

Meeting Minutes for the General Meeting of the UNH Graduate Student Senate (GSS)
3 December 2013, MUB 233
Ian Cohen, President, Facilitating

I. Call to Order: Ian Cohen, President

II. Roll Call and Introductions

A. Executive Committee

Members Present:

1. Ian Cohen, President
2. Joe Gilbert, Vice President
3. Deanna Silva, Treasurer
4. John McClain,
External Affairs Officer
5. Madhav Baral,
Programs Coordinator

B. Executive Committee

Members Not Present:

1. Dan Tran, Clerk

C. Senators Present:

1. Myles Lynch, CHHS

2. Luke Dietrich, COLA

3. Mike Verney, COLA

4. Brianna Isenberg, COLSA

5. Mica Kurtz, Paul College

6. Patrick Lacroix, Babcock Hall

7. Matt Smith, Graduate School

D. Senators Not Present:

1. Harrison Roakes, CEPS

2. Surupa Shaw, CEPS

3. Mike Griswold, CHHS

4. Jay Derick, COLA

5. Kei Saito, COLA

6. Thomas Cronin, Manchester

E. Other Graduate Students Present: 2

III. Initial Reports from the Executive Committee

A. President, I. Cohen

1. Graduate Council

- a) The School of Law has been accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) before becoming incorporation with UNH on January 1.
- b) There is a revision and renaming of a master's program in education. A new certificate, also in education, was tabled due to issues with clarity in the proposal.
- c) Regarding graduate stipends for FY2015, an initial proposal presented to the Council included raises of 2.6% for Level 1, 2.5% for Level 2, and 3.2% for Level 3. There was concern about whether or not this would be an overall 3% for graduate students, especially if the majority of students are at Level 1 and 2.

B. Vice President, J. Gilbert

1. No report.

C. Treasurer, D. Silva

1. Central Budget Committee (CBC)

- a) Documents will be distributed for summarizing of numbers for FY2013 and FY2014.
- b) Regarding long-term financial planning, the idea is to devise a list of strategic priorities and create a timeline of events/deadlines that need to start happening now for the budget next year.
- c) Review of the Responsibility Center Management (RCM) will start in the fall but formally starts in FY2016.

D. External Affairs Officer, J. McClain

1. Governmental Affairs Committee

- a) See "Student Loan Refinancing Initiative" under "New Business" below.

E. Programs Coordinator, M. Baral

1. See "Announcements/Notes" below.

IV. Ad Hoc, Liaison, and Other Committee Reports

A. Community Service, M. Kurtz

1. The first fundraising program for the graduate UNH Relay for Life team will run from the beginning of the week until the end of the following week (December 2 through 13).
 2. It is called "The Obnoxious Office Object Fundraiser" where one of four obnoxious objects is placed on someone's desk. The recipient is then asked to pay to have it removed. The money goes towards the team's fundraising total.
- B. Space Allocation, Adaptation, and Renewal Committee (SAARC), P. Lacroix
1. \$50,000 was allotted for the transfer of facilities and programs out of Kendall Hall so that it may be fully renovated.
 2. Another \$50,000 was allotted for planning for the outdoor pool in terms of negotiations that have been occurring and involving designers in the process.
 3. Regarding planning for contingencies and unspecified maintenance (things like snow removal, burst pipes, etc.), the university is about halfway through its emergency fund.
 4. There was also discussion of projects for FY2014 and FY2015. Some funds (around \$1 million) were allocated for development of a new well to support greater water supply to the university and potentially to the town.
 5. \$1.5 million was allocated for Hamel Recreation Center improvements in FY2014.
 6. There was a debate between SAARC and the Athletics Committee as to whether the university needs to irrigate Memorial Field, since it is turf and not really grass. Field hockey is played on the field and apparently, the ball bounces better if it is irrigated.
- C. Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee, J. Gilbert
1. The Student Senate is putting together a resolution concerning instructors being cognizant of textbook prices when setting up their syllabi.
 2. There is concern that textbooks are unnecessarily expensive when only a few chapters are being used or if a new version has been mandated that has not changed significantly from the previous version. The resolution focuses on "hidden costs."
 3. Discussion of the plagiarism policy will continue in the upcoming spring semester.
- D. Campus Recreation Building Committee, D. Silva
1. Schematic design is due December 20; however, it is unclear as to what this means in terms of a decision on the outdoor pool.
- V. Old Business
- A. Mandatory Fee Proposals and Approval
1. Shortly after the last meeting of the GSS during which fees were voted on 19 November, MUB director MaryAnne Lustgraaf informed that there had been an accounting error in the MUB budget. They had used the incorrect number of students in projecting their revenue from fees. The fee that was originally proposed to be \$370 (an increase of \$11 or 3.1%) is now proposed to be \$362 (an increase of \$3 or 0.8%).
 2. The GSS voted to reject the original proposed fee of \$370 with 13 votes for and 2 votes against rejection (2 abstentions).
 3. J. Gilbert moved that the recently adjusted FY2015 MUB fee of \$362, an increase of \$3 (0.8%) from FY2014, be approved.
 - a) J. McClain seconded the motion.
 4. Discussion
 - a) MUB graduate assistant Conner MacIver provided some insight on the process of predicting the number of students and projecting the budget for the following year. It always changes multiple times. There was a substantial increase in the number of fee paying students predicted from the past year to next year.
 - b) I. Cohen reiterated that a main concern was that the Granite State Station mailroom was underused by graduate students; however, over 300 graduate students do have mailboxes at the MUB and it is an alternative to a P.O. Box. A revote on the fee was

