

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate
Tuesday, April 19, 2016
Ezra Temko, President, Facilitating

I. Call to Order: Ezra Temko President, 12:10.

II. Roll Call

A. Executive Committee

Ezra Temko	President
Mike Verney	Vice President
Felicia Fowler	Programs Coordinator
Paul Rowe	Clerk
Patrick Lacroix	Treasurer
Andrea Jilling	External Affairs Officer

B. Senators Present

Drummond Biles	CEPS
Damian Manda	CEPS
Taylor Hodgdon	CEPS
Myles Lynch	COLA
Nathaniel Stafford	COLA
Dante Broadbent	CHHS
Wade Heath	PAUL
Catherine Welter	COLA
Jin Lee	COLA
Devin Batchelder	COLSA
Jovana Milosavljevic	COLA
Jochen Wirsing	CHHS

Elizabeth Moschella	COLA
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C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present:

Tom Cronin	Manchester
Matt Smith	GRAD
Kevin McMahon	LAW

D. Members at Large Present: Incoming GSS Senators Holland Prior and Jordan Coulombe.

E. Guests: Director of Campus Recreation Stacey Hall.

III. Greetings, Check-Ins, Introduction of Guests.

A. Meeting agenda approved.

IV. Meeting with Director of Campus Recreation Stacey Hall.

- A. Stacey Hall came to receive advice from GSS. During the expansion of Campus Rec, Hall is working with the construction team to maximize access to Campus Rec facilities. Hall mentioned this collaboration has reached a challenging point: air-handling units are currently being replaced. These machines will not be in these recreational facilities for two months during the summer. During this two-month period, indoor machines will not be accessible.
- B. Ezra Temko asked if the space across the street in the Field House would be available during the summer. S. Hall noted that this space would be available in June, but perhaps not in July. This may not be a good place to go during that time period.
- C. S. Hall noted that in spring, attendance numbers start to drop, as students begin studying for final exams. It makes more sense to close these Campus Rec facilities and designate another available space for these activities. H. Hall noted it wouldn't cost students any additional fees to use Campus Rec during this time. M. Lynch asked how much it costs graduate students to use these facilities over a two-month period. D. Biles asked if S. Hall numbers on faculty and student fees for these services. S. Hall indicated she does not have this data.
- D. S. Hall noted that from June-July locker rooms would be updated. It's important to provide services in an alternate location such as the employee fitness center, or subsidize something at Wildcat Fitness. Jovana Milosavljevic noted the possibility of an outdoor gym. S. Hall noted it would be difficult to protect gym equipment from wind, rain, and other harsh forces of nature, although graduate students could do yoga outside.
- E. Andrea Jilling noted a space in the field house could accommodate graduate students to have some sort of gym access during bad weather. Could that be an option for a couple summer months?
- F. S. Hall asked for a sense of the importance of fitness facilities for graduate students. D. Biles: It's pretty important. The summer months are the best times to work out. These facilities help

graduate students maintain healthy lifestyles over the semester.

- G. E. Temko asked if there would be lost revenue because of outside groups, including children. S. Hall replied in the affirmative, noting that high schools do Project Graduation activities at UNH facilities and Campus Rec wants to keep this business: it's easy money.
- H. D. Broadbent noted that for CHHS, everyone is out doing research during the summer months. S. Hall noted Campus Rec would try to keep the outdoor pool open.
- I. E. Temko noted that for graduate students who are around over the summer, with the lack of resources and the fee increase for Campus Rec, this looks bad. E. Temko wondered if there are other options for fitness spaces at Oyster River High School, etc. S. Hall noted that's a good point, but UNH charges them for various things, and asking for that service could prove problematic.
- J. P. Lacroix asked if there are any spaces across the street from Campus Rec that was climate controlled. S. Hall: The new academic study area. At least where the Employee Center is, there is a high ceiling to trap heat. P. Lacroix noted some people might be interested in using these facilities even if they get hot and uncomfortable.
- K. M. Verney noted Campus Rec should leave these facilities open and let graduate students decide for themselves. If Hall wants backup from graduate students, GSS would be willing to write an email in that capacity.
- L. S. Hall asked if GSS wants her to negotiate the operating hours of these facilities. GSS indicated that 6:00am-9:00pm sounds good. Weekends are less important.
- M. E. Temko noted that he is wondering if these spaces actually get unbearably hot and suggested the possibility of taking temporary measures to install window units in these facilities over the summer.

V. Outside Business.

- A. **USS Student Senate Report:** USS Representative was not present.
- B. **Student Trustee Report:** Student Trustee not present.

VI. Internal Business.

A. Minutes from 4/5/2016 approved through general feelings.

B. Reports.

- 1. **Announcement of the impending retirement of Graduate School Dean Harry S. Richards.** This will take place over the summer. GSS is planning an ice cream social in his honor. There will be a card passed around for graduate students to celebrate H. Richards. Graduate students will be able to indulge in ice cream.
- 2. E. Temko noted there might be a motion to approve GSS Executive Committee sending out an honorary Resolution celebrating the contributions of Harry S. Richards. This would be a message of our appreciation of his support.

