

Meeting Minutes for General Meeting of UNH Graduate Student Senate  
 April 21, 2015  
 Mike Verney, President, Facilitating

**I. Call to Order:** Mike Verney, President, 12:41 pm

**II. Roll Call**

A. Executive Committee

Mike Verney	President
Tim Roemer	Programming
Kelly Nifong	Clerk
Mica Kurtz	Vice President
Madhav Baral	Treasurer

B. Senators Present

Ezra Temko	COLA
Felicia Folwer	CHHS
Myles Lynch	CHHS
Amanda Sobel	Forest Park
Amanda Demmer	COLA
Kassie Sarr-Dietershagen	COLA
Matt Smith	Grad School
Patrick LaCroix	COLA
Alireza Ebadi	CEPS

C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present

Morgan Crowley - email proxy	COLSA
Tobi Afolayen - email proxy	External Affairs

D. Members at Large Present: 5

E. Guests: President Mark Huddleston

F. Quorum (11 voting persons /18 filled voting positions): achieved with 13 + 2 proxy

**III. Approval of the Minutes**

A. Motion to approve April 7th minutes:

a. Motion by Patrick LaCroix, seconded by Matt Smith

b. Yea: 11 + 2 proxy, Nay: 0, Abstained: 2

#### IV. Guest Speaker - Pres. Huddleston

- A. Sent four questions, fees, opportunities to interact, grad school education at UNH, state funding update
- B. Graduate education, integral to UNH. UNH is the flagship public university and research and graduate education are a very important part of that. Anticipate increased attention to graduate education moving forward. Strengthening some programs, growing others. Focus on rebuilding graduate numbers. Need to think about whole graduate student experience.
  - a. Remembers own experience. Remembers very long hours and hard work. Appreciates the financial strain on graduate students, especially since stipend has not grown much over the years.
- C. Fees, certainly an issue. Dislikes user fees, so feels that dealing with the burden should not be redesigned to user fees. Relates to state funding which was cut. Knows that the campus recreation was a specific issue, especially because it's big, but the logic of not paying for things you don't use simply won't play out for running the university.
  - a. Feels the solution is not to single out fees, but to try and increase support for graduate students. Can't promise that will happen soon, but it will be a focus on the agenda moving forward.
  - b. Taking out a fee or two is not the main issue of graduate education. Other issues like graduate housing, stipends, help for international students need to be addressed.
  - c. Have been working with undergraduates to go away from fee by fee approval. Feels it is a distraction from the overall issues. Understands that's the way graduates have been encouraged to participate, so would like to work on that.
- D. The RCM system is similarly warped, in personal view, with cost shifting. Should be focussing on the university community as a whole.
- E. Is committed to graduate education at UNH, understands that there is a financial issue, would like to work on that.
- F. Meetings and interacting with GSS, has been difficult in the past. Yesterday, did pizza with the Pres. event with undergraduates and it turned out well. It was a small group of undergraduates, but was still a success. Happy to hear creative suggestions on increasing interactions.
- G. On state funding, currently only getting 8% of funding from the state, which is one of the lowest in the country. It's not that state legislatures hate higher education, the state just doesn't raise any money. When considering funds brought into the state, USNH actually gets a bigger slice comparatively to other states. The new legislation has increased the funding to the point that we may be able to freeze tuitions again. The problem is that it goes back to the idea of user fees. It really doesn't take much to move the needle in NH, a handful of emails and letters can really make a difference. Have really tried to reach out to alum and encourage reaching out to legislators
- H. Questions
  - a. Ezra Temko - in regards to fees, agree 90%, but some things are called fees that maybe shouldn't be. Thoughts on what should qualify a fee?
    - i. Pres Huddleston answered, not a great ready answer for you.
  - b. Tim Roemer - with state funding looking so bleak, what are the other sources?
    - i. Pres Huddleston answered there's a number of things. Student tuition, intellectual property (patents), private philanthropy (donations), are some. The problem is the income and expense buckets are very different sizes. Need to figure out how to bend the cost curve. The question that we get year after year is how do you raise costs over inflation increase year after year. This is something higher education in the country has done for decades. NH is a little better, but we need to figure out how to fix that since it is not sustainable.