considered in light of the fee increasing only marginally. M. Lynch argued that the total amount of the fee is still high considering the seemingly low amount of usage by graduate students. M. Verney added to that sentiment that while graduate students should pay something, the current amount does not match what they get out of it. L. Dietrich originally voted to reject the fee but expressed different sentiments, having booked rooms in the MUB on several occasions. Similarly, M. Kurtz pointed out that over the course of an entire year, it costs less than a dollar per day to have the MUB. M. Lynch responded that graduate students are not really around all year and it should be a smaller amount for something that is mandatory. J. Gilbert presented the results of a 2008 survey, showing that graduate students do not really use the MUB. C. MacIver made the case that if graduate students do not pay the MUB fee then that perpetuates the idea that they are not part of the student body, the big picture being that the MUB does provide for the entire community as well. I. Cohen countered that students do not necessarily have to be excluded if they do not pay the fee. P. Lacroix added that there needs to be a better balance in terms of what graduate students pay based on usage, and it does not reinforce the notion of segregation if graduate students paid a lower fee or paid per event. J. McClain noted that we do not know what an undergraduate survey would reveal but the building needs to be paid for; however, the fee is not changing much because more people are expected to pay. J. Gilbert suggested that if usage is spread to the community (like with the outdoor pool) then the costs should also be spread. C. MacIver responded that the contentious outdoor pool issue has devolved the relationship between the town and university which is not a goal of the MUB. M. Smith commented that while we can argue about how each fee can be too high, we can stand behind fees based on what we want the university to represent. While a worthwhile battle, there are far more important issues for the community to take on than the MUB.

5. The vote resulted in a tie with 5 votes for, 5 votes against, and 1 abstention. The tie is broken by the President with one vote for. The motion passed and the fee is approved.

B. Student Loan Refinancing Initiative

1. Letters will be sent to Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), and Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), as well as Congresswomen Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH) and Ann McLane Kuster (D-NH).
2. The letter to Sen. Gillibrand is intended to thank her and express support for her work on bill S. 1066 which proposes refinancing of student loans with rates of above 4% down to 4%. This is similar to the proposal laid out by a report from the previous spring by Campus Progress as well as a bill from Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA).
3. L. Dietrich moved, on recommendation of the Governmental Affairs Committee, that the attached letters be sent to Senator Gillibrand and the members of the New Hampshire Congressional delegation.
 - a) The motion was seconded.
 - b) The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. New Business

- A. There is no new business.

VII. Announcements/Notes

- A. Holiday Extravaganza, Friday, December 6, 6-8pm, at Scorpions Bar & Grill
1. The GSS is sponsoring a free pasta dinner.
- B. Alumni Association Holiday Reception, Thursday, December 12, at Wentworth by the Sea
1. Tickets are free for students.

VIII. Adjournment

- A. The meeting is adjourned until the next general meeting scheduled on 28 January at 12:30pm in MUB 302.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Tran". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dan Tran, Clerk
Graduate Student Senate
University of New Hampshire