3. **Dante Broadbent made a motion to approve this honorary resolution.** M. Verney was unsure about this and noted that he would be more comfortable making a motion that GSS encourage that proposed letter if GSS gets to weigh in electronically. E. Temko noted GSS would be flexible if there is any pushback regarding this honorary statement of appreciation for H. Richards. **D. Broadbent made the motion.**

1. Yay, 15. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 1. Motion approved.

4. Andrea Jilling noted that she was at the meeting when H. Richards announced his retirement. Associate Dean Cari Moorhead is unfortunately illegible for the position of Graduate School Dean because she is not tenured. Historically, there has been an effort to dissolve the Graduate School under the Office of Research and Administration. This came directly from a Graduate Council member of standing authority. A. Jilling noted this is concerning for members of Grad Council. There is much opportunity for discussion or action on concerns over the possible dissolve of the Graduate School.
5. Patrick Lacroix noted that Harry Richards and Cari Moorhead have been the best advocated for GSS at UNH. It might be worthwhile to craft a letter stating there are benefits from maintaining an independent Graduate School. GSS should assert the value of an independent Graduate School.
6. M. Verney noted Nesbit is keen on helping UNH become a great research university. GSS should want to support keeping an independent Graduate School, but cultivate an ally there. Grad School should remain a federated system, but continue to collaborate.
7. There will be a Student Health Benefits Plan meeting to discuss the possibility of graduate students receiving dental coverage.
8. Myles Lynch discussed the 3 Minute Thesis Challenge.

VII. Discussion on Best Practices for Graduate Student Involvement in Departmental Governance

- A. Nathaniel Stafford led a discussion on developing and approving GSS-endorsed best practice(s). The goal is to have something GSS can promote to departments/programs. There's quite a wide spectrum of grad student involvement at faculty meetings and meetings with grad coordinators. There's three general approaches:
 1. Either a formally or informally nominated student serves as liaison who discusses grad student issues including department issues that could involve grad students, if they wanted to solicit grad student opinions, etc.
 2. A small group of students, formally or informally, nominated or elected, serve as graduate student representation, and serve the role of liaison. In both instances, they can approach faculty or attend meetings, and in most cases, they aren't barred from that.
 3. A formal graduate student caucus codified within the department, officially elected to represent the student population within that department.
 4. Best models:

- a. Need at least one grad student liaison, M.A. or Ph.D., through grad coordinator, or attends department meetings.
 - b. If program is large enough, if a Ph.D. program, they're around for a while and have a vested interest in the curriculum over time, a formal group like a graduate student caucus should be recognized, but should maintain flexibility so they can gauge the reception on how these programs and students feel. Most grad coordinators and faculty members are receptive to grad student input. There's a really fine line where that becomes inappropriate to discuss personnel things with the department chair. But if there were an official group, that allows the rest of grad students to have an avenue to say whatever needs to be said. N. Stafford noted his hope that GSS could open up the floor to suggestions. Any issues you see with those best practices? What would work best in your department?
- B.** P. Lacroix likes the idea of transparency, but remained unsure about the benefits of graduate students attending department meetings. Do we need this? If we do, we need to make a good case for this. However, if we have specific needs or issues to work out, we can go to department chairs for space allocation, organizing events, hiring committees, etc. P. Lacroix wonders what graduate students feel they can benefit from attending faculty meetings, so they might best pitch their case for a best practices model.
 - C.** Elizabeth Moschella noted that this issue depends on a departmental basis. It depends on the program coordinators themselves. Some departments need more outreach from their program coordinator. If you have one that doesn't do that very well, is there something you could do to get them to improve their duties?
 - D.** P. Lacroix noted he doesn't know how this situation works at most departments. P. Lacroix noted his department has a very open, responsive, communicative program director. When trying to pitch our case in the best way, we can't simply say, "One program director is inefficient." GSS should pitch this in a responsible way that communicates what graduate students stand to gain from this.
 - E.** Jovana Milosavljevic noted that in the English Department many graduate assistants organize syllabi but there is no consistent communicate about course design. As graduate assistants help shape decisions that effect students, and share this duty with faculty, graduate students need more of a voice.
 - F.** Nate Stafford noted that Lecturers attend faculty meetings. Jovana Milosavljevic noted that Lecturers and graduate students are left out sometimes and there is a lag in resolutions made at faculty meetings. These best practices could enhance transparency but also way lend structure to grad students who are responsible for designing courses or labs. This helps them collaborate closely with faculty members who are invested in curriculum design.
 - G.** Jin Lee noted that graduate students have the English Graduate Organization. E.G.O. suggested they become present at faculty meetings, and many members of the department were upset about this: they didn't see the point. It's hard to communicate what the purpose behind this is. J. Lee agreed with P. Lacroix's point that we grad students need to make a good case for this. Some faculty members see this as a purely

“symbolic” act. We need to make the case that this is useful for graduate students.

