

Meeting Minutes for the General Meeting of the UNH Graduate Student Senate (GSS)
October 21, 2014, MUB 302
Mike Verney, President, Facilitating

I. Call to Order: Mike Verney, President, 12:35pm

II. Roll Call

A. Executive Committee

Mike Verney	President
Mica Kurtz	Vice President
Kelly Nifong	Clerk
Madhav Baral	Treasurer
Tim Roemer	Programming Coordinator
Tobi Afolayan	External Affairs

B. Senators Present (8/12 filled positions)

Amanda Sobel	Forest Park
Kassie Sarr-Dietersagn	COLA
Amanda Demmer	COLA
Matt Smith	Graduate School
Ian Cohen	CEPS
Myles Lynch	CHHS
Ezra Temko	COLA
Wali Raja	UNH-Law

C. Executive Committee Members/Senators Not Present

Morgan Crowley	COLSA - Excused
Stanley Quartey	Paul
Alireza Ebadi	CEPS
Patrick LaCroix	COLA - Excused

D. Members at Large Present: 5

E. Guests: Jason Snook (USS Babcock), Mark Rubinstein (V.P. for Student and Academic Services)

F. Quorum (11 voting persons / 17 voting positions): Achieved with 13 voting persons present

III. Approval of Minutes – None to approve

IV. Guest Speaker – Mark Rubinstein

- A. Mark Rubinstein discussed his role at UNH (enrollment/registration, student affairs, student life), mentioned that it is mostly dealing with undergraduate students.
- B. Works with the Graduate School to help fund Graduate Life Programs.
- C. Main association to GSS is through the Fees Approval process.
 - a. Board currently still in discussion about the upcoming fees.
 - b. Currently unable to build budgets for auxiliary units
 - c. As of now the increase will be in accordance with the 2-2.5% inflation rate.
- D. Mike Verney opened the floor to questions for Mark Rubinstein.
 - a. Ian Cohen asked if the BOT would be allowing graduate student involvement in the election of a student trustee. Mark Rubinstein answered that he did not see an issue with that.
 - b. Tobi Afolayan asked for an update on the change in Common Exam time. Mark Rubinstein answered that the Faculty Senate has approved the change from Tues-Thurs 12:30-2pm to Fri 2-5pm with a 2-year pilot.
 - c. Mike Verney asked what happens next, is this decision final? Will there be another opportunity for student input? Mark Rubinstein answered that the decision was entirely up to the Faculty Senate.
 - d. Ian Cohen asked for the Fees schedule. Mark Rubinstein answered that hopefully the report will be made available within the next week.
 - i. Ian asked if the model (future revenue) includes an increased freshman class size based on this years' class size. Mark Rubinstein answered that there are several models, including some that will be determining if UNH can support the resulting increase in capacity due to increased freshman class size. Also mentioned that models have been update for a 3200 freshman class size for auxiliary data.
 - ii. Mike Verney outlined the planned schedule for approving Fees is to bring the fees to GSS meeting on Nov 4th for senate discussion. The FAC will then meet with external committees also involved, will draft recommendations which will be voted on by the senate on Nov 18th.
 - e. Ian Cohen asked a question he had for President Huddleston. Asked if the Board of Trustees will continue to freeze tuition in the NH Senate fails to restore funding, like it has done in previous years. Mark Rubinstein answered that the NH Senate is unlikely to be able to fully restore funding to 2009 levels due to several reasons.
 - i. The first time the BOT froze tuition despite NH Senate fully restoring funding because it seemed as though the NH Senate had done as much as possible. The state is stuck in not having enough revenue without raising taxes. All state agencies are “underfunded” by the state because of this.
 - f. Myles Lynch asked if the change in common exam time was final. Mark Rubinstein answered that it seems that way. Mentioned that the GSS letter about the change in common exam time was shared with the Faculty Senate. Mentioned that the MUB is also concerned in an increased pressure in room usage. The question is what really will be the impact of the change.
 - i. Ezra Temko asked if there was any indication of the affect on individual departments. Mark Rubinstein answered that most of the department schedules will continue to “roll over” like they have in the past. One result will be

departments being encouraged to optimize class size to room size. The goal of the change is to create more available classroom space.