- c. Mike Verney - how do you see UNH increasing funds for graduate education?
  - i. Pres. Huddleston answered, on the science side, really need to encourage PI's to write in graduate students into grants. This doesn't always happen since it can be cheaper to write in a post-doc. On the professional side, need to figure out something else since they don't have the same process for writing grants, so graduate students tend to be more university funded.
- d. Patrick LaCroix - seems to be a disproportionate amount of funding going to student athletics (Watkin center, field house, new campus rec, etc) instead of academics. There are a lot of academic buildings that are getting renovated, but not enough. Are there any plans to bring more money to the academic side of things to help bring in more undergraduates?
  - i. Pres. Huddleston answered that the short answer is yes, but it's complicated. The Watkin Center was all privately raised money that wouldn't have gone to anything else on campus. First big money I got in office was for Paul. There were other buildings that really needed the money for renovations, but Peter T. Paul only wanted to give his money to one thing. Have been trying to get private funding and donors to help with the buildings that really need the renovations. The other dollars that are hard to raise are scholarship dollars, though we have been success in that. You find that a majority of people who want to give money have really clear ideas of how to spend that money.
- e. Mica Kurtz - a lot of what we've talked about has been rather bleak about graduate education. You started the conversation mentioning that you feel graduation education should be growing in the future. Can you expand on why you feel that way?
  - i. Pres. Huddleston answered there are a lot of graduate programs that could be better. There are areas of real strength where the graduate programs aren't as strong as they should be. The MBA program really could be stronger and raising more funds. The law school is still new and growing. There are things in the online space, in some particular areas, things could be put online and gain more students.

## V. Old Business - none

## VI. New Business

- A. Follow-up Pres Huddleston's visit - Mike Verney
  - a. Do we feel we got all our questions answered?
    - i. Ezra Temko asked could we maybe send the questions we didn't get answered to him and maybe get answers back?
      - 1. Mike Verney answered, will check.
  - b. Mike Verney commented that maybe we could maybe look at spending more time with him next year (more than one visit).
- B. Student Government Association - Mike Verney
  - a. Would like the GSS to ratify the SGA Constitution
  - b. Motion to approve
    - i. Motion by Ezra Temko, seconded by Matt Smith
  - c. Discussion
    - i. Mike Verney commented that this is something that bloomed out an idea to have all student government orgs meeting together to stay informed with what the other groups are working on. Believe that in order to really garner more

support for graduate students, we really need the undergrads on board. Found that at the undergraduate student senate meeting about voting for student trustee, a lot of undergraduate senators weren't on board we graduates voting. One fight we've had for awhile is that when the administration says "students" they typically mean undergraduates. In order to change that we really need the undergraduates on our side as allies. If we can get two-thirds of the student orgs to ratify this, at the upcoming meeting we can actually elect board members, allowing the SGA to become active before the energy dies out.

- ii. Patrick LaCroix commented that like the idea of presenting a more united front on issues that affect both undergraduates and graduates. What do you think the potential benefits are?
  1. Mike Verney answered that one thing is adding our voices together for resolutions. Another thing, especially, is USNH state funding, something we've been involved with a little this year. If we had been more involved with the undergraduates a couple years ago when we were facing the real budget issues, we could have made a better stand. A lot of times emails to the undergraduate student senate get forgotten or not answered, so this personal connection would help fix that.
- iii. Tim Roemer asked is there only one graduate governing body (recognized as a voting member of the SGA)?
  1. Mike Verney answered yes.
  2. Tim Roemer asked so is there a chance that something against graduates would be put forth due to the fact graduates only have one vote.
  3. Ezra Temko commented that they put in the SGA Constitution that they won't be making any decisions. The SGA won't make any decisions that affect the individual student orgs.
  4. Mike Verney commented that another thing is that graduate students could actually run and hold all of the executive board positions of the SGA. We thought to restrict the number of members from individual orgs, but decided against that.
  5. Ezra Temko - read corresponding line from document.
- iv. Mica Kurtz commented there are other organizations, so is there anything we could do to include some of the organizations that are getting left out?
  1. Mike Verney answered that the organizations that are listed are the officially recognized governance organizations.
  2. Mica Kurtz commented that if there is an organization that is officially recognized they should be allowed to be involved.
  3. Ezra Temko commented that one thing is that the SGA should have open meetings. so other organizations can come or not. SGA could also add organizations in the future.
  4. Mica Kurtz commented that the point was that since we are typically left out, we don't want to leave out other organizations.
  5. Mike Verney answered that's a good suggestion.
- v. Patrick LaCroix commented there is mention of the residence hall association. Never heard of it. What is it?
  1. Mike Verney answered don't know.
  2. Mica Kurtz commented was on it for my undergrad, so can only speak to that, but feel it won't be that much different. Governs the residents halls,

run programs to try and get involved the residents and bring them out of their rooms. Not a governance like we are, but still have university funding.