- H. Jin Lee noted that from her perspective as a resident of Babcock she has concerns about strangers constantly pouring in and out. There is no protection for Babcock residents other than security cards. Jin Lee is unsure that would be the proper atmosphere for studying, especially for residents on lower floors. Babcock’s prices are not competitive with outside living options, although there have been attempts to increase the graduate student population there.
- I. M. Verney appreciated P. Lacroix’s challenging question and noted that professional development is another useful angle to promote. Through participating at departmental meetings, graduate students learn a lot about what to say, or withhold, at meetings. Since a lot of graduate students are interested in pursuing careers in academia, it’s crucial for them to understand what it’s like to be a community faculty member. M. Verney asked if N. Stafford has thought of what the cut off number is, specifically, for requiring a graduate student caucus/organization?
- J. Drummond Biles noted this is a terrific discussion. D. Biles noted that many graduate students want to conduct research and don’t care about departmental communication. Many graduate students don’t think it’s necessary to sit in at departmental meetings. Meeting with graduate coordinator or department chairs once a semester may be a good first step or best practice. Departments might be more open to that. At the end of the day, we’re here for an education. Although having some basic mode of communication is key, graduate students shouldn’t try to overstep their bounds.
- K. M. Lynch noted it’s a good idea to have graduate student representatives at departmental meetings. Some departments allow it, but some don’t. We can’t have unequal opportunities across the graduate school. A best practice repositions our collective values.
- L. N. Stafford responded to M. Verney: From a graduate student perspective, he likes the idea of a culture change. Yes, we want greater transparency; yes, some departments may react differently. One of the overarching themes of this discussion: We have specific concerns whether we are researching or teaching, that departments need to be aware of at meetings. Sending graduate coordinators to department meetings, however, is like playing telephone. Perhaps there’s too much channeling of information. We need this professional development, and representation at faculty meetings ensures that we have a vested interest as stakeholders in our departments. Graduate students should have a forum through which to make opinions heard.
- M. D. Broadbent noted that people participate in things that are closer to them. Departmental involvement may be a great way to get graduate students involved in GSS as well.
- N. **Ezra Temko suggested potential language on Best Practices:**

Motion to send this statement to Grad Council for review, comment, and possible endorsement as a best practice:

In line with UNH’s commitment to the principle shared governance, the Graduate Student Senate endorses as a best practice each graduate program and/or department including at least one graduate student in their governance processes as a representative of the graduate students and liaison to the graduate students in their program and/or department. This liaison/s should at minimum liaise with the department and/or program’s Department Chair, Graduate Coordinator, and/or Undergraduate Coordinator, as applicable, and ideally should be included in departmental committee meetings, excluding confidential portions of said meetings. Additionally, the GSS encourages

graduate programs of substantive size and duration to consider forming a graduate student group or caucus that is recognized by the department or program. For undergraduate programs, the GSS also endorses the inclusion of undergraduate students in departmental governance.

- O. Dante Broadbent made a motion to send this resolution with language as it stands to Graduate Council for their review, comments and suggestions, and possible endorsement as a best practice for graduate programs and departments.** P. Lacroix noted that when it comes time to send this out, it's worth having a Cover Letter, and to check that letter with relevant faculty members.

2. Yay, 16. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 0. Motion approved.

VIII. Internal Business

- A. Governance Committee Constitutional & Bylaw Amendment Proposals.**
- B. Mike Verney noted GSS would discuss these changes as a slate, and briefly summarized these amendment proposals.**
- C.** M. Verney discussed the role of Past Presidents on GSS Executive Committee. This would be at the discretion of the current GSS President. The President could appoint a different Past President to enhance generational communication and knowledge within the GSS, and open up the Executive Committee to GSS Senators as well. The Executive Committee is where a lot of the action happens and is a dynamic group to be a member of. This could help recruit future GSS Senators. These amendment proposals would allow graduate students to run for Student Trustee. M. Verney stressed the importance and necessity of this change. M. Verney discussed changes to filling vacancies in the GSS and the change that Manchester and Law Senators would not be required to attend every GSS meeting.
- D. M. Verney moved to approve these Governance Committee changes as a slate.** Jovana Milosavljevic noted her approval of these changes.

3. Yay, 16. Nay, 0. Abstentions, 0. Governance Committee Amendment Proposals approved.

- E. Survey Discussion.**
- F.** Andrea Jilling noted that much was learned from these surveys, especially regarding the financial burdens that graduate students face. A. Jilling noted that helps us find ways to lower the burden of students in light of the huge spike in Campus Recreation fees.
- G.** A. Jilling noted that the Finance and Administration Office wants to address graduate student concerns and lower their financial burden. They would like to offer twelve-month pay instead of nine-month pay. There are different models and scenarios available to see what's cost effective and beneficial for graduate students in the long run.
- H.** Damian Manda and Drummond Biles are looking to craft more questions for surveys about departmental level of involvement, etc.

IX. Adjournment – 1:50 pm. Final meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 9:21am. Breakfast provided.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Rowe, Clerk
Graduate Student Senate
University of New Hampshire

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