- ii. Mika Kurtz asked why they couldn't have moved classes to Friday afternoon. Mark Rubinstein answered that the issue is the loss of space caused by the closing of Ham-Smith. Also mentioned that 12:30-2pm is a popular choice for class time.
- g. Ian Cohen asked about the RCM review and if it will be affected by the VPFA search. Mark Rubinstein answered that the RCM review is scheduled to be complete by the end of the year, and it should not affect the VPFA search.
- h. Tobi Afolayan asked if there was any indication whether the NH Senate was going to be trying to restore funding. Mark Rubinstein answered that until the election there is no clear indication of how much funding will be available for next year.
- i. Mike Verney asked Mark Rubinstein to address the questions/concerns listed in the GSS letter on the change in common exam time.
 - i. Concern #4: "What would be the duration of the temporary change and would the process of changing it back be the same as implementing it?" – The Faculty Senate will at the end of the two-year pilot re-address the issue, including the discussion of making the change permanent.
 - ii. Concern #6: "Are there any other factors playing a role in the need for this change besides the renovation of Hamilton Smith?" – Although it did not play a role in the decision, Campus Dining has in the past asked for help in decrease the amount of students that attend the dining halls during that time period.
 - iii. Concern #7: "What makes the Hamilton Smith renovation different in terms of classroom space from previous renovations (McConnell Hall, for example)?" – One factor is that McConnell was closed after Paul opened, allowing some relief. Also McConnell had already been transitioned to mainly admin space prior to the closure. Also the number and size of the classrooms is different.
 - iv. Concern #8: "How much space does McConnell Hall and Horton Hall offer and can they be utilized to accommodate the renovations of Hamilton Smith?" – A lot of shuffling of faculty offices and admin space has already occurred in an effort to move people out of Hamilton Smith. There simply isn't enough room without Hamilton Smith.
 - v. Concern #10: "Will the hiring of a new University Registrar affect our knowledge of the University's spatial needs?" – The new Registrar is Andy Colby, someone who is very familiar with UNH and its needs due to having been employed at UNH for a number of years.
 - vi. Concern # 11: "When was the last time the University conducted a study of its spatial efficiency and what were the results of that study? If there have been no recent studies, is it feasible to perform one again in the time that we have?" – A study was completed recently. Doug Banks would be the person to talk to about the results.
 - vii. Concern #12: "How certain are we that the MUB or other campus facilities will be able to accommodate all the student organizations who would be seeking to use the new common exam time?" – This is uncertain at this time and is a concern, especially for the MUB, that will hopefully be addressed.
- j. Ian Cohen asked for an update on the new Campus Rec and how it is being paid for. Mark Rubinstein answered that fees are in part funding it, with an estimated \$240 dollar increase to campus rec fee once the new facility opens. Other funding is coming from a loan with the state.

- k. Ezra Temko asked if there is any way to plan ahead for building closures so that the planning included not having to change the common exam time again. Mark Rubinstein answered that that is a good question that has yet to be addressed, and that the next planned closure is a science building, which will prove to be a challenge due to the specialized classrooms. However, Ham Smith has more general classroom space, so the specialized class space isn't a concern this time.
- l. Damian Manda asked if the increase in freshman class size, if continuous, will also affect the need for space. Mark Rubinstein answered that the overall growth of the university is much less than the increase in freshman class size indicates. Although this increase won't affect the immediate future, the eventually goal of University growth will cause a need for more housing, especially in the fall semesters. One thought of decreasing the pressure on fall semester housing is to offer more summer programs.

V. Standing Committee Reports

- A. President, Mike Verney
 - a. Nothing to report
- B. Clerk, Kelly Nifong
 - a. Nothing to report
- C. Vice President, Mica Kurtz
 - a. Nothing to report
- D. Programming, Tim Roemer
 - a. Homecoming effort was a success. Was able to use new GS Banner, hand out pens and stickers.
- E. Treasurer, Madhav Baral
 - a. GSS is currently within budget. Due largely to reducing Homecoming to 50% less than the estimated cost.

VI. Ad Hoc and Liaison Committee Reports

- A. Faculty Senate – Kelly Nifong
 - a. Senate voted and passed the change, 35 yays, 4 nays, 2 abstained.
 - i. Ham-Smith not officially closing until Jan 2016, allowing a buffer for emergencies for Fall 2015, start of the change in common exam time.
 - ii. The details are that 199 classes (for the week) need to be moved.
 - iii. Not all of the classes could fit into the 12:30-2pm time slot, so there is likely to be an increase in 8am classes.
 - iv. The goal is try and preserve the schedules outside of Ham-Smith to minimize the disruption of the closure. Trying NOT to rewrite the entire campus schedule.
 - b. Discussed a reworking of the Honors program. How it will change, why the change is good for UNH.
 - c. Discussed an ongoing idea of allowing non-tenure faculty to hold senate positions.
- B. Campus Safety Walk – Mike Verney
 - a. Walk was Oct 8th and looked at several safety concerns raised by the GSS.
 - b. Results were:
 - i. High shrubbery on left side when leaving West Edge lot and entering Main Street will be trimmed.
 - ii. Planning to increase the lighting on the dirt path leading from Mast Road Extension to Mast Road parking lot.
 - iii. Acknowledged the concern of Pedestrian safety on Main Street at night. Not sure yet what a good solution is.

- iv. The lighting when crossing the pipes behind the Field House, on the path to the A Lot tunnel, will be increased.
 - c. Ian Cohen asked about the necessity of cops to direct campus at Garrison Avenue and Main Street intersection. Mark Rubinstein answered that the cops are there mainly to help maintain the campus transportation (bus) schedules.
 - i. The issue not only that intersection, but also all of the crosswalks on campus.
 - ii. Ian asked if a stoplight would help. Mark Rubinstein answered that the town of Durham would have to order a traffic study before a traffic light could be built. Unfortunately the town does not seem to be interested.
- C. External Affairs – Tobi Afolayan
 - a. Governmental Affairs Committee
 - i. Midterm elections are coming up.
 - ii. Discussing how to get information to the students so they make informed voting decisions.
 - 1. Comparison cards
 - 2. Information up on GSS website, new page.
 - 3. Possibility of inviting candidates to campus for a discussion forum. Not finalized yet.
 - iii. John McClain asked if a link for voter registration on the GSS website page will be a link. Tobi Afolayan answered that yet is will be.
 - iv. Mike Verney mentioned that an update will be sent out about the possible candidate forum.

VII. Old Business

- A. GSS Senator Discussion Forum – Mike Verney
 - a. Will be initiated on Wildcat Link. Senators need to request membership to GSS group if interested in participating.
 - i. Ian Cohen mentioned that the member list needs to be edited so only current senators are members. Mike Verney agreed.
 - ii. Tim Roemer asked what the notification policy is. Taylor Hodgden answered that members can set their notifications.
 - iii. Ezra Temko asked what members would be getting removed. Mike Verney answered that members who have graduated would be removed first. Taylor Hodgden mentioned that all graduates will be removed from Wildcat Link shortly anyway.

VIII. New Business

- A. Vice Provost Vasudevan offer to visit – Mike Verney
 - a. Would like to come visit to address GSS questions about the change in common exam time.
 - b. Ian Cohen mentioned that the decision was already made, so no question left.
 - i. Tobi Afolayan asked once the change is official, how will it be presented/be seen? Mark Rubinstein answered that the main change will be in class schedules.
- B. Tobi Afolayan asked if the discussion of fees was going to occur at Nov 4th meeting. Mike Verney answered yes, as long as the GSS has received the fee report at that time.
- C. Ian Cohen asked about the Paul Ph.D program and if a resolution of support of continuation is necessary.

- a. Mika Kurtz answered that Paul has preliminary approval to hire two new faculty for next year.
 - i. Mike Verney mentioned that the issue was no new Ph.D students were admitted into Paul last year.
 - b. Mika Kurtz mentioned that a resolution supporting the continuation of the Economics Ph.D program is a good idea.
- D. Ezra Temko asked if there was interest in drafting a resolution of support for the new Lecturers union.
- a. Ian Cohen asked if supporting the lectures would be in turn taking away from possible graduate student positions. Mike Verney disagreed that the GSS needs to be concerned with competition.
 - b. Tobi Afolayan asked if there was employment data on lecturers vs T.A.s vs tenure faculty. Mark Rubinstein answered that Jim Varn in the Provost office would have that information.
 - c. Mike Verney moved the possibility of a resolution to old business for next meeting due to time constraint.

IX. Announcements/Upcoming Events

- A. Myles Lynch announced that the Graduate School will be hosting a "Dissertation Year Fellowship" seminar, registration is online.

X. Adjournment - 2:02pm

- 1. Motion made by Tobi Afolayan, seconded by Tim Roemer.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kelly Nifong, Clerk
Graduate Student Senate
University of New Hampshire