3. Amanda Sobel commented that Forest Park doesn't have a representative on that, but Babcock does.
- vi. Mike Verney commented that want to say this is a really positive thing. We have a lot of momentum going, and don't want to lose that.
- d. Vote for ratifying SGA constitution
  - i. Yay: 13 + 2 proxy, Nay: 0, Abstaining: 0

## VII. Standing Committee Reports

- A. President - Mike Verney
  - a. Stacey Hall came up at GRC
    - i. Looked at campus rec summer fee process. decided not to enforce the summer fee this year.
  - b. GRC was a success
    - i. Want to thank everyone who was involved, both presenting and volunteering, as well as sitting at the GSS table.
- B. Vice President - Mica Kurtz
  - a. Update on open positions, hasn't changed since last update.
  - b. Remember to bring binders to next meeting!
  - c. Next meeting will be first where new members are expressly invited.
    - i. Also someone will be getting pied.
- C. External Affairs- Tobi Afolayan (given by Mike Verney)
  - a. Went to BOT meeting
    - i. Presented on GSS Survey.
    - ii. Found they were impressed by the survey effort.
    - iii. Impressed by the depth of it and the turnout, and the goal of 500 surveys.
- D. Treasurer - Madhav Baral
  - a. None
- E. Programming Committee - Tim Roemer
  - a. Last week was GPSAW
    - i. Went well, except cancelled margaritas since only MV was RVSPed.
    - ii. Spring Fling was on Friday, not a great turn out.

## VIII. Ad-hoc Committees

- A. Library Information Access Group - Mike Verney
  - a. Concerned about outreach to undergrads and grads to advertise the resources available.
  - b. Collection developer discussed expenses
    - i. Note of interest is that in last 10 years the amount spent on print vs electronic sources has switched
  - c. Will be putting together a proposal soon
    - i. Any specific points please pass along.
- B. GSS Survey - Ezra Temko
  - a. Up to 297 participants
  - b. Goal is 500 - which is 26% of all graduate students
  - c. More detailed information available (contact Ezra Temko if curious)

- d. Mike Verney commented that will be ending the survey will be May 4th so someone can get pied on May 5th
- e. Mica Kurtz commented that don't feel that we need to end it in order to pie someone
  - i. Kelly Nifong commented that we do need to send out the prize, feel it should be best to try and get those out before the end of finals.
  - ii. Tim Roemer commented that we could do a soft date for pieing and prizes, but leave the survey up for a little longer.
  - iii. Ezra Temko commented that agree with a soft date, but we need to get the data to people who want it.
  - iv. Mica Kurtz commented that agree that we need to take it off line at one point.
  - v. Ezra Temko commented we can have the end date but take it offline when no one is taking it anymore.
- C. Anti-Violence Walk - Kelly Nifong
  - a. Ezra Temko, Mica Kurtz, and I went.
  - b. It was a nice cold day (snowed).
  - c. Got given cow bells and we walked around with about 200-300 people. Went well.
- D. Transportation - Dan Tran
  - a. UNH has been reviewing the transportation funding, since UNH is one of the few funding the bus system compared to out-sourced funding.
  - b. They reviewed all the routes.
    - i. Going to try to keep the rochester route, but numbers are low.
    - ii. Looking at the different runs, will be combine or cut a few lines based on low riders.
    - iii. Goal is to cut runs to save money.
    - iv. There has been an increased campus connector rider numbers, they think due to increase durham housing.
    - v. Looking at the mast road route.
  - c. The full review is online.
  - d. There are a number of public hearings.
  - e. Starting a pilot route between manchester and concord
- E. Commencement and honorary awardees - Amanda Demmer
  - a. They have been publicly announced
- F. ExecComm - Mike Verney
  - a. Will be meeting next Tuesday with outgoing Provost MacFarlane
- G. Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Graduate Journal
  - a. Interest meeting Monday May 4th 6:45-7:30pm

**IXI. Adjournment - 2:02 pm**

- A. Motion by Patrick LaCoix, seconded by Mica Kurtz.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kelly Nifong, Clerk  
Graduate Student Senate

University of New Hampshire