-Laws and Constitution Edits – GSS needs to renew our governing docs (By-Laws and Constitution) by the end of this year. In addition to Graham, Vignesh and Chau, we would prefer to have additional voice from the Senate be on this committee so that we get a plethora of viewpoints to take into consideration. Please send us your volunteer.
	3. Dan Pfeiffer has acquired 25 graduate student signatures and turned in his declaration form so he is now a Senator at Large.

**VII. New Business**

1. Motion to extend the meeting by 20 minutes started by Bahareh Deljoo; seconded by Ruth Yuste Alonso. Approved by Senate unanimously.
2. Special allocation request for GBA
	1. The GBA submitted a request for an end of the semester event with an anticipated attendance of 150 grad students.
	2. Motion to approve the request was started by Jennifer Caffyn and seconded by Cristian Gogu. The request was passed by the Senate unanimously.

**VIII. Committee Reports**

**IX. Issues Forum**

1. Jennifer Caffyn: Can we make it mandatory that organizations putting in Special Allocations request to present to the Senate and also to require attendance? This could be through a voice or video call. It just seems so unfair to all the Storrs campus organizations that these other campus organizations don’t even call in to present their case. A number of others agreed, such as Bahareh and Chau. This would constitute a change in the by-laws or constitution and could be something we incorporate as part of our governing docs renewal.
2. Announcement by Graham – Road blockage that would prevent access to Glenbrook Road has been removed so it is accessible to bus and emergency vehicles again. Red Line is running again. This is a win for us!
3. Daniele Heichel – There is currently no crosswalk light on the incoming corner at the intersection of Discovery and North Eagleville. Is there any way GSS can advocate to put one there? We are hoping to get a representative from UConn Tranportation Dept as a guest speaker for the next meeting so that would be a great issue to bring up to them then.

**X. Adjournment - 9:13 